

Cotton ICM/IPM Meeting
Maricopa Ag Center
September 15, 2008

10:00 am

Sam Wang - Meeting Chair

Bill McCloskey, Al Fournier, Russ Tronstad, Randy Norton, Bob Roth, Peter Ellsworth, Erin Taylor, Pedro Andrade, Richard Farmer, Kurt Nolte, Jay Subramani

Introductions

10:10 meeting called to order and introductions around the table.

Al introduced the newly-hired Database Specialist, Richard Farmer, who will be working on the 1080 database.

Discussion on personal changes and challenges

The working group had a discussion about how ag specialists and agents will deal with the reduction in Extension personnel, following the departure of Pinal County Ag Agent Kevin Rice, and in the near future, Eric Norton (La Paz County). Currently, Erin Taylor is struggling to cover all agricultural needs for 3 counties (Pinal, Maricopa and N. Pima). Recently, Kelly Young's position has been changed to full time to help provide some support. But this is only a stop-gap solution. When Eric Norton departs (no later than June, 2009), we will down to one half-time agent in La Paz, Linda Masters, an area that still has large agricultural production (about 85,000 acres in Parker Valley). Linda Masters (La Paz) and Rob Grumbles (Mohave) may be called upon to help with some extension load, and should be involved in future discussions. Clearly, these personnel changes leave us with some serious gaps in Cooperative Extension that will greatly challenge our ability to respond to the needs of agricultural clientele in the affected areas. Furthermore, this is a continuation in a gradual decline in extension agents serving agriculture statewide, a decline that also impacts the productivity of our specialists.

How does the Agricultural and Natural Resources component of Cooperative Extension intend to address these gaps, particularly following the departure of Eric Norton? The working group had a discussion about these needs and decided to develop a proposal to Cooperative Extension administration (Ed Martin) that will propose, at a minimum that we refill both Eric and Kevin's positions. **Action:** Al, Peter, Kurt and Erin will draft a letter to be sent to Linda Masters, Rob Grumbles, Rick Gibson and the rest of the cotton IPM / ICM working group for review before submission to Ed Martin.

Ag and natural resources strategic planning meeting

The meeting will be held on Dec 10-12th at biosphere. Everybody should be there to let our voice heard.

1080 database update

Al introduced Richard Farmer, who is working on the database. Richard is working for Al on a full time temporary basis. (Currently, we have over 1.5 years worth of funding but will continue to seek grants to extend this.) Richard brings expertise in computer programming and database development to this project, for which we are forming an advisory committee. Bill, Russ and Randy expressed an interest in participating on the advisory board. Al will check with George Frisvold, who may also be interested.

Presentation on yield monitoring and multispectral canopy measurement on cotton. Pedro Andrade presented some of his latest research to the group. Questions and discussion followed.

Cotton report and extension article reviewing process

The number of articles for the Cotton Report that Russ has received is only 3 so far. Combining cotton reports and other crop reports (forage and grain, vegetable) was discussed as a way to cope with the situation.

The working group also discussed changing the peer-review process for extension articles. Currently, someone submitting an article fills out a form and submits it to Ed Martin who forwards it on to the appropriate department head, who identifies reviewers for the article. The problem is, sometimes this is a very slow process. It was proposed that the current chair of the Cotton Team may help to improve this process by serving in a role of brokering reviews for cotton-related extension publications. This would basically replace the department head role, but we would keep department heads informed and copied on all submissions. We also discussed the potential use of online peer review tools that would help facilitate the review process. **Action:** It was decided that Peter will pursue the peer review question with Ed and that Russ will approach the editors of the other crop reports (vegetables, forage and grains, tree crops and turn & landscape) and Robert Casler regarding the possibility of combining some or all of these publications.

Crop Pest Losses

Al mentioned the need to plan the next round of cotton pest losses meetings and hopefully to expand the survey to included weeds, to which Bill agreed. Potential meeting dates were discussed, including the weeks of Dec 1 or Dec 15 for Yuma and central AZ. We discussed the alfalfa pest losses survey, which had a poor response rate. Al is hesitant to continue with this survey unless we can work to generate some real interest among clientele. **Action:** Al will forward most recent melon and cotton surveys to Bill, who will work on drafting some survey items for weeds. Al will coordinate with specialists and agents to gather PCA input and finalize meeting dates.

Agent/Specialist update and extension workshop planning

- Randy: Oct 14th, cotton field day at Safford Ag Center
- Randy: The week of Feb 9th, cotton preseason meeting at Safford Ag Center

- Erin: Sometime in Oct, Forage meeting with Mike Ottman
- Erin: Jan 27th, Cotton preseason meeting at MAC [Erin is currently trying to reschedule this date! New proposed date the week of Feb 2.]
- Erin: Feb 25th, Cotton preseason meeting at Marana
- Kurt: March 11-12th, Ag Expo at Yuma
- Pedro: 2nd week of Jan. Pedro's workshop on tree crops

Leadership:

Bill McCloseky is specialist chair for the working group (Thanks Bill).

Randy Norton is the agent chair for the working group (Thanks Randy).

Next meeting will be on March 20th at 10am at MAC.