



Director's Notes

In the last few months, we've been involved in several events of note. First, we have presented all five Friends of IPM awards, two of which are featured in this newsletter. Scott Ludwig of Texas AgriLife Extension received the IPM Educator award at the Northeast Texas Nursery Growers Association trade show on February 6. We presented Amy Fulcher of the University of Kentucky with the Future Leader award at the Southern Nursery Association Landscape Conference and Trade Show in Atlanta on February 13. In March, we presented Union County (North Carolina) School IPM Specialist Chris Mills with the IPM Implementer award, the Western (North Carolina) Christmas Tree IPM Program with the Pulling Together award, and the Southern Region School IPM Working Group with the Bright Idea Award.

We have also completed the competition for the 2009 IPM Enhancement Grant projects. This year we funded 9 Part 1 projects and 6 Part 2 projects. For the first time this year, we funded a working group under Part 1. More about the Enhancement Grant projects is on page 5.

In early April I had the pleasure of a productive, if brief, trip to Puerto Rico. I spent one day at with IPM Coordinator Wanda Almodovar-

Caraballo at the University of Puerto Rico's Adjuntas Research Station, learning about IPM for a new and important pest of coffee, the coffee berry borer. The next morning I reported on IPM issues in the region to the ASRED/SAAESD (Experiment Station and Extension Directors of the land grant universities in the Southern Region) Joint Spring Meeting.

As you will see by the story on page 3, funding for ipmPIPE has been patched together 2009, although we are still seeking sustainable core funding to continue beyond this season. Part of that search involved a proposal for a legume and onion ipmPIPE, submitted earlier this month to the Specialty Crop Research Initiative.

Finally, we all had a very energizing experience at the Sixth International IPM Symposium in Portland, OR. This meeting occurs about every 3 years and never fails to inform, engage, and challenge us to do more to refine, promote and implement IPM. I was especially struck this year by the breadth of the IPM community. When I started in IPM many years ago, it was almost exclusively an agricultural issue. Now IPM is used and useful in virtually any setting.

-Jim VanKirk

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Friends of IPM Award: Scott Ludwig

Right after Scott Ludwig, an Extension Program Specialist with Texas AgriLife Extension Service, took the microphone to accept a regional award for integrated pest management education, he began to do what he does best: to educate.



With a Friends of IPM Educator Award in his hand, Ludwig began to update the audience about what they could expect to see in the next few months.

Spider mites, thrips, diseases—Ludwig explained when each

one might be appearing and recommended ways to minimize losses.

Ludwig received the Friends of IPM Educator Award on February 6 at the 15th Annual Trade Show of the Northeast Texas Nursery Growers Association. Sponsored by the Southern Region IPM Center, this award recognizes professionals in the region for excellence in teaching or training. Ludwig's combination of workshop training, conference sessions and education through articles in the media made him an excellent candidate for the award.

"If we need a speaker, we ask Scott," says Mike Yelverton, on staff at Texas Nursery and Landscape Association. "He's been a speaker on several different issues, and he's a regular contributor to our magazine. He's awesome."

His success in helping a large hibiscus operation transition from conventional to integrated pest management resulted in a 50 percent reduction in insecticide use and a 24 percent reduction in the cost of the operation's pest management.

Ludwig is one of 22 IPM Agents or Specialists with the Texas IPM Program, a program within Texas AgriLife Extension Service. Based in Overton, Ludwig specializes in pest management for nurseries and ornamentals. His interest in ornamentals began at Virginia Tech, where he volunteered at the horticulture gardens when he was a student.

Texas is rich in cotton, sorghum, and other field crops, so most of the university's researchers and Extension personnel have traditionally focused on field crops. The greenhouse and nursery industry began expanding in eastern Texas after 2000. In 2002, Ludwig started the state's first county-based IPM program in ornamentals. Even though his appointment is in Extension, Ludwig conducts research experiments himself to ascertain the best pest management method for new pests.

"We run into problems because there are few research positions dedicated to ornamentals in the state," Ludwig says.

The Texas IPM program has a long history of conducting applied research programs that involve the growers. This enables the grower to see another option to incorporate into the production plans. Conducting those experiments has had its challenges. Nurseries have a "zero tolerance" policy for pest damage, so very few nursery owners are willing to house a "control" area with untreated plants amidst the rest of their cash crop. To allay growers' fears that they would suffer losses from pests on untreated plants, Ludwig often takes plants back to the Texas AgriLife Research and Education Center at Overton, Texas. There he has research facilities, including a new greenhouse donated by the Northeast Texas Nursery Grower Association last year.

"There's no problem getting plants from the growers," Ludwig says. "Many growers have concerns with tests on their property. This is especially the case if the treatments may not work."

"This is the only guy who has come in to see the nursery and asked for plants with scale on them," says Bob Mallory, co-owner of Tram-Tex Nursery in Tyler. "And he pays for them! With Scott's help, we're now controlling the scale."

Ludwig's preventative actions are helping save the Texas ornamental industry from losses from invasive pests, including chilli thrips. This new pest was first detected in 2007 as a result of alerts in his newsletters and newspaper articles

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Scott Ludwig (continued from previous page)

contained descriptions of the pest. He also collaborated with USDA-APHIS-PPQ in Edinburg, Texas to evaluate control techniques for this pest. As a result, Texas landscapers and growers now have recommendations on how to better manage and prevent plant damage from this new pest. Several growers and landscapers who had not met Ludwig previously began contacting him after he began writing newsletter articles on chilli thrips.

"Everyone who is concerned about chilli thrips knows Scott because he is dedicated to helping them prevent damage to the crop," says Ben Fischer, an employee at Tawakoni Plant Farm in Wills Point. "He's very genuinely concerned about the industry and our success."

Ludwig works closely with the chemical sales representatives, since many growers obtain pest control advice from the representatives. Because Ludwig can work with growers in the field, he can show them how to use each product and how to

time the applications to reap the most benefit. Some of the chemical company representatives even call Ludwig for advice if a grower approaches them with a problem that they have not seen before.

"Scott does a lot of work with the products and tells the growers which one to use first," says Karl Steddom, plant pathologist with AgriLife Extension. "Chemical sales reps like that because he's telling them how to use the products correctly."

Growers who watched Ludwig accept the award on February 6 agreed that it was well-deserved. Many of them have depended on his advice season after season, whether they attend his workshops, read his articles in a grower magazine or just pick up the phone and call him.

"We couldn't get along without his help," Mallory says. "he's just a phone call away."



ipmPIPE
PEST INFORMATION PLATFORM
FOR EXTENSION & EDUCATION

Perhaps the most exciting news from the ipmPIPE at the moment is that the Pecan PIPE and the CDM PIPE are both live and active as we go to press. The Pecan PIPE, led

by Marvin Harris of Texas Agrilife Extension, covers pecan sites across from New Mexico to Florida, and as far north as Illinois. Check it out at <http://pecan.ipmpipe.org/map/>.

The CDM PIPE (Cucurbit downy mildew) is led by Peter Ojiambo and Wendy Britton at NCSU. Their site is also live, providing updates and forecasts for this important disease of cucurbits (vine crops including cucumber, squash, melons and pumpkins) across the entire eastern half of the US and into Canada. This site is at <http://cdm.ipmpipe.org>.

The ipmPIPE Steering Committee met in Washington, DC during the first week of April. A report

ipmPIPE Update

of that meeting will be available on the website <http://www.ipmpipe.org/SC> soon after it is approved by the Steering Committee. Highlights of the meeting included a discussion of ways that we might work more effectively with private consultants to gather important pest and crop data from the field, and the initiation of a communications planning effort for the program.

We're still struggling to obtain sustainable core funding for this important national program. The project is supported for the 2009 growing season using a combination of stop-gap measures including reduced RMA funds, soybean check-off funds, limited support from USDA-CSREES, and exhaustion of unspent reserves.

Friends of IPM Award: Amy Fulcher

University of Kentucky Extension Associate Amy Fulcher received the Friends of IPM “Future Leader” Award on February 13 for her leadership in integrated pest management. The award presentation took place during the Annual Southern Nursery Association Research Conference and Trade Show in Atlanta, Georgia.



Since the beginning of her career, Fulcher has delivered IPM programs that generated results. As a County Extension Agent for Horticulture in Hopkins County, Kentucky,

she coordinated a gardening program for inner city youth, called the “Seeds of Hope, Harvest of Pride” program. After she moved to the Research and Education Center at Princeton, she and University of Kentucky horticulture professor Winston Dunwell started the IPM Program for Nursery Crops. Fulcher coordinates and delivers much of the training for the program.

“Working with staff and faculty, Amy has developed, coordinated and helped deliver diverse educational programs yearly on topics ranging from scouting techniques and pruning to modeling disease incidence,” wrote Patricia Lucas, IPM Extension Specialist at the UK Research and Education Center at Princeton. “This program has afforded Kentucky growers access to the best nursery crop researchers and educators and the most up-to-date information in the country.”

From 2004 to 2007, growers estimated that they saved up to \$400,000 because of what they learned during her workshops. Her scouting programs have saved growers over \$34,000, and growers who have been unable to participate in her programs but who read her weekly newsletter saved as much as \$5,750 in control costs for granulate ambrosia beetle infestations of redbud.

Fulcher encouraged her colleagues to share her interest in outcomes. Dunwell said that she constantly strived to improve the nursery crops IPM program.

“She’s always been pushing me to start looking at the impacts of what we do and to send out surveys,” said Dunwell. “She makes people do better work by helping us ask the right questions.”

The Friends of IPM Future Leader Award rewards professionals early in their careers with proven leadership qualities. Southern Region IPM Center Director Jim VanKirk said the term “future leader” did not adequately describe Fulcher.

“This year, like last year, we have a winner who is already a leader,” he said as he presented Fulcher with the award. “We expect that Amy will continue to do great things.”

Originally from Ohio, Fulcher pursued her bachelors in horticulture at Western Kentucky University. While in college, she worked for several nurseries, sparking her interest in working with the nursery business.

“There’s so much more impact from success in a nursery,” she said. “If a homeowner plants a plant and it dies, there isn’t really a major impact. But if a plant in a nursery isn’t successful, there’s more at stake, because that nursery’s survival depends on the success of its plants. So there’s more of a chance to make a difference.”

Dunwell said that her enthusiasm for personal improvement has inspired several of their volunteer nursery scouts to enroll in university programs. One of them, Derek Hammond, is now a Ph.D. student at the University of Kentucky.



Winston Dunwell, Amy Fulcher and Jim VanKirk

Fulcher will receive her doctorate in crop science from the University of Kentucky in August. Now the Extension Associate for Nursery Crops at the University of Kentucky’s main campus in Lexington, Fulcher has been coordinating a regional working group of southern university faculty and professionals in nursery crop IPM.

“When Amy asks people to participate in IPM educational programs, they give freely of their time and effort, enhancing the benefit significantly,” said Dunwell.

SRIPMC Awards the 2009 IPM Enhancement Grants

For the fourth year, the Southern Region IPM Center IPM Enhancement Grants Program was split into two parts. Part 1 includes the state contact, IPM documents (crop profiles, pest management strategic plans, IPM priorities and IPM elements), and IPM working group projects. Part 2 includes seed and capstone projects.

Separate Requests for Applications (RFAs) for Parts 1 and 2 of the IPM Enhancement Grants Program were released on December 10, 2008 with a deadline of February 13, 2009 for submitting proposals to the Center. Eleven proposals (with 18 separate projects) requesting \$392,876 and 10 proposals (with 10 projects) requesting \$239,647 were submitted for Parts 1 and 2, respectively.

Grant Review Panels for Parts 1 and 2 of the IPM Enhancement Grants Program reviewed the proposals and met separately on April 2, 2009 to evaluate proposals and make recommendations for funding to Center staff. For Part 1, 9 proposals (15 projects) totaling approximately \$315,110 were approved for funding. Six proposals (6 projects) totaling approximately \$149,897 were approved for funding under Part 2. A list of projects (and project directors) selected for funding for 2009 is provided below.

PART 1:

State Contact Projects:

- State Contact and IPM Documents for Texas (Mark A. Matocha and Don L. Renchie)

IPM Documents Projects:

- Multi-State Crop Profile and Pest Management Strategic Plan for Nursery Crops (Amy F. Fulcher, Anthony Vincent LeBude, Jean L. Williams-Woodward, Sarah A. White, Steven D. Frank, Frank A. Hale, Matthew Randolph Chappell,

Juang-Horng Chong, Alan S. Windham, S. Kristine Braman, Kelly L. Ivors, Craig R. Adkins and Winston C. Dunwell)

State Contacts and IPM Documents Projects:

- State Contact and IPM Documents for Alabama (Henry Y. Fadamiro)
- Southern Region IPM Network for Florida, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands and Related IPM Documents (Mark A. Mossler and Frederick M. Fishel)
- State Contact and IPM Documents for Kentucky (Patricia L. Lucas)
- State Contact and IPM Documents for Oklahoma (Jim T. Criswell, Charles C. Luper, Justin L. Talley, Eric J. Rebek, and Damon L. Smith)
- Tennessee Pest Management Information Network - State Contact Project and IPM Documents (Darrell D. Hensley and James Patrick Parkman)
- Virginia Pest Management Information Network - State Contact Project (SCP) and IPM Documents (Michael J. Weaver)

IPM Working Group Projects:

- Leveraging Resources through the Southern Regional School IPM Working Group in Support of Children's Environmental Health (Dennis R. Ring, Dale K. Pollet, Lawrence C. "Fudd" Graham, Janet A. Hurley and Faith M. Oi)

PART 2:

IPM Seed Projects:

- Building Diagnostic Capacity for Detection of Plant Viruses (Jane E. Polston and Carrie Lapaire Harmon)

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IPM Enhancement Grants Awarded (continued)

- Weeds as reservoirs of resistance breaking TSWV isolates in tomato and pepper systems of Georgia (Rajagopalbabu Srinivasan and Ronald David Gitaitis)
- Preliminary Investigation of an Integrated Multiple-tactic Strategy for Managing Stink Bugs in Soybean (Jeffrey A. Davis, D. Ames Hebert, Jr. and Katherine L. Kamminga)
- Evaluating Zinc Supplementation for Management of Pierce's Disease (Jeff A. Brady, Travis R. Faske and Donald G. McGahan)
- Pheromone Preferences of Distinct Pecan Nut Casebearer Populations in North America (Raul F. Medina and Marvin K. Harris)

IPM Capstone Projects:

- Controlling invasive mole crickets in Florida pastures (J. Howard Frank, Norman C. Leppla and Ed Jennings)

IPM At Work: Insect Trapping Network Aids Growers



Insect pheromone traps dot the fields at the University of Kentucky's Princeton and Lexington farms and the University of Tennessee's Jackson and Milan stations. The traps catch a variety of wheat, corn and forage pests, including army-

worm, corn borer and corn earworm. Moths caught in the traps provide the field crops industry with the answer to an important question: when do I need to scout or check my crop?

The question prompted the formation of an Insect Trapping Network for Kentucky and Tennessee, funded by a USDA Regional IPM grant.

Although monitoring insect populations through traps in Kentucky and Tennessee is a long standing technology, the Trapping Network added a couple of components to an already-successful trapping system: a change in the method of communication with the public and direct coordination with another state.

Dr. Doug Johnson, IPM Coordinator and project co-director, and Ms. Patty Lucas, UK Extension IPM Specialist and project co-director along with Dr. Russ Patrick, UT Extension Entomologist, used the data from the trap catches to alert local growers about high pest populations. Because of the alerts, many growers said that they saved time in scouting their fields because they knew when to begin looking for pests. Alerts were sent through e-mails and newspaper stories, and trap population reports appeared in the Kentucky Pest News newsletter and on the graphic display on the UK IPM web pages.

A major test of the system's utility occurred in 2006 when Kentucky suffered a major armyworm infestation. In April, specialists noticed a spike in trap captures—much higher than in previous years. This adult flight produced a caterpillar population in May when growers faced an intense battle with armyworm. The infestation and resulting crop damage provided University specialists with valuable information: they now had a known outbreak situation that resulted from the moth flight data, and they realized that their communication to growers needed more support.

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Kentucky Trapping Network (continued)

“After that, we could tell what a huge outbreak looked like,” said Lucas. “Since then, we have been able to predict when there was a high potential for damage based on the trap counts.”



Jeff Porter, Henderson County Extension Agent for Horticulture, places European corn borer pheromone in a Texas cone trap located in a field of sweet corn.

The 2007 grant gave them the financial resources to reinforce the trapping system with additional traps and to begin a communication system. Lucas and Johnson conducted several workshops. Two were held for Kentucky county Extension Agents, two more were presented to members of the Kentucky Agricultural Chemical Dealers Association, and Dr. Patrick gave several presentations at county-based meetings in Tennessee. The workshops caught the interest of several of the growers in Kentucky.

“We had as many local people show up to the trainings as county agents,” Lucas said.

In addition to the trainings, Lucas and Johnson used print and electronic communication methods. Johnson and Lucas printed “potential dam-

age” alerts in Kentucky Pest News newsletter and e-mailed alerts to county Extension Agents. Some of those alerts even appeared in the local newspapers.

University specialists who were counting populations in the traps asked another important question: are growers and consultants using this information?

Yes, according to a survey conducted in February-March of 2007. Of the certified crop advisors who answered the survey, 74 percent said they had seen or used the alerts, and 68 percent said they used the information to scout for a specific pest.

In addition, after the season was over, the project team conducted another survey and found that 31 percent of certified crop advisors said that the information alerted them to completely unrelated problems they would have missed had then not been in the field.

In 2008 the Network faced a test; armyworm populations again were high enough to cause significant damage to crops. This time, specialists were ready, and the information saved corn growers from a potential \$50,000 loss. The alerts also traveled across state and national lines; Extension Specialists at the University of Illinois, Purdue and the Ohio State University issued warnings in response to Kentucky’s alerts.

In time, Lucas predicts that the Network will save growers money in reduced pesticide treatments.

“The Trapping Network gives them a way that the growers can be more efficient with their time, and it gives them a little bit of warning that they need to look for something,” said Lucas. “They have time to make a decision about what they should spray and when they need to spray, so they need to spray only once.”



Publications and Events

IPM and Pest Newsletters:

Arkansas newsletters: <http://www.aragriculture.org/newsletters.htm>

Kentucky Pest News: <http://www.uky.edu/Ag/kpn/kpnhome.htm>

North Carolina Pest News: http://ipm.ncsu.edu/current_ipm/pest_news.html

Tennessee newsletters: <http://eppserver.ag.utk.edu/Extension/TN-PMIN/News.html>

Texas newsletters: <http://www.tpma.org/newsletters/>

Virginia news items: <http://www.vaipm.org/hottopics.php> and <http://www.sripmc.org/virginia/>

Events:

Soybean Rust Short Course

August 26-27, 2009

North Florida Research and Education Center in Quincy, FL. There is no registration fee for this course. This course is intended for the agricultural specialist or consultant. For more information, refer to the information sheet located at http://www.vaipm.org/content/general/hot_topics_2-09/Soybean_Rust_Short_Course_2009.pdf.

National IPM Centers Coordinating Committee

June 9-10, 2009
Washington, DC

SRIPMC Advisory Council and Steering Committee meetings

June 17-18, 2009
Raleigh, NC

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