

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)

I keep thinking that we will have a slow time of the year at IR-4 Headquarters and within the program, but after my fourth winter season that does not appear to be possible. The program operates seamlessly from one year to the next. As we wrap up one year and take a moment to reflect on our 2001 Accomplishments, we are already heavily involved with planning the 2002 field program and working with our regulatory partners (EPA, California's Department of Pesticide Regulation and Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency) to schedule minor crop petitions for review on their FY2003 Workplans. The term "never a dull moment" really applies to IR-4.

One important aspect of our program is to attend regional and national professional society meetings to network with university/USDA researchers and land grant university extension agents to learn about their latest minor crop pest control needs and the products being evaluated to address those problems. Our staff has been active participants in the Weed Science Society (Eastern, Southern, Western and National) Meetings held this quarter. Several staff members (Marija Arsenovic, Jerry Baron, Michael Braverman, Ray Frank, Dan Kunkel and Fred Salzman) gave paper and poster presentations and participated in the Herbicides for Minor Use Committee held at the National WSSA Meeting chaired by Dr. Bernie Zandstra at Michigan State University and one of our fine Field Research Directors. This committee provides IR-4 with valuable inputs on program and project priorities and serves as a focal point for weed control approaches for minor crops. The National WSSA Meeting also held a Vegetable Herbicide Roundtable Discussion which also provided information on weed control needs for that important industry. It was great for Jerry to be recognized by the Northeast WSSA as their Outstanding Researcher for 2001 based on his many years of service to the Society in various capacities, most recently as Legislative Committee Chair.

Several important events occurred in our Biopesticide Program during the quarter. First of all, there was a change in leadership. Bill Biehn retired from IR-4 and Rutgers University after 22 years with the program and 5 years as our Biopesticide Coordinator on January 2nd. Michael Braverman has assumed the Biopesticide Coordinator role and was

busy with the Biopesticide Research Program as noted in the article on page 10. In addition, our EPA regulatory partnership has deepened with the Biopesticide and Pollution Prevention Division (BPPD). We held our first BPPD/IR-4 Technical Working Group Meeting on March 18th prior to our regularly scheduled EPA/IR-4 Technical Working Group (TWG) Meeting on March 19th. This was the second EPA/IR-4 TWG Meeting this quarter and in 2002. Part of the BPPD/IR-4 TWG Meeting involved the details of the sabbatical for Michael in BPPD planned to start later this spring for 4 or 5 months (3 or 4 days/month). Our hope is to utilize this opportunity to better learn the BPPD's biopesticide regulatory procedures in order to be more effective and efficient in our biopesticide petition submissions with registrants and to provide general feedback to the Biopesticide Industry Alliance in their efforts to register more products. We wish to thank Janet Andersen, BPPD Director, and her management team (Kathleen Knox, Sheryl Reilly and Phil Hutton) and other BPPD staff for this opportunity.

On February 25th, the IR-4 Project Management Committee (PMC) met with our Commodity Liaison Committee (CLC) to discuss minor crop stakeholder issues. The PMC again thanks the CLC for their efforts in obtaining the FY2002 funding increases (\$1,515,000 for CSREES and \$400,000 for ARS) to support IR-4 programs. The CSREES funding increase of \$1,400,000 (after overhead removed) is targeted as follows: operational expenses of \$600,000 (7.1% increase over previous \$8,400,000 base or 1.4% increase/year since last increase in 1997), FQPA residue program of \$450,000 (approximately 20 projects with 100 trials); major analytical equipment upgrade of \$250,000 (purchase of LC/MS/MS for Southern Regional Lab) and Ornamental Program of \$100,000 (\$25,000 per region). The ARS increase of \$360,000 (after overhead) is being targeted for dislodgeable residue projects (mainly for ornamentals) to provide accurate data for FQPA aggregate risk assessments. The CLC sponsored a Congressional Staff Luncheon on February 25th which was well attended. It was a great opportunity for CLC members (Rich Bonanno, Ann George, Rocky Lundy, Matt Pitts and Ray Ratto) to talk about the importance of IR-4 to their commodities and thank the staffers for supporting the FY2002 increase. It may not be possible for the CLC to convince Congress to attempt another increase for CSREES in a tight budget year since it is not in the Presidents FY2003 budget. However, the CLC is lending its support to keep the \$400,000 ARS increase as a permanent funding item since it was included as a Congressional add-on in the FY2002 budget and as such was not included in the Presidents FY2003 budget proposal.

Finally, I have had some great opportunities to represent the IR-4 Program with our crop protection industry partners (AgraQuest, Biopesticide Industry Alliance, Dow AgroSciences, Seminis Vegetable Seeds and Valent U.S.A,

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Corporation), land grant universities (Cornell University/Geneva, Purdue University, University of California/Davis, and Northcentral and Western Region Agricultural Experiment Station Director Meetings) and regulatory partners (EPA, BPPD and California DPR). I also had the privilege of being invited by Jean-Marie Peltier, Special Assistant to EPA Administrator, to participate in a FQPA panel discussion as part of the Committee to Advise on Reassessment and Transition (or CARAT) Meeting held on February 27th and 28th. CARAT and its predecessor Tolerance Reassessment Advisory Committee (or TRAC) have focused mainly on science policies like aggregate and cumulative risk and not a great deal on the transition process to new pest control approaches as part of the FQPA. It was encouraging to hear from CARAT members (include current CLC members Steve Balling and Wally Ewart, former CLC member Dan Botts and

former Administrator Adviser Eldon Ortman) about their interest in FQPA transition and a great opportunity for me to explain IR-4's role in bringing new Reduced Risk chemistries and biopesticides to the EPA and CDPR for approval and tolerances on minor crops. I am also a member of the EPA's Pesticide Program Dialog Committee or PPDC. It is encouraging that the EPA and USDA spend a great deal of time listening to and soliciting stakeholder input for important regulatory policy decisions. Note that CARAT is co-chaired by Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Jim Moseley and Assistant EPA Administrator Linda Fisher. Both Jim and Linda are to be commended for their patience and listening skills.

We are off to another running start in 2002. Hold your hats and work with us to make this another productive year!

Article by Bob Holm

IR-4's Data Contribution to Section 18's Avoids \$1.2 Billion in Estimated Potential Agricultural Losses for 2001

Section 18 of FIFRA authorizes EPA to allow states the use of a pesticide for an unregistered use for a limited time if EPA determines that emergency conditions exist. The Food Quality Protection Act of 1996 additionally requires EPA to establish time-limited tolerances (TLTs) for Section 18 approvals. Time-limited tolerances require residue data. IR-4 provides the data for many crop/chemical combinations that are submitted as Section 18 requests - as many as 30% of all the Section 18s approved by EPA in a year. Each Section 18 application contains data on the estimated potential dollars lost without the use of the pest control product. In an effort to assign a value to IR-4's contribution to the Section 18 process, IR-4 has collected as much of the economic data as possible. The economic data cannot be determined or verified for the entire 30%; therefore the values used by IR-4 are conservative. In 2001 IR-4's data contribution to residue tolerances for Section 18s saved American agriculture from an estimated \$1.2 billion in crop losses. Similar figures have been collected for 2000 (\$1.2 billion) and 1999 (\$1.1 billion).

The economic data collection project began two years ago. It involves a painstaking sifting of resources to find, verify and quantify the data for as many states as possible. Input from university researchers, commodity groups, state and federal regulators and others has made the effort possible. Some of the most useful resources have been the IR-4 Bilog, the Federal Register, the EPA Section 18 database (<http://www.epa.gov/opprd001/section18/>), and other web sites such as the Washington State Pesticide Notification Network (<http://picol.cahe.wsu.edu/>). The EPA Registration Division's Hoyt Jamerson and the Section 18 staff deserve high praise for the fast, efficient and detailed manner in which they make decisions, process and log the Section 18 applications. The FIFRA Section 18 process is one of the most responsive and important programs for American agriculture. For more information contact Sandy Perry (perrys@msue.msu.edu).

Article by Sandy Perry