
Northeastern Pest Management Center Helps Identify Research Priorities

The Northeastern Pest Management Center (NE PMC) develops and maintains a pest management information network that contributes to environmentally, economically, and socially sound pest management decisions. The USDA-funded organization was established in 2000 as one of four regional centers nationwide authorized by Section 406 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998. NE PMC serves two major purposes: promoting communication among key groups of people who have an interest in pest management policy and implementation, and providing broad access to high-quality pest management information. The Center's web site, nepmc.org, presents a comprehensive database of reliable, research-based information, with links to vast resources that support sound pest management decisions.

NE PMC's communication network connects diverse groups who haven't always interacted in the past, including pest management users (e.g., growers, nursery owners, park managers, and homeowners), consumer and environmental groups, government regulatory agencies, researchers, and educators. The organization's broad-based regional participatory leadership is designed to gather input from these stakeholders and harness their expertise for the purpose of establishing research, education, and regulatory priorities in the region. The Northeast Region of IR-4 (NER) is contributing to the NE PMC network as well as tapping its resources, as Edith Lurvey, NER field coordinator, serves on the Advisory Council.

In support of its regional priority-setting goals, one of the Center's important tasks is facilitating the development of crop profiles and pest management strategic plans for agri-

cultural commodities in the Northeast. Crop profiles provide descriptions of current crop production and pest management practices, including actual pesticide use and usage information. Pest management strategic plans (PMSPs) build on crop profiles by assessing current practices and setting research, extension, and regulatory priorities for the future. NE PMC creates a forum where growers, scientists, consumer groups, extension specialists, and other stakeholders can work together to identify the most serious pest management challenges for specific crops. The Center helps the groups articulate these challenges in a PMSP. NER IR-4 then uses the resulting information to determine high priorities for projects and funding decisions.

NE PMC has created two major substructures that contribute to the creation of crop profiles and PMSPs, in addition to expanding the communication and information networks in other important ways. The first substructure is a set of seven state-based information networks involving all twelve states in the region. NE PMC has sponsored these networks through a competitive grants program. The second substructure is a set of working groups organized around six pest management areas: fruit; vegetables; greenhouse and ornamentals; field, forage, and livestock; community IPM; and public health IPM. Completed crop profiles and PMSPs for northeastern commodities are listed on the NE PMC web site, and many more are currently being developed.

NE PMC is administered jointly by The Pennsylvania State University and Cornell University. Dr John Ayers of Penn State is the director, Cornell's Jim VanKirk is the coordinator, and Dr. Michael Hoffmann of Cornell is the other principal investigator on the project.

Article by Liz Myers in cooperation
with Edith Lurvey

Fungicide News

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David Thompson organized the *Phytophthora capsici* discussion session at the Cucurbitaceae Conference in Naples, FL on December 8, 2002. The topic of the discussion was "*Phytophthora capsici*, Where are we? Research Results and Discussion."

Researchers from the state universities of NJ, NY, MI, AZ, NC and IL presented papers including "Managing *Phytophthora capsici* in Michigan - Challenges and Progress," "Managing *Phytophthora* Blight in Peppers Using Cultural Practices With Implications for Cucurbits," "Comparative

Impact of Five Different Fungicides on Growth and Sporulation of *Phytophthora capsici*," "Relative Susceptibility of Cucurbit and Solanaceous Crops to *Phytophthora* Blight Under Field Conditions in NC," and "New Approaches to Manage *Phytophthora* Blight of Cucurbit Crops."

Presentations and papers are available upon request. Please contact Dr. Thompson at 732-932-9575 ext 613 or dthompson@aesop.rutgers.edu if you would like to discuss further or receive a copy of the presentations.

Article by Hong Chen