

AG TEAM /Integrated Crop Management Working Group
Maricopa Agricultural Center
Conference Room 15, 12:00 pm 3:30 pm
Tuesday, April 26, 2011

Participation: Russ Tronstad, Sam Wang, Peter Ellsworth, Ayman Mostafa, Mike Ottman, Paul Brown, Lydia Brown, Shawna Loper, Al Fournier, Ed Martin, Trent Teegerstrom, Randy Norton, Pedro Andrade, Kurt Nolte, Mary Olsen, Bill McCloskey

I. Lunch and Introductions

New personnel:

Lydia Brown, BS, Oregon State University in Horticultural Research, Assistant in Extension, Agronomic Crops.

Shawna Loper, MS University of Florida; worked for NRCS in CA. Passion for nutrient management and soil science.

Ayman Mostafa, PhD from Manitoba, Canada; 3 year post-doc in British Columbia; insect management with cover crops.

Veteran personnel provided Brief program summaries for the benefit of new personnel.

Paul Brown – Extension Specialist biometerologist. Runs weather network with 30 stations.

Al Fournier, Associate Specialist, IPM Program Manager. Helps manage the Arizona Pest Management Center and provides expertise on needs assessment.

Ed Martin, Associate Director of Extension, Ag Programs and Irrigation Specialist

Trent Teegerstrom, Ag Resources Economics Extension Specialist

Mary Olsen – Extension Plant Pathologist based on campus.

Randy Norton – Director, Safford Ag Center, Area Agent. Works mostly in cotton; interested in precision control of nematodes. Also interested in soil fertility.

Russ Tronstad – Specialist in Ag Resources and Economics. Involved in Ag marketing, including livestock and commodities.

Sam Wang – Extension Specialist agronomist, based at MAC. Primary interest is in crop rotation and development of new crops.

Peter Ellsworth, Extension Specialist in IPM, based at MAC. Works mostly in cotton IPM, but also starting to work on other agronomic crops

Pedro Andrade, Specialist, Precision Ag, based at MAC

Mike Ottman – Specialist, Grains and biofuel crops, based on campus

Kurt Nolte – Ag Agent and director, Yuma County. Focuses on vegetable production. Interested in food safety and good practices

Description of the working group and purpose of the meeting (Paul Brown). This group has more than a 20-year history. It started as the Cotton working group, but now we focus on all crops. One function of the meeting is to facilitate communication. The other is to plan extension programs. We meet 2 or 3 times per year. We also plan outputs such as publications. With new people on board, we hope to improve our focus on program planning in this group. We hope to improve our reach and our impacts, to keep the group relevant.

II. General Updates

a. Arizona Pest Management Center Update: New IPM Assistants in Extension (Peter Ellsworth). Arizona Pest Management Center. Peter review organizational chart: 5 new positions. 4 Assistants in Extension (Lydia Brown Agronomic Crops IPM; Bryan Stevens Community IPM, Marco Pena Vegetable IPM, Wayne Dixon IPM Assessment), web staff person part time, eventually a student assistantship in IPM diagnostics

b. Soil Fumigant Training – Randy has coordinated a number of trainings throughout the state; Buckeye, Yuma, Maricopa and Safford, plus a turf training in Scottsdale. Hector Duran with ADA is interested in doing additional trainings. Randy has had a request for additional fit testing trainings. Hector has already picked a date in Yuma (in May.) It was suggested we coordinate a conference call for the group, including Hector and someone from the AZ CPA. We could do a sign up sheet at DAC next week. Contact George Waibel with AZCPA. AM VAC representative should be included on the call. Fumigation for melons may be imminent. ***AI will call Hector, then set up a conference call.**

III. Review of Current and Near Term Problems/Issues Related to Crop Production & Pest Management

Agents Identified Issues:

Kurt Nolte – Yuma has experienced increased cotton acres. Would like a mid season cotton production meeting in June / July. Heat stress, irrigation (including termination), pest management from a cross commodity standpoint, possibly weed management. We could include a field component at Ag Center: Kurt has a variety trial on site that we could do.

Randy Norton – planning for a mid-summer workshop in Safford. There is an interest in corn (30,000 acres of grain corn), with a need for IPM information. There is also an increase in cotton production. Midseason cotton meeting would be good, in mid-July, a “refresher” session in Cochise County.

Linda Masters (not present) will likely want to do something in the same timeframe. Rosie Ratato is doing double cropping of cotton. Linda might coordinate a trip with her few local growers to travel to buckeye.

Shawna Loper – growers are excited that her position has been filled. Had good feedback on recent meetings. She did a needs assessment. Variety trials and nutrient management were listed as important topics. She expects to have variety trials in Stanfield and Coolidge, is working on a site in Marana. Potential field day.

Ayman Mostafa – Wants to plan a multidisciplinary meeting. Crop rotation, irrigation, pest management. Cotton is an important topic, but may incorporate some other crops: alfalfa and grains. Peter commented that short field meetings were very well received last year (in Buckeye and Goodyear). Double cropping of cotton is an issue in some specific areas. Ron Rainer is an expert grower doing this. Potential May / June event in Buckeye, possibly coordinated with Ron.

Central AZ, areas to hit: Goodyear / Buckeye (May & late July), Coolidge (early June), Maricopa (mid June) or possibly Ak-Chin, Marana (mid-July). For Marana meeting, Sam has some cover crop trials close to the freeway. Mid-July is good timing.

CEUs: ADA only approves CEUs for pest management and pesticide related programs. We sometimes use creative titles to emphasize pest management aspects of presentations. 50 minutes of program = 1 CEU. Growers like to see about 3 CEUs per meeting.

Agents should be encouraged to present at these meetings themselves as well. Show that you are a leader and expert in these areas. Or doing a dedicated needs assessment.

Other potential needs: Cotton markets.

Specialist Identified Issues:

- Paul Brown. AzMet Advisories – Are available through labor day.
- Peter wants to work with grower groups to do a Lygus Game simulation. This would be done at a set of dedicated meetings possibly in June. Wants to set up meetings for 16 to 32 growers with an RSVP. Program teaches concepts about prevention of lygus bug injury through strategic placement of their crops. 2.5 – 3 hour meetings. Up to 3 CEUs. Lunch provided. Central AZ and in LaPaz, wants to work with Indian communities. For Yuma, we will have a Yuma-specific module in about 1 year.
- Pedro Andrade – John Deere precision tractor systems are changing very quickly. There may be a need or an opportunity to provide training on these systems. Randy: there is a high adoption rate of this technology. In his area Case is training growers. We could potentially partner with the retailers to help deliver information. Trainings should be bi-lingual, to fit the Spanish speaking audience. If agents see a need, Pedro could help provide some training on operation of Trimble FMX systems.
- Cotton Advisories – Years ago, 5 pages of information were sent each week from each of the counties. Now the defacto approach has been to just send out the link to Paul's weather advisories. It would be useful to bundle other information with these advisories.

V. Publications and other outputs

Cotton Report Update (Peter Ellsworth). Now done as an online publication, a virtual volume. Articles are peer reviewed and published online as soon as they are accepted. May 1 deadline for submitting to 2009-2010 volume. Starting on May 2, anything submitted will go into the next volume.

Mary submitted an article.

Sam submitted two.

Forage and Grain report: Mike Ottman is the editor. They are doing it online as well. It is not currently peer reviewed, but it gets published quickly.

Vegetable report: David Byrne is retiring. Who will take this over?

Publication Review Process (Peter Ellsworth, Ed Martin). Extension is behind. Robert Casler is hiring a student this summer to help catch up on publications. Kurt: we could use a tutorial on what is an Extension publication, and the procedure for review.

Are there any urgent / current publication needs? Peter and John are working up chemical use plans for vegetable, melons and cotton. Peter will also work on a natural enemies field guide this summer. Lydia is working on a cotton invasive pests manual for the USDA APHIS Cooperative Agricultural Pests Survey program.

VI. Extension Administration Update

Update on Dean search and various retirements (Ed Martin). Houser dropped out of the Dean search. Two candidates will be interviewed. Hope to have the new Dean on board by July 1. Jim C is retiring June 30. Colin K will stay on until 2012.

Open positions: 4H in Maricopa and Pima and one in Yuma in FCHS with Dept of Health.

VII. Other Business

b. Noxious Weed manual: 500 copies.

Next Meeting: Will need to plan for Sept – October field days and other fall programs. Sept. 6., day after labor day. Doodle the time.