

Arizona Crop Information Site Technical Support 2006 IPM Grant Report

Project Leader: Al Fournier

Project Objective: The purpose of this proposal was to provide continued financial support for maintenance and expansion of the Arizona Crop Information Site (ACIS), which provides independent, research-based desert crop production and protection information to a wide range of agricultural clientele in Arizona, the desert Southwest, and beyond.

Summary and Current Status

The funds provided through this grant were used to pay a part-time student worker (Charles Reid) who began work on Jun 13, 2005. This allowed us to provide regular updates to ACIS, including posting of new events, presentations, commodity reports and other research data and publications. In addition, some new areas of the site were created, such as a new “Pest Alerts” page that includes updates and regulatory information related to invasive species. Some highlights of our activities are presented below.

Charles Reid’s employment was terminated in November 2006. We are currently working with Robert MacArthur to identify and hire a new campus-based student to work on ACIS part-time. In the meantime, Becky Papp, currently employed part time at the Maricopa Ag Center, will help us to maintain the site.

Activities (Highlights, June 2006 – Nov 2006)

- Posted over 30 new educational events and opportunities, covering a range of commodities and topics, including cotton, vegetables, melons, citrus, rangelands, turf, landscape/nurseries, pesticide safety, crop insect losses and IPM assessment.
- Maintained ACIS email list (currently 205 recipients) and sent out occasional email updates and alerts.
- Posted Extension presentations and publications including:
 - Whitefly Management in Arizona Cotton 2006 (IPM #18)
 - Technical Advisory Committee of the Q-Biotype Whitefly Taskforce: A Rapid Response to an Emerging Pest (poster)
 - Commodity Reports (2005 Vegetable Report, 2006 Cotton Report, 2005 Forage and Grain Report, 2003 Citrus Report)
- Posted results of Western survey about herbicide tolerant and insecticide resistant crops.
- Made revisions to several sections of ACIS, including grains page; cotton advisory pages; farm fresh produce page; pesticides / regulatory pages.
- Created “Pest Alerts” page to provide information about new and potential invasive insects, weeds, diseases and nematodes in Arizona and the US.
- Created a page to host information / updates related to the Pink Bollworm Eradication program.

- Performed routine maintenance tasks.
- Created links to the Western and National Plant Diagnostics Network websites.
- Engaged with Barry Pryor and the Arizona Plant Diagnostics Network on plans to integrate their website (currently under development) and ACIS in the near future.
- Charles Reid's employment was terminated in November 2006.

Participation

All UA faculty involved in agriculture are invited to contribute to ACIS. Primary participants during this grant period included: Peter Ellsworth, John Palumbo, Charles Ried, Becky Papp, Jon Dinsmore, Mary Olsen, Mike Matheron, Jeff Silvertooth, Russ Tronstad, Pat Clay, Kurt Nolte, Eric Norton, Randy Norton, Kai Umeda, James Walworth, Barry Pryor, Jon Reding (Arizona Crop Protection Association), AnnaMarie Knorr (Arizona Crop Protection Association).

ACIS is used by a wide variety of agricultural stakeholders, including growers, pest control advisors, industry representatives, researchers, and Extension personnel statewide. Usage statistics for ACIS from May 1 to Nov 30, 2006 are listed in table 1.

Table 1: ACIS Summary, 5/1/06 – 11/30/06

Total Sessions	421,355.00
Total Pageviews	1,217,989.00
Total Hits	2,651,961.00
Total Bytes Transferred	101.51 GB
Average	
Average Sessions Per Day	1,968.95
Average Pageviews Per Day	5,691.54
Average Hits Per Day	12,392.34
Average Bytes Transferred Per Day	485.75 MB
Per Session	
Average Pageviews Per Session	2.89
Average Hits Per Session	6.29
Average Bytes Per Session	252.62 KB
Average Length of Session (HH:MM:SS)	00:03:18

Leveraged Resources

- Partial funds to support web development and maintenance (including but not limited to ACIS) were written into 2 external USDA grants that were funded in 2006 for future work: a Western IPM Center Information Network proposal (the Arid Southwest IPM Network) and a Risk Avoidance and Mitigation Program (RAMP) proposal focused on area-wide suppression of Lygus bugs. For calendar year 2007, these funds total about \$8,700. It is important to note that these funds are tied to specific project objectives and outcomes, beyond routine maintenance of ACIS.
- Jon Dinsmore was hired as Yuma County Instructional Specialist in early September 2006, funded 100% through Yuma County. Jon is currently working with Kurt Nolte, Jorge Fonseca and others to update Yuma county information,

- particularly with respect to vegetable production, on an ongoing basis. All updated information will be posted on ACIS.
- Becky Papp was hired as a part time Research Technician in August 2006, primarily to work on the Arizona Pest Management Center and the Arid Southwest IPM Network websites, but her web expertise makes her a valuable resource to ACIS as well.
 - Faculty members and non-UA partners contribute time, energy and information to help us maintain and update various sections of ACIS, and occasionally review past and current information on the site. These reviews are critical to maintaining a high quality standard for the information provided by ACIS.

Outcomes / Current Status / Continuing Need

Statistics on web activity continue to support the reality that a well maintained website gets more visitors and has more potential impact on clientele than a static site. Since June 2005, with the exception of a few months in the summer of 2006, we have been able to maintain and expand ACIS to meet the changing needs of clientele. In a 7-month period from May through November 2006, ACIS had well over 2.5 million hits and over 1.2 million page view, averaging over 12,000 hits/day. Our stakeholders have come to rely on the “one-stop-shopping” convenience of ACIS as a single source for reliable, unbiased research information and current events related to Southwest desert agriculture.

The funds provided through the APMC IPM grant have been critical to the ongoing maintenance and modest expansion of ACIS during this timeframe. For a relatively small investment, we were able to maintain critical communication with agricultural stakeholders, including growers, pest control advisors, extension personnel and other agricultural clientele. While we continue to seek additional resources for ACIS in nearly every extra-mural grant we submit, it is important to demonstrate UA’s ongoing commitment of internal resources to maintain the site. The scope and depth of information on ACIS that make it an invaluable resource also require that the site is vigilantly reviewed and maintained on a continual basis. Since pest management is a primary focus of the ACIS site, we feel the IPM 3(d) monies are an appropriate resource to commit to this ongoing need.