

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

I am writing this partnership article just after the completion of our Food Use Workshop while the highlights are still fresh in my mind. Compared to the 2001 Workshop which started on that tragic September 11th date, the 2002 Workshop was a pleasure and a tremendously successful event with a record 200 plus attendees. The participants represented all of our stakeholders including university researchers and extension agents, USDA researchers, commodity groups, individual growers, EPA representatives, crop protection industry (chemical and biological), regulatory, product development and marketing experts, and our Canadian friends (PMRA, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Canadian Horticultural Council). The Weed Science Society Herbicides for Minor Crops Committee held a pre-meeting before the Workshop to discuss the challenges of finding selective herbicides for specialty crops, especially vegetables.

Each Workshop session (a day each for Weed Science, Entomology and Plant Pathology) was well attended and started off with a welcome from Dr. Neal Thompson, Chair of the IR-4 Administrative Advisers, and myself as well as the organization instructions from Dr. Jerry Baron, Associate Director, who served as the meeting organizer. Drs. Fred Salzman/Weed Science, Keith Dorschner/Entomology and Dave Thompson/Plant Pathology did excellent jobs in chairing their respective sessions and steering the discussion groups through several hundred projects each day to arrive at the assigned number of 'A' priorities. Each session started with short updates from representatives of the crop protection industry providing information on their new products, especially the status of company priority minor crop registrations and opportunities for minor crops supported by them for IR-4 potential. The open discussions and information exchanges during the prioritization led to the selection of the most important pest control needs for IR-4 to address in 2003. It certainly demonstrates the democratic process works well and validates the partnership approach for IR-4 with strong stakeholder input. As of now, IR-4 will be addressing the pest control needs for radish, leaf lettuce, peas, peppers, tomato, cantaloupe, blueberry, strawberry, asparagus, snap bean, artichoke, mint, hops, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, carrot, parsley, mustard greens, succulent bean, basil, safflower, ginseng, dry bean, Belgium endive, sweet potato, peach, plum, caneberries, cranberry, and several crops represented by the tree nut and tropical fruit crop groups. The number of individual crops will be greatly expanded beyond the representative crops listed here due to the crop-grouping concept pioneered by IR-4. The final prioritization and work assignments were made at the National Research Planning Meeting (NRPM) held at IR-4 Headquarters on October 29th and 30th. Beside the Head-

quarters staff, attendees at the NRPM included the Regional Field Coordinators who made the residue trial assignments at the Field Research Centers, the Regional Laboratory Coordinators who decided for which projects they will conduct the analyses, the ARS staff who took on both field and laboratory assignments, and some of the Regional Directors. In addition, Dr. Neal Thompson the Chair of our Administrative Advisers Committee supports the entire process representing the entire land grant university system.

This year's NRPM had an expanded presence from our Canadian partners who have been represented at our meetings since 1996 and have conducted over 90 field residue trials during that period as part of workshare on our prioritized projects of interest to Canadian minor crop growers. In addition to representatives from Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) and the Canadian Horticultural Council who have attended previous NRPM's, we had strong representation from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada as the result of the significant funding initiative by the Canadian government to support expanded minor crop clearances of safer chemistries for pest control needs. Many of those needs overlap with U.S. priorities and, when they do, the Canadians will join in workshare of field trials which allows both countries' resources to be stretched further. Every GLP field trial conducted in Canada as part of the NAFTA residue zone initiative means one less trial we have to conduct in the U.S. for that project, allowing IR-4 to stretch its program resources further to additional projects. Our Canadian partners are setting up 6 Field Research Centers and 3 Residue Laboratories to conduct additional trials. Also, some of the funding will go to hiring additional PMRA staff to review minor crop petitions and to set up a Minor Use Center to administer the entire program. We wish our Canadian friends success which will strongly benefit minor crop growers on both sides of the border.

Our regulatory partnerships continue not only with Canada's PMRA, which completed its first joint workshare IR-4 petition with the EPA on fenhexamid/bushberries this year, but also the EPA and California's Department of Pesticide Regulation (CDPR). We have successfully completed our fourth year of the EPA/IR-4 partnership through the Technical Working Group (TWG) which met for the fourth time this year and sixteenth time since our partnership began. We continue to work closely with our EPA partners to explore innovative ways to improve the registration of minor crop pest control tools. Special thanks to Hoyt Jamerson, EPA Minor Use Officer, who attended our Food Use Workshop and serves as our principal EPA contact on minor crop regulatory issues. Hoyt and Dr. Dan Kunkel, IR-4 Registration Manager, have been working in close cooperation since early this year to finalize the Agency's 2003 Workplan which includes for the third year in a row 50% of the petitions from IR-4. We greatly appreciate this level of support and confidence from the Agency! Another vote of thanks go to our CDPR partners who have committed for the third year in a row to review 30 IR-4 petitions in a EPA workshare program. This unique state/federal government partnership avoids duplicate reviews with the EPA accepting CDPR's science

Continued on Page 3

IR-4 Highlights

Continued from Page 2

reviews of IR-4's petitions. The 30 petitions amount to approximately 10% of the EPA's annual Workplan and 20% of IR-4's petitions and is a major factor in IR-4 reaching the 50% level on the Agency's Workplan the last three years. The remarkable feat for this program in 2003 is that CDPR will continue at previous years' petition levels in spite of severe budget restrictions in the state of California. Thanks again for the support from our CDPR partners.

Another partner that needs to be recognized is the crop protection industry-both chemical and biological. Over 25% of our recent Food Use Workshop attendees were from this group who gave new product updates and gave guidance on where their products might fit in minor crop pest control situations. Many companies have volunteered matching support for approved projects including analysis of samples in their laboratories. This is another way in which IR-4 is able to extend our resources to conduct additional projects. Headquarters staff (usually Dan Kunkel, Jerry Baron, and our Senior Coordinators-Keith Dorschner/Entomology, Fred Salzman/Weed Science and Dave Thompson/Plant Pathology) have visited most of our key crop protection industry partners this year to reinforce senior management support for IR-4 and to conduct thorough technical reviews of ongoing projects. We also encourage our partners to make available their newest chemistries for minor crop uses and ask them to work with us to develop minor crop strategies for maximum regulatory impact. I am pleased to report that we have received excellent cooperation and support. We also thank those companies who have visited IR-4 Headquarters for our partnership meetings so that the discussions can be extended to our entire Coordinator staff.

No discussion of our partners would be complete without a strong vote of appreciation to the IR-4 Commodity Liaison Committee (CLC) which was well represented at our recent Food Use Workshop by Mike Aerts/Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association, Jan Sharp/California Strawberry Commission, Ray Ratto/Ratto Brothers, Dave Trinka/MBG Marketing, Matt Pitts/Cranberry Institute, and Brian Flood/Del Monte. Their presence was invaluable in helping us set priorities for the growers and minor crops that they represent for 2003 projects. The CLC under the leadership of Chair Rocky Lundy/Mint Industry Research Council played a major role in supporting the \$2 million increase granted by Congress in FY2002 to CSREES and ARS which has helped us expand our programs as well as purchase needed laboratory analytical instrumentation and research farm equipment. The President's FY2003 budget did not include any increases for IR-4. However, thanks to efforts by our CLC, the House Appropriation Committee put in \$715,000 in additional

funding for FY2003. We certainly hope that the increase will be supported on the Senate side. Thanks again CLC for your efforts on our behalf!

I would like to end my column with a unique learning experience for IR-4 Headquarters staff that resulted from one of our partnerships. Tom Holt and Marty Mascianica from BASF visited Headquarters a few years ago to propose a unique partnership opportunity with their new fungicides (BAS 500F, 510F and 516F). After that meeting which was held in my office, Tom saw a copy of Steven Covey's "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" on my bookshelf and volunteered to teach a "Habits" course to Headquarters staff since he was a certified trainer. I quickly accepted and readily admitted that I had read the book when it came out in the late 1980's and had forgotten most of its contents. The BASF merger with American Cyanamid postponed the course but Tom hung in and we finally scheduled a one-day training session in September. Tom is an excellent teacher and did a fine job of condensing three days of information into a concise day of learning. Covey's "Habits" still ring true for today's personal and business environment. After this refreshing course on the Seven Habits and reflecting on how they are currently being applied at IR-4, I thought you would be interested in my analogies with the IR-4 Program as follows:

- Habit 1/BE PROACTIVE (partnership initiatives)
- Habit 2/BEGIN WITH THE END IN MIND (goal of more minor crop clearances)
- Habit 3/PRIORITIZE (Food Use Workshop and NRPM)
- Habit 4/WIN-WIN SITUATIONS (partnerships developed)
- Habit 5/SEEK FIRST TO UNDERSTAND, THEN TO BE UNDERSTOOD (partnership meetings)
- Habit 6/SYNERGIZE (all partnerships working together)
- Habit 7/CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT (our current challenge)

We must be practicing some if not most of this process in order to have gone from 100 clearances/year pre-FQPA to an average of 500 clearances/year recently. Thanks to all of our partners who can take credit and share in this wonderful success story!

Article by Bob Holm