

Cotton IPM/ICM Team Meeting
USDA Arid Lands Agricultural Research Center, Maricopa
September 18 2006

In attendance: Pat Clay, Russ Tronstad, Ed Martin, Peter Ellsworth, Al Fournier, Kurt Nolte, Maria Sims, Steve Naranjo, Jonathan Dinsmore, Jay Subramani, Tom Henneberry, James Hagler, Jackie Blackmer, Paul Brown, Trent Teegerstrom, Randy Norton

Roles of Cotton Team members

Can we be better? The Cotton Team has been around for a while. The Team was developed at request of clients to better connect UA personnel to address cotton issues in the state.

Why are we not doing as well as we have in the past? We have two fewer agents. Recent meetings have been fewer and have been poorly attended. Not all cotton advisories are being updated. Paul Brown asked for input on AZ Met advisories and got only a couple of comments. Paul's feeling is that if he's not getting feedback on his advisories, he will discontinue investing time in it. Attendance at cotton team planning meetings isn't what it once was. We used to get county directors to these meetings. There's been a decrease in "cotton enthusiasm" around the state, among clientele, perhaps among CALS administration. Is there a lack of clientele interest? Fewer, bigger farmers. Is our message no longer valuable? Perhaps agents need to play a role in soliciting input from growers. The more basic question: Do we want to develop coordinated cotton programming in the state?

Sometimes it takes a push from clientele to guide us in coordinating an effort. A proactive approach. Ed gave the example of NRCD working with Paul and Ed through Rob Call in Cochise County.

The group reviewed a draft list of responsibilities for various team members.

Agent's responsibilities

- Developing meeting content. Ed hasn't presented at a cotton meeting in 5 years, but welcomes the opportunity to participate. No CEUs for what Ed and what Paul Brown covers. Other specialists (Dennehy, Olsen, and McCloskey) have communicated their interest in participating in county meetings. How can they best communicate with agents and vice versa?
- Need to improve communication from specialists to agents so they know what specialists have to offer. Maybe we need to circulate a written summary to agents. Possible circulate via email or post to a special area of ACIS. Al could coordinate this.
- Peter mentioned that was in Parker. Although the meeting seemed to work well, it was not very well attended.
- Please send info to Al for posting on ACIS and ACIS email updates.

Team responsibilities wrt cotton advisories

- “Localization” of county advisories is important. About 5 years ago, advisories began to be produced at the county level.
- Paul’s site links to local advisories, which haven’t been updated. In the future, Paul will offer an interactive online planning tool for producers. When this product is developed, perhaps the old advisories will go away—or perhaps agents will maintain. It’s a lot of time and labor to update these things regularly, costs salary dollars (get 7k/year from cotton growers, not enough). There will be changes in format, etc.
- How can we evaluate the impact of the advisories?
- Missed some stuff

Direct question: should we maintain our cotton programming effort?

- Yes. It’s important.
- We should get evaluative feedback from our clientele. Do they value our programs?

Specialist’s responsibilities

- Specialists need to improve communication to the agents on current projects and programs that might be included in county meetings
- Agents need to communicate more effectively with Specialists, letting them know what their clientele needs are.
- Again, perhaps better communication through AI and the ACIS site might help these efforts.

Cotton Insect Losses – shoot for second week in Dec.

Cotton Report: done. It would be good to have a look to see how much people are hitting on the Crop reports. Who will coordinate the cotton report next year? No volunteers! Need to be more stringent about the deadline. Should we consider publishing in tandem with the AZ Ag. Statistics report?

Other business

- Trent mentioned AG Lite risk management program.

Late season cotton meetings

- Randy is planning Cotton Field day on Oct 11 at Safford Ag Center
- Randy plans a winter meeting, probably early Feb.
- Pat is planning defoliation meeting—no date yet, but probably late Oct.
- Kurt has a desert vegetable meeting coming up on November 28 in Yuma.

Next meeting:

Kurt and Russ will co-chair

Tentative date is Monday, Jan 29

Notes taken by Al Fournier and Ed Martin