

**Editor's Note: IR-4 Highlights by the Executive Director is an outreach feature of the Newsletter, focused primarily on articles in this issue.**

## IR-4 Highlights (Partner Outreach)

There is an old saying that time flies when you are having fun. I must be having a great time since it only seems like yesterday that my career at IR-4 started. I recently began my fourth year as Executive Director and wonder what happened to the time since joining the IR-4 Team in May 1998. As we end another productive year and look forward to a challenging 2002, we usually look at our successes in terms of number of clearances, or most recently, the economic impact of the Section 18's from IR-4 projects. However, the numbers reflecting the events that occurred on September 11th (or commonly referred to as 9/11) have changed our outlook and how we judge ourselves and our accomplishments which will be discussed later. Many of us look more deeply into relationships and their importance to our jobs. Psychologists are indicating that our society has become more reflective and we have become more appreciative of each other as human beings. I believe IR-4 is a program made up of people deeply committed to the goal of supporting minor crop agriculture as well as working together as a Team to accomplish this task. The partnership efforts we initiated the past few years are a reflection of this attitude and approach to doing our jobs.

Before we discuss our 2001 accomplishments, let us first take a look at the partnerships which made those achievements possible:

**Program Leadership and Staff.** We are truly fortunate to have some of the best people in agriculture as part of our program. The Headquarters staff is a pleasure to work with and go about doing their jobs with minimal supervision which allows me to travel extensively to network within the IR-4 program and our external partners to focus on strategies and programs. The Project Management Committee and Administrative Advisers provide overall program strategy, financial direction and focus from our USDA funding agencies (ARS and CSREES). The Regional Directors and their staff members do an excellent job of running the programs in their regions while the Beltsville ARS leadership partners with the land grant system on a national basis to provide excellent support in all program areas. At the state level, we are fortunate to have outstanding State Liaisons who represent the interests of their minor crop growers. Last, but

certainly not least, are our Field Research Directors who conduct all the crop residue and crop performance trials which are the basis of all of our projects.

**Crop Protection Industry Partnerships.** This past year continued the consolidation trend which has accelerated the past few years. Dow AgroSciences purchased the agrochemical business from Rohm and Haas while Bayer purchased the Aventis operations. In spite of these mergers and the consolidations the previous year to form Syngenta (Novartis and Zeneca) and BASF (purchased American Cyanamid agrochemical business), the industry kept up their commitments to IR-4 to develop their latest crop protection technologies (both biopesticide and chemical) for minor crop growers. We appreciate these efforts on their part and the financial contributions made to IR-4 to help fund our Food Use Workshop and the NAFTA Biopesticide Registration Workshop as well as individual project support. I would like to especially thank Dr. Marty Mascianica of BASF and his Team and Dr. Janice McFarland and the Syngenta organization for their significant monetary contributions to our programs. BASF's funding was for an innovative partnership to develop efficacy data (where they already were developing the residue tolerance data) on their new fungicides for minor crop registrations. The Syngenta grant will allow for additional program support for their new molecules like fludioxonil as well to assist Headquarters with contract QA and report writing to speed our petition submission process. Additional funding like these examples and many others, reflect the true partnership developed with the crop protection industry and greatly leverage our federal funds to accomplish more in a shorter timeframe.

**Regulatory Partnerships.** Our EPA partnership completed its third successful year with four meetings and two tours plus a sabbatical by Dan Kunkel, Registration Manager, with the Agency. The retirement of Dr. Willis Wheeler, IR-4 Liaison to the OPP Director, this fall ended our two year support for this important communication effort which opened the doors for free exchange of information and ideas between our groups. The EPA/IR-4 Technical Working Group addressed a number of issues and made significant progress on crop groupings, supercrop/reduced data set proposals, electronic data submission, petition formatting and many other ideas. We appreciate the continued confidence the EPA has shown in IR-4 as evidenced by half of the petitions on the FY 2002 Work Plan coming from IR-4 compared to 46% in 2001. The Agency partnership was extended further with the Biopesticide and Pollution Prevention Division (BPPD) who co-sponsored a Biopesticide Registration Workshop along with Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) and California's Department of Pesticides Regulation (DPR) attended by over 190 in November. The partnership with DPR was extended with the EPA and IR-4 to

Continued on Page 3

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## IR-4 Highlights (Partner Outreach)

Continued from Page 2

include review of 30 petitions (10% of the EPA's workload and 20% of our petitions). This was a major contribution and greatly appreciated! PMRA agreed to accept one IR-4 petition for joint review and it is hoped that this will be expanded in future years. The result of these combined efforts was the EPA Excellence in Team Work Award for members of IR-4, EPA, PMRA and DPR who made the cooperation and accomplishments possible. A special note of appreciation to Jim Jones who was given the IR-4 Headquarters Special Recognition Award at our Annual Meeting for providing management support for all of the partnership initiatives the past three years in his role as Registration Division Director. Congratulations to Jim for his recent promotion to Deputy Office Director for Pesticide Programs.

**Commodity Liaison Committee (CLC)** A special note of appreciation from the entire IR-4 Program goes to Rocky Lundy, Executive Director of the Mint Industry Research Council and the CLC Chair, and the CLC for their support of our efforts this year. The CLC made it a priority to work with Congress to obtain a funding increase for IR-4. They started with a Congressional Staff Luncheon in February followed by a Senate Staff Briefing in April. At those times and numerous others throughout the year, Rocky and his CLC Team met with Congressional and Senate members and their agricultural staff both in Washington, D.C. and in their state offices as well as on minor crop tours they arranged. The result of all these efforts on their part was a \$1,515,000 increase from USDA-CSREES for the land grant university part of our program (i.e. Headquarters and Regions) and

\$400,000 for the USDA-ARS minor crop budget. The CSREES funding will allow us to keep ahead of the inflationary creep since the last increase in 1997 to expand programming as well as purchase laboratory equipment as outlined in our 2001 to 2005 Strategic Plan. None of this funding increase would have been possible without the tireless dedication and efforts of Rocky and the CLC. Many thanks!

Now we come to the numerical accomplishments. Our 564 food crop clearances (543 chemical and 21 biopesticide) did not quite match the 2000 record of 567 clearances (511 chemical and 56 biopesticide), but were close and greatly exceeded the previous record total in 1999 of 255. We believe the programs set in motion the past few years and all of our partnerships will allow IR-4 to sustain a level of 400 to 500 food crop clearances annually for the foreseeable future. Our ornamental clearance total of 296 was clearly down from the 2000 record of 1155. However, the 2000 and 2001 average of over 700 clearances is above the 1996 to 1999 ornamental clearance average of 600/year. With the increased funding made available for the ornamental program from the recent budget increase, we hope to be able to expand current programs and increase the ornamental clearance totals in future years.

Overall, 2001 was a very good year and one we can all be proud of. My personal thanks to each and every person who helped make it happen. I look forward to another challenging and productive year in 2002.

Article by Bob Holm

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## Changes at the California Department of Pesticide Regulation

Recently, two friends of IR-4 from Cal DPR have made career changes. Jerry Campbell, former Cal EPA-DPR Supervisor of Registration, has accepted a promotion to work with the California Department of Food and Agriculture's Pierce's Disease Program. The program was formed to combat a new insect pest to California, the Glassy-Winged Sharp Shooter (GWSS). The GWSS is a very problematic pest transmitting Pierce's Disease to grapevines and diseases to other crops.

Tom Leffingwell, former Cal DPR Chief Chemist, has retired from Cal DPR and the University of California, Berkeley where he taught before joining DPR. Tom was the lead for CDPR review of IR-4 petitions in 2000/2001.

Thanks and best wishes from IR-4.

Prepared by Sandy Perry with input  
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