

**Integrated Crop Management Working Group Meeting
Maricopa Agricultural Center
Thursday, August 19, 2010**

Meeting Notes

Attending: Trent Teegerstrom, Erin Taylor, Peter Ellsworth, Mike Matheron, Bill McCloskey, Pedro Andrade, Paul Brown, Al Fournier, Russ Tronstad, Linda Masters, Rick Gibson, Rob Call, Randy Norton, Sam Wang, Kurt Nolte, Rob Grumbles.

I. Administrative Update

Ed Martin was not available for a meeting on this date. No administrative update.

II. Extension Update

a. New Agent: Central AZ (Rick Gibson)

Thanks to Erin Taylor for her service to CE. Erin will be leaving Cooperative Extension for a job in industry in about two weeks. We have approval to hire a new agent for Pinal county, and will also replace Erin's position in Maricopa County. A committee is already formed (Rick G, Randy N, Monica P, Kai U, Peter E & Marvin Wuertz). We are hoping for a good pool of candidates, and to have both positions filled by the first of the year. The model for the positions will be for the 2 agents to work together to cover Pinal, Pima and Maricopa counties. There is not a committee consensus on whether the job description will be the same for both positions. Rick is waiting for permission from the dean to advertise.

b. Crop Budgets: An Update (Trent Teegerstrom)

"A long time ago, we used to do crop budgets." Trent is now using a different program and will start generating crop budgets again. The format and level of detail is different from the old program, but it has some advantages. All the budgets have been redone in draft form. Trent asked the group to review the numbers, much of which were compiled from survey data. He plans to go around and visit with agents, specialists and growers to verify and correct the details before finalizing the new budgets.

c. IPM Program: New Assistants in Extension (Peter Ellsworth)

We now compete nationally for Extension IPM funding. This year's EIPM grant, put together by the IPM Coordinating Committee for 3 years of IPM funding, was not fully funded. The committee put together a 3-year budget including EIPM monies and funds from other sources, including grants and some additional funding from CALS, approved by the Executive Council. We have budgeted for 3 assistants in extension (AiE) to support IPM extension statewide. One is Marco Pena, already employed in Yuma and working with the Vegetable IPM Team. Two have yet to be hired. This includes an Urban IPM AiE to be based at the Maricopa County office. This person will focus on school, turf and ornamental IPM. (Committee is Ursula S, Dawn G, Kai U, Paul Baker, Al F and Peter E). Second is an agronomic crops IPM AiE to be stationed at MAC. The committee is not yet formed, but Peter will chair, with the goal of hiring someone in the fall. All AiEs are available for

statewide IPM programming. These positions should help get IPM Extension work done: plan meetings, send advisories and updates, put out demos, help with publications, and should help support new and other agents in their IPM-related activities. Marco has done a great job in Yuma coordinating with John P, Barry T, Mike Matheron and Kurt N. [Kurt: please add all county agents to the Vegetable IPM Update mailing list.] Through EIPM, we will also fund 2 quarter-time grad student assistantships to support diagnostics, for Entomology and Plant Sciences.

d. Tools for Web use monitoring (Paul Brown)

Monitoring Web use: Google Analytics has replaced Urchin as the tool supported by CALS. The problem with Google Analytics is that a certain code needs to be imbedded in each file, which poses a challenge for large existing websites (e.g., AZmet & ACIS). Based on group discussion, it was suggested that we urge Extension to reinstate and support Urchin.

III. Current and Near Term Problems/Issues Related Crop Production

Paul: What are the Issues that we need to address through Extension programs?
[Identified potential topics are underlined below.]

Erin, Central AZ: Growers want information on insect scouting in cotton. No major problems in cotton production right now. Growers appreciated a series of summer workshop that Erin put together that included a field component. She did one with Sam on wheat fertilization in Marana. She is trying to improve communications and mailing lists. She is working on a silage study with Sam. Had a lot of phone calls about weeds in alfalfa this spring. This is an important topic. Bill says it was because many growers did not do fall herbicide application. She has had questions about irrigation in cotton, alfalfa, and other crops as well, especially flood irrigation. Problem with rust in bermudagrass pastures. No wheat concerns. She has talked with Pedro about doing training in Spanish for tractor operators using GPS based guidance systems. It is of interest to growers, Randy agrees. One problem is that the monitor equipment readouts are in English. Would have to be a hands-on, in the field training. Erin has set up an Ag Team listserv.

Rob Call, SE AZ:

Grain irrigation and soil fumigation. They want to get ADA out to provide testing and certification.

(Paul suggested a separate meeting to support Extension planning for tree crops and grapes.)

Linda Masters, LaPaz:

She created a user-group on her phone and texted everyone the day before last week's meeting, and had great attendance. Had a cool spring with no rain. CRIT had cotton planted early. There's a new CRIT farm manager, who is putting in test plots for veggies and is open to suggestions. FFA field is available to set up some kind of Extension trials. Doing cotton variety trials with Rudy. Several people are interested in participating on trials. She is finding what looks like root rot in late-planted cotton. We do not have good data on how to handle problems in late-planted cotton following wheat. She is doing a needs assessment survey on their entire county extension program. There is interest in micro and drip irrigation. Tough to sell it on the reservation.

Kurt Nolte, Yuma

Cotton is being picked starting this week. Had hot weather in June, but so far yields look good. Need: during cool, wet springs, following lettuce, we are seeing problems with seed corn maggot in cotton. It was bad this year. Some growers had to replant. It is also a problem in melons following lettuce. Need good Extension info on control options for seed corn maggot. It is probably a soil management issue. Between John and Peter, they could provide some management information. Had 2,500 fewer acres of wheat this year. Some producers stayed fallow through the summer. Bagrada bug is an issue in cotton and in vegetables following cotton. We need information to cotton growers on how to manage it, to reduce problems in vegetable crops that follow (source reduction). John is researching bagrada bug in cotton. Fertility management issues in wheat (grown in flat fields). They see a problem with lodging. Don't see this problem when they grow on beds. Alfalfa looked good in the spring, production is down in summer. In fresh produce, they are concerned about food safety. They theorize that wet spring drove native animals out of Gila River valley and so more were in the field.

Randy Norton, SE AZ.

Cotton looks good. Had problems with certain seed varieties, but it is looking better now. Now that we have lost Bollgard, growers are wondering what varieties they should replace it with. We need to continue variety trials. PRGs are an important issue for growers. Some are looking at doing variable rate applications of PGRs. Corn rootworm trials Randy runs every year. There are some good new products. New seed treatments as well. Growers are interested. They have seen verticillium wilt on cotton. Drip irrigation is a big topic: many growers are installing systems.

Rob Grumbles, Mohave.

Cotton looks good. 30% replant in the spring. They deal with both heat and frost in the spring. Will be harvesting in 2-3 weeks. Alfalfa weed problems are due to negligence. A lot of fields had weeds early. Still a lot of weeds now. The Fort Mohave tribe has a feedlot program on the CA side of the border. Growing some sudangrass, but no wheat. Communications are now by email. He has about 5 growers on both sides of the border.

Specialist identified topics / issues for upcoming meetings:

- Bagrada bug meeting in Yuma with input from John and Peter
- Regulatory issues that growers need to hear about: (1) change in requirements for fumigant use; meetings in Jan or Feb to address this, which Randy is coordinating. (2) endosulfan phase out. (3) aldicarb (Temic) is being phased out as well.
- Bill is looking for roundup-resistant palmeramernanth. Please alert him if you suspect resistance. What can growers do to prevent resistance from developing? Bill always covers this in his presentations. Should we bring the question to grower organizations? Bill will talk to Rick Lavis, AZ CGA; meet with the board.
- Russ: crop insurance is changing. There is an opportunity to tell growers about.

Lunch on site -- Lunch presentation: Lygus Computer Game for Growers (Peter Ellsworth) Peter demonstrated a Lygus game that is being developed as part of the RAMP project. We hope to pilot this game in a few locations toward the end of the year.

IV. Fall/Winter Programs To Address Current/Near Term Issues

Jeff Silvertooth is hearing from growers that indicate Extension efforts need to be more focused, more effective and more aggressive programming. The Dean is concerned about “the future of Extension.” The sense of things is that we are under scrutiny and clientele are looking for more programming and more effective, quality programming. We need to maintain and expand programming in some areas where we have been negligent. If we are short on resources, we need to better focus our efforts. Our infrastructure and communication with growers has deteriorated. There is a need to restructure how we do what we do. The question we face today: *what can we do in the short term to demonstrate that we are relevant?*

Paul suggests seasonal meetings that address multiple crops (fewer crop-specific meetings). We have to integrate the major crops into our meetings. We need to improve the quality of what we deliver and we have to improve meeting attendance. Based on surveys, growers want easier to understand, to-the-point, applied information. Today, we need to plan Extension programming through the winter.

a. Program Content & Meeting Dates (tentative)

- Monica Pastor, Steve Husman and Rick G are anxious to hold a meeting before the end of the year. Mid January may be good timing. 3 separate meetings would be ideal.
- **Linda Masters / LaPaz:** wants a mid-september meeting that will cover defoliation. And / or Dec 1, 2, 3 or 13, 14 for a meeting that will cover irrigation, among other topics. Will include IPM topics and request CEUs. Next would be an early Feb early season meeting. She will send a Doodle out to help pin down the dates.
- **MAC Field Day.** Last year, a Sept field day at MAC was well attended and appreciated by clientele. Mike Ottmann, Peter and others are interested in doing it again this year. Timing for Peter’s field presentations would be around 3rd or 4th week in Sept. Randy has some plots he could show. Avoid Sept 30 because Deltapine field day is that day.
- **Randy Norton / SE AZ:** Randy has Oct 1 and Sept 9 meetings planned already. Early season meeting first or second week in Feb.
- **Rob Call / SE AZ:** SE AZ Ag Day: Feb 2
- **Kurt Nolte / Yuma:** Kurt suggests a mid-Nov meeting that covers bagrada bug and lygus. Kurt is concerned that Barry T may not be willing to cover weed management in alfalfa, but he will ask him. Field day planned in Yuma in Dec. Yuco Gin meeting will occur, usually around Dec 1 (they cover variety selections). Peter suggests we get one or two extension people on that meeting, or to meet in conjunction with that group. SW Ag Summit will be March 9-10, 2011.
- Cotton Losses meetings. Peter is thinking of doing individual luncheon meetings with PCAs at restaurants this year rather than traditional dedicated Extension meetings.

Note: Most Meeting Dates were not finalized!

Follow-up and Action Items

- Al will finalized draft notes and circulate to attendees for review.
- Peter and Al will develop and circulate a list of topics, i.e., who can address what for Extension trainings, and begin circulating it to the group (possibly via Google Docs).
- Peter and Al will set up a Google calendar for the Ag Team to facilitate planning, so we are all aware of each other's meetings. We should include non-Extension meetings that we are aware of.
- Linda will send out a Doodle to finalize meeting dates for LaPaz.
- Bill will contact Rick Lavis, AZ CGA, and make arrangements to meet with the board to discuss weed resistance issues.
- Kurt: please add all county agents to the Vegetable IPM Update mailing list.

Next Meeting Date

- Meeting date not identified; Paul / Al will send a Doodle.
- Paul Brown will stay on as chair for the next cycle.
- An Agent Co-chair was not identified.