

**Roundtable Discussion:
Identification of Needs, Resources, and Partnerships Related to Pesticide
Applicator Training (PAT) and Education for Weed Management**

Francisco Grande Hotel, Casa Grande
November 2, 2006

Meeting Participants:

Leroy Brady, Arizona Dept. of Transportation
Gary Christian, Arizona Dept. of Agriculture
Pat Clay, University of Arizona, Maricopa County Extension
Peter Ellsworth, University of Arizona, Arizona Pest Management Center
Patti Fenner, Noxious Weed Program Manager, Tonto National Forest
April Fletcher, US FWS, Region 2
Al Fournier, University of Arizona, Arizona Pest Management Center (notes)
Michael Francis, Structural Pest Control Commission
Rob Grumbles, University of Arizona, Mohave County Extension
Leonard Lake, National Forest Service, Southwest Region
David Madison, Quarantine/Nursery Program Manager, Arizona Dept. of Agriculture
Bill McCloskey, Plant Sciences Department, University of Arizona
Greg Miller, Nichino America / AZ Crop Protection Association
Laura P. Moser, Coconino National Forest, USDA, Forest Service
Jeffrey Myers, Arizona Dept. of Agriculture, PSD Noxious Weeds
Ed Northam, University of Arizona, Maricopa County Extension
Jack Peterson, Arizona Dept. of Agriculture
Jeff Schalaus, University of Arizona, Yavapai County Extension
Kai Umeda, University of Arizona, Maricopa County Extension
L.D. Walker, Arizona Bureau of Land Management

Purpose

Al Fournier of the UA Arizona Pest Management Center (APMC), in a discussion with a few faculty members in August, was asked to organize this meeting to discuss the current status, needs and resources related to Pesticide Applicator Training (PAT) in Arizona. The goals of this meeting are to document stakeholder needs in this area, to identify current available resources to address these needs, and to facilitate a discussion on how these needs might be better addressed.

Agenda

- The Arizona Pest Management Center (and how it relates to this issue)
- Background Information
- General Discussion
 - Identification of Needs
 - Available Resources
 - Ideas for Addressing Needs
- Action Items

Meeting Summary / Action Items

For the reader's convenience, a meeting summary and action items are presented here. More detailed points from the discussion are included below for those who are interested.

Summary Points

1. **Reduce the need** for initial certification training by developing reciprocal licensing agreements with an MOU between ADA and other agencies. This may also reduce the need for CEUs, since some of these could be obtained through training provided by other agencies. It will be up to a high-level representative from each of those agencies to initiate a dialog with ADA.
2. **The new National Core exam** and training materials will reduce the need to “re-invent the wheel” in AZ. New category exams and training materials in Utah might be adopted / adapted to update materials for AZ.
3. We should try to **offer centralized trainings** and encourage people in remote areas to attend.
4. **Continuing education might continue to be done through CE** agents and other sources such as online CEUs. We should explore ways to provide resources to support county agent's PAT efforts (e.g., UA PAT funds?).

Action Items

- Establishing MOUs between ADA and other agencies. The current APHIS MOU can be used as a template. (Key contact from each agency bolded below.)
 - BLM point persons will be **LD Walker** and **Richard Lee** (BLM IPM Specialist, not present).
 - Forest Service point person is **Leonard Lake**.
 - **Steve Cassidy** (not present) is a NRCS point person.
 - BIA – **Nelson Roanhorse** (not present) is a contact for the Navajo; he may not be the right person for this particular issue, but could get us to the right person.
 - **April Fletcher** will serve as contact for Fish & Wildlife. They are developing an invasive species management training (including IPM) out of the National Conservation training center. She hopes this new training will meet the requirement for reciprocal certification.
 - **Park Service** has an IPM training as well: **Jerry McCray** is contact person.
- **Jack Peterson and Michael Francis** will work on putting together FAQs regarding ADA & SPCC regulatory question for posting on the web. We could link to these from our various websites.
- **Patti Fenner** suggests that next year's SWVMA meeting might include updates on the work of various people involved in this discussion.
- **Jack** will share the new national training manual with this group. **The manual is available online:** <http://www2.nasda.org/NR/exeres/E7D03323-984C-4971-95B8-9DEA471D1B89.htm>
- **Al Fournier** will prepare the meeting notes and send them out to this group for review, before they are shared with a broader audience. He will also establish an email list for continuing communication on PAT issues and activities. The list will include everyone here plus others who did not attend.

Discussion Details

The Arizona Pest Management Center – Al Fournier

- The APMC was created as a way to strategically use UA's existing resources for IPM. The vision was to create a faculty position (mine) to provide leadership and organizational support for all IPM activities at UA. My activities relate to supporting other UA faculty and partner organizations to identify needs, identify and help secure resources to address those needs, and also developing resources to help measure the impact of our pest management programs.
- (Handout: APMC Organizational Chart.) All IPM programs at UA are now organized within the APMC. This umbrella organization is managed by the IPM Coordinating Committee, a steering committee made up of UA faculty and stakeholders from across the state with expertise in entomology, plant pathology and weed science. The committee is convened by Dr. Peter Ellsworth, who serves as Arizona's IPM Coordinator. Day to day management of the APMC is my responsibility, as the IPM Program Manager. I also serve in an advising role to the committee. The org chart shows how our pest management programs are organized within the APMC, but it is important to point out that we are few in number. While each "box" represents a few individuals responsible for a program area, many people cross over to occupy more than one box. Note that one of the program areas is the Pesticide Information and Training Office (PITO), which relates to today's discussion.
- There are more needs than there are resources and people to address them, so we need to prioritize. Identifying and documenting priorities is a major function of the APMC. Documented priorities can support competitive grant proposals, which increasingly require authors to cite documented stakeholder need.
- In my year-and-a-half at UA identifying pest management needs, the topic of PAT has come up in several conversations with faculty and stakeholders. Some people have suggested specific strategies for better addressing these needs while others have just commented that there is a need for more pesticide applicator training overall or in certain geographic or topical areas. I'm glad for this opportunity to bring together many of the major stakeholders for a discussion on this topic.
- Today my role is to facilitate this discussion and document the needs and ideas we discuss. If leadership and a will to accomplish specific tasks related to the needs we identify in this meeting emerges here today, I will be willing to work with that leader to help organize and facilitate whatever effort evolves from this discussion.

Background

- Today's meeting was an idea that emerged from a discussion between Jeff Schalau, Al Fournier, Rob Grumbles and Kai Umeda at a faculty conference this summer. Jeff Schalau became aware an APMC-funded project organized by Jeff Silvertooth and the Arizona Crop Protection Association (ACPA) to revise training manuals for pest control advisor (PCA) licensing in the agricultural sector. Jeff Schalau suggested the APMC might organize a meeting to discuss a parallel need to address training needs for pesticide applicators.

- Earlier today, as part of the Southwest Vegetation Management Association annual conference, Jack Peterson and Michael Francis presented some information and conducted a Q&A forum on the topic of PAT rules and regulations. As part of that discussion, it became very clear that some clientele in the state feel frustrated that their needs for initial PAT certification training are not being met. (Northern Arizona, in particular, feels underserved.) One other point that emerged from this forum was that ADA has a reciprocal agreement with USDA APHIS, in which applicators who get credentialed through a federal training program can obtain AZ licenses without additional training. Jack said that other federal agencies might seek to develop memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with ADA to accomplish the same thing. If the training their agents undergo are determined to be rigorous enough, it is possible that additional MOUs might be forged, but this would have to be initiated at a high level in each of the organizations, through dialog with ADA.

Identification of Needs / General Discussion

Reciprocal Agreements

- Concerns about PAT were apparent from this afternoon's discussion. With diminishing resources, how can we meet the continuing need? Jack was asked about establishing MOUs with federal agencies that would allow ADA to reciprocally accept federal credentials for ADA certification. He indicated this is a possibility; that each individual would have to reapply every year, but that those applicators could get CEUs from their own organizations. Non-BLM agencies that participate in the BLM training (e.g. FW, Forest Service) might also be covered. The BLM training course is recognized by EPA, and is quite rigorous. It was decided that affected agencies should work on establishing their own MOUs with ADA, which will reduce the need for AZ PAT training (but not eliminate it).
- SPCC also acknowledges it is a possibility to set up MOUs for reciprocal licensing similar to what ADA offers.

Status of the ADA Certification Exam / Regulatory Issues

- Jack mentioned that a new CORE exam is being developed at the national level and will be available soon to states that want to adopt it. With the new exam and other changes in the national certification program, the federal agencies will have to "re-up" or make certain their national certification plans on file with the EPA are current and reflect the real program.
- Jeff Schalaus expressed concerns that the ADA exams are out of date, including questions expressed in pounds of AI and other outdated information. A new CORE exam would address that problem, but what about the category exams?
- Regarding the exam, Jack indicated that there are "chain of custody" issues. If other people (e.g., UA County Agents) provide training and testing, ADA will have to "follow the exam" if it ever goes on the road. There may be a possibility for an MOU between ADA and UA Cooperative Extension to address this issue, making CE agents accountable for the exam.

- Question for Jack: Is there a possibility of developing a “Rangeland” category (or “invasive species” or “non-ag lands”)? Jack: It is possible. There are federal categories set up that Arizona uses. In many cases, we don’t have enough people in the categories that we have, so we would rather not be creating additional categories. However, we could potentially develop training materials that are range specific.

Financial Resources for PAT

- Historically, each state land grant college (including UA) gets funding from EPA for PAT. EPA planned to make these funds competitive next year, but now those plans are on hold. The PAT funds are supposed to go toward initial training. In AZ, these funds (currently 15k/year) go to Paul Baker’s Pesticide Information and Training Office (PITO). EPA requires recipients of funding to report back on their outcomes (how many people were trained, etc.)
- ADA gets 20k/year from EPA for certification and training. This funds part of a position at ADA.
- In ND, funds from penalties go into an education fund that can be used for PAT. Would something similar work in AZ?
- Suggestions for UA’s PAT funds: Could a portion of someone’s position be funded with PAT funds to cover these trainings? Could some funds be distributed to agents who are already providing training, to offset time, travel, etc?

Current Trainings and Resources / Needs

- Initial training in remote locations usually terminates in the exam. Jeff covers IPM and general topics, but doesn’t teach calibration or other “nitty gritty” topics. Jeff teaches the forestry (category?) exam using training materials from Utah. They have a training module available online at <http://ag.utah.gov/plantind/PestTraining/TrainingBegin.html>.
- Train-the-trainer workshops put on by ADA 4 times/year are another resource that federal agencies might take advantage of. Workshops are coming up Nov 15 (Spanish) and 16 (English) in Yuma.
- ADA requires a 30-person minimum attendance to organize special trainings at the request of agencies. This justifies the invested time, personnel and travel for ADA. One problem is that people expect too much—want something for nothing. Applicators need to view this as a professional license and take responsibility for getting to the location to take the exam.
- ADA doesn’t get funds for the training. The license cost is \$50, but government employees’ fees are waived. (State law says that they have to be licensed.)
- ADA trainings are open to anyone who needs them, but we often get low turnout. Example: ADA cut train-the-trainer workshops from 12/yr to 4/yr to get people to show up.
- Both SPCC and ADA require that people re-register. SPCC requires a minimum of 10 people to run a program.
- There is a mechanism for agencies to pay ADA cost recovery for training through an interagency agreement.
- There is a significant need in northern AZ for initial certification training. Because of the time and cost involved in travel, many applicators in that area will re-test when needed

rather than travel to meetings to get CEUs to maintain their licenses. This increases the demand for initial training in Northern AZ.

- New resources are coming available. A fair number of CEUs are now available online. Some of these are free and might fit well for remote locations (presuming people have internet access).
- The initial training is the most important need. CEUs can be picked up in various venues.
- UA's PITO office used to provide more training in more areas of the state, but these activities have been greatly reduced in the past several years.
- UA CE agents are currently doing some of the remote trainings. County Agents have been doing trainings, some on a cost recovery basis, or getting reimbursed for travel. Time is a big issue as well; time spent doing trainings out-of-county takes Jeff away from his county responsibilities. PAT funds do not support these efforts.
- There is a national Core manual that's now available electronically (not printed). Jack has the CD. It is an option for the states to use it, but not required. It may be an opportunity to post it on the ADA site. ADA will adopt these materials, but they won't start using the new exam until next year. SPCC has not yet decided whether they will adopt the new national exam. Question: How can we modify existing training materials to help people study for the new Core exam? The National Core manual will only need to be updated with AZ specifics. Hopefully, it will be available in English and Spanish.
- Utah has updated their category tests recently. They might welcome a call from AZ to share some of those materials. Jeff has a contact there and will look into it.
- CEUs are approved at each monthly SPCC meeting. Problem: it often takes up to 2 months for the approval process. Q: can this time interval be shortened? Michael: the reason for the delay is that each of these requests is reviewed by the SPCC, which meets monthly. If a request for CEUs is submitted just after the meeting, it will take 2 months to approve. Currently, the Commission is looking into whether this can be delegated to a staff person to facilitate a quicker turn-around.

Ideas for Addressing Needs

- Understanding the overlap between SPCC and ADA regulatory authority is challenging for some applicators. (This was very apparent in this afternoon's forum.) Could ADA and SPCC develop a website with FAQs that would help agents and others to address questions about these grey areas? As a web resource, it could be updated regularly.
- Suggestion: Establish some remote proctored locations where people could take the exam. (Just the testing function, not training).
- Are there a few central locations that people would travel to for training? Meet them halfway. ADA and UA could work together, divide and conquer, cover more ground. Flagstaff is a possibility, or Kingman, Holbrook. Maybe colleagues in UT could help us cover the AZ Strip.
- Are there opportunities when federal agency people meet for conferences, etc., to do trainings and/or testing at those venues? Noxious weed shortcourse in Farmington every year (3 days) would be a good opportunity to catch many people from the Four Corners area, both for initial training and CEUs, if enough are made available. Larry Howery and Richard Lee coordinate the Farmington training.

- How might we share contact information to identify applicators for training? (e.g., the Navajo reservation question that came up this afternoon.) We could do a better job of organizing and marketing trainings by identifying all the contacts in a geographic area. Every certified applicator is listed online on the ADA website (not searchable, but you can get them if you're industrious).