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# The Organic Materials Review Institute

Although organic farming standards have not yet been established by the federal government, there is a source of information for growers (and other interested people) who want an unbiased opinion with regards to which fertilizers or pest control materials are acceptable for use on organic farms. The Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) was founded in 1997 in Eugene, Oregon with the mission of providing professional, independent, and transparent reviews of materials allowed in the production, processing, and handling of organic food and fiber. OMRI is a nonprofit organization that publishes and disseminates generic and brand name lists of materials allowed or prohibited for use in organic farming. The list of subscribing certifiers and state/provincial programs includes organic associations from more than 20 states. Products that have received a passing grade from OMRI reviewers can be labeled and/or advertised with an OMRI Listed trademark seal.

The standards of this organization are based on the standards of various governmental and private certifiers, but OMRI's decisions do not necessarily coincide with those of any particular agency. The final decision regarding the organic acceptability of different products remains with the state and private organizations.

Examples of pesticides reviewed by OMRI and which have had residue data developed by the IR-4 Project include rotenone and cryolite. Rotenone is undergoing reregistration on many minor crops. IR-4 is developing residue data on leaf lettuce, broccoli, snap beans, tomatoes, peaches, and blackberries. See the related article in [IR-4 Newsletter 28\(4\):20](#). OMRI considered rotenone, along with other botanical pesticides, to be regulated. It may be used only as "part of a biorational pest management program, and cannot be the primary method of pest control in the Farm Plan. The least toxic botanicals must be used in the least ecologically disruptive way possible." Cryolite, also called sodium fluoaluminate, is also undergoing reregistration. IR-4 has submitted residue data for the reregistration of cryolite on cranberries, caneberries (raspberries and blackberries), and strawberries. Data has also been developed for new registrations on blueberries and mint. OMRI prohibits the use of synthetic cryolite, and considers the use of the natural form to be regulated, noting that because "it is no longer being mined, only backstock of the natural form can be used until it runs out. No visible residues (are) allowed on harvested crop(s)."

Additional information about OMRI may be found at their website: <[www.omri.org](http://www.omri.org)> or by e-mail at <[info@omri.org](mailto:info@omri.org)>.

Article by Ken Samoil

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## Regional News (Southern)

### Georgia IR-4 Committee Formed

by Culpepper, Granberry, Langston and Riley

Since its beginning in 1963, the IR-4 Project (Interregional Research Project No. 4) has cooperated with university specialists, producers, the agri-chemicals industry, and federal agencies to secure clearances for pest control products on minor crops and for minor uses of these products on major crops. Minor crops range from acerola to zucchini and include almost everything in-between except cotton, corn, soybeans, and grains. Minor crops are not just food crops; they also include ornamentals and landscape plants, commercially grown flowers, shade trees, and turfgrass.

Over the years, IR-4 has assisted with over 5000 clearances including tolerances, exemptions, label expansions, crop groupings, crop definitions, and re-registrations. However, because of limited public recognition for the project's role in assisting pest control clearances in Georgia and to further enhance the efficiency of the IR-4 program, a Georgia IR-4 Committee has been formed. The objective of this committee is primarily twofold: 1) to help enhance the understanding of IR-4 and the potential impact that it can have on our producers and 2) to encourage and facilitate feedback from county agents, consultants, producers,

etc. so that the committee can address the needs of our producers in the area of pest control.

The Georgia IR-4 Committee consists of our University of Georgia Extension or Research Scientists (Stanley Culpepper - Weed Science, Darbie Granberry - Horticulture, David Langston - Plant Pathologist, David Riley - Entomologist), one University of Georgia Extension Entomologist (David Adams), one University of Georgia Extension Agent (Glenn Beard), the Executive Director and two members of the Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association (Charles Hall, two members to be announced at a later date), and one crop consultant (Cal Roach). Please contact any of these individuals or your local Extension Service for more information.

The IR-4 Southern Region Field Coordinator, Dr. C.W. Meister, also noted that Arkansas, Tennessee and Texas have IR-4 Committees.

Article by Stanley Culpepper,  
Darbie Granberry, David Langston,  
David Riley and Editor

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## Regional News (Western)

Since this is the last newsletter of 1999, allow us the opportunity to wish you all a joyous holiday season and a safe and healthy New Year (and Millennium). As 1999 comes to a close, a brief highlighting of the year, is in order. Major changes occurred in our office: Margaret Reiff started the year as the Acting Regional Field Coordinator and was glad to hand the reins to Ron Hampton upon his hiring. In recognition of service to the program and the Department of Environmental Toxicology, she earned a Staff Achievement Award. The sad news is that due to her husband's relocation, Margaret will be leaving the IR-4 program at the end of January (we wish Margaret and her family all the best in their new home)! Chuck Mourer was recognized for all his hard work by his promotion to the Professional Staff ranks. Jim McFarland and Martin Beran have had a busy year traveling and conducting critical event audits and facility inspections. In September, we welcomed our new Administrative Assistant, Eileen Johanson, in our office.

Changes in the Western Region have also occurred. After several years of service to the program, the field center in Idaho will be officially recognized as a FRC due to the efforts of Will Meeks, Field Research Director, and our State Liaison Representative, Ronda Hirnyck. Having a FRC in conjunction with the two Residue Analysis Laboratories will complete the efforts to establish an Idaho Minor Crop Center with funding from the state legislature. Similar efforts are underway in Oregon spearheaded by Bob McReynolds. In recognition of Bob's overall service to the

IR-4 program, he received the Meritorious Service Award for his dedication to the program. New Field Research 'Mini-centers' are being organized in Colorado and New Mexico by their respective State Liaison Representatives, Sandra McDonald and Richard Lee. Interviews for the full-time position of Field Research Director at the Kearney Ag Center will take place in the beginning of the New Year, as will the interviews for the Washington Laboratory Director. On a personal note, we would also like to congratulate Mike Kawate on his marriage on November 21, 1999.

The Western Region has had several visits of late. Bob Holm made his third visit to the WR and presented the IR-4 Strategic Plan. Dan Kunkel, Keith Dorschner, Dave Thompson and Michael Braverman visited the facilities at Seminis Seeds (producer of Round-Up Ready lettuce) and conducted important 'round-table' discussions with CA Department of Pesticide Registration (regarding Super Crop Group tolerances - kudos to Dave and Keith) and the CA Lettuce Board. Jim and Martin had advanced training with Debi Garvin on the 'Application of GLPs to Field Studies'. Ron visited New Mexico to assess their research capabilities and Oregon to provide technical training to Chris and Karen Cornwell and Martin Nicholson (congratulations to Chris for his promotion to FRD for vegetable field trials!)

In closing, the year 2000 will be an exciting year with more changes and challenges. Thanks to everyone as we look forward to 2000 and working with you.

Article by Ron Hampton

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## Regional News (Northeastern)

The Northeast Region of the IR-4 Project will be hosting technical training for field researchers. The event, January 11 and 12, will take place at IR-4 Headquarters, Cook College. The training will focus on technical issues, including such areas as: equipment calibrations and logs; the different types of applications, application rate calculations; harvest data; and sample shipping. The IR-4 Field Data Book, and how to fill it out, serves as the central organizational tool from which the discussions evolve. This type of training allows field researchers an excellent opportunity to discuss various ways to deal with technical issues, as they relate to IR-4 residue work. The Field Data Book discussions will take place on Tuesday, January 11. On Wednesday morning we will have a practical session with application equipment demonstrations by Wayne Curry and small group discussions of how to organize the GLP studies. A short session,

Wednesday afternoon will be used to address GLP issues not covered on Tuesday.

This particular training session also provides a unique opportunity for researchers to meet the IR-4 staff and see where their paperwork ends up - the IR-4 Archives and to EPA in petition format! There will be a catered dinner Tuesday evening for additional conversation.

Similar training sessions were held in the Southern, Western and Northcentral Regions last year. The plan is to have at least one technical training session per year, as a refresher course for researchers already in the system and to bring new researchers up to speed on the IR-4 Field Data Books and related GLP issues.

Article by Edith Lurvey