

2009 Pesticide Safety Education Program (PSEP) Proposal

Project Title: **Establishment of an APMC Budget to Support Pesticide Safety Education Throughout Arizona**

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Team Members & Affected Parties:

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Others CE faculty with documented pesticide safety education expenses

Location: Statewide

Critical Issue/Situation to be Addressed/Target Audience

Clientele engaged in professional pest management activities in agricultural, urban and natural settings are required to obtain certification and appropriate licensure through the Arizona Department of Agriculture (ADA) or other entities and to maintain these credentials by seeking Continuing Education Units (CEUs) in their area of expertise. For Certified Pesticide Applicators in the agricultural arena, this includes “Core” training in basic pesticide safety as well as training in one or more specific areas of expertise, such as “Right of Way.” Similarly, Arizona licensed Pest Control Advisors (PCAs) working in agriculture must pass an exam that includes “core” concepts in pesticide safety along with additional testing in one or more topic areas (e.g., invertebrate management). Professionals engaged in structural pest management are now

licensed through the state of Arizona Office of Pest Management, and also must maintain CEUs to keep their licenses current.

University of Arizona Cooperative Extension personnel, including Specialists and Agents, routinely deliver educational programs aimed at Certified Pesticide Applicators and Certified Pest Control Advisors, as well as turf and landscape professionals and clientele working in structural pest control with analogous licensing requirements. These trainings, conducted throughout the state on an ongoing basis, typically provide CEUs that clientele must obtain in order to maintain their certifications while staying current in their field. These education opportunities also can provide a foundation that supports individuals seeking initial certification in any of these areas. Unfortunately, the continuation of some of these educational activities is threatened by current and anticipated shortfalls in state and county level Cooperative Extension budgets. In this time of financial stress, it is increasingly difficult for faculty to muster resources, particularly funds for travel and meeting logistics, to support these critical education activities.

Specific Activities Proposed

Through this proposal, we are seeking funds to create an Arizona Pest Management Center budget specifically reserved to support pesticide safety education activities engaged in by Extension Agents and Specialists throughout the current fiscal year, which are not otherwise covered in a separate approved PSEP project. Information on how to request funding to support pesticide education and CEU trainings will be posted on the APMC website and forwarded to all CE faculty via email. This system will be especially helpful to many faculty, including Specialists, who historically deliver educational programs providing training and CEUs to clientele, but who did not develop a targeted PSEP proposal. When conducting or delivering educational programs that provide CEUs or initial training to support certification for Certified Pesticide Applicators, PCAs, or other pest management professionals, faculty may submit expenses related to their educational efforts to the APMC, to be paid through this designated budget. This will help to ensure continuation of these important educational opportunities, and will sustain the professionalism of our pesticide applicators and pest management service providers statewide. Through the reporting requirements outlined below (see “Evaluation Plan”) we will develop a database of pesticide safety training and CEUs delivered that will be helpful for reporting and for tracking changes in education delivered over time.

Relevancy

At a meeting of diverse stakeholders held in November 2006, Cooperative Extension was identified as an important resource for providing pesticide applicator training, and stakeholders indicated the need “to explore ways to provide resources to support County Agent pesticide applicator training efforts” (http://cals.arizona.edu/apmc/docs/PAT_Discussion_11-2-06_notes_final.pdf). In fact, these kinds of documented stakeholder concerns ultimately drove the decisions of the IPM Coordinating Committee that led to the formation of this competitive call for proposals (see IPM-CC meeting notes 1/13/06, 12/15/06, 11/14/07, 2/2/08, <http://cals.arizona.edu/apmc/coordinating.html#notes>).

This request will **“support CE faculty efforts related to developing and delivering pesticide safety education to clientele throughout the state of Arizona,”** as described in the RFP for this program, and will make it easy for faculty engaged in these efforts to be appropriately compensated through a centralized budget. This will enhance pesticide safety education statewide. A more educated clientele base will reduce the potential for improper or unneeded pesticide use, thus enhancing human safety and the Arizona environment, as well as encouraging proper stewardship of pesticide products and discouraging development of pest resistance. These

expected outcomes are consistent with the mission of the Arizona Pest Management Center of **“supporting faculty in their efforts to develop and deliver outstanding IPM programs that address the needs of Arizona citizens,”** and also in line with the goals of the National IPM Roadmap (<http://www.ipmcenters.org/Docs/IPMRoadMap.pdf>) of **“reducing potential risks to human health and the environment caused by pests...or the use of pest management practices.”**

Expected Outcomes/Impacts

In the **short-term**, this proposal will support pesticide education efforts of CE faculty by providing them, upon request, funding for travel, resource development, and operational costs associated with delivery of training. This will help to encourage ongoing efforts in pesticide education despite shortfalls in state and county office budgets. **Medium-term** outcomes will include increased knowledge of professional clientele in Arizona on topics such as pesticide safety, mixing, handling and storing pesticides, application technology, insect, weed and disease management, scientific principles underlying resistance and resistance management strategies, and a broad range of other appropriate topics that will increase the professionalism of our clientele statewide. Expected **long-term** impacts of this project are a reduction in human and environmental risks related to pests and pest management in Arizona and an improved relationship between the university and clientele associations and partner agencies that have a stake in pesticide safety education in Arizona.

Evaluation Plan

Faculty requesting these funds will be required to provide to the APMC documentation of the training they provided, including a program agenda, an indication of the number of CEUs granted, as well as the number and “type” of clientele trained (e.g., pesticide applicators, PCAs, etc.). This will be the only “requirement” of faculty requesting these funds, however, faculty will be encouraged to provide workshop evaluation data or other outcome measurements. We will create a database of PSEP training events, CEUs provided, number of clientele reached, etc. This information will be summarized in a year-end report and posted to the APMC website, where it will be available for use in state and federal reports. Should continuing funding for an APMC PSEP budget be sought and granted in future years, this baseline data can be used to track changes in pesticide safety training provided by CE faculty over time.

Budget

Requested Budget: \$5,000

Budget Narrative: A subaccount will be set up and managed by the IPM Program Manager. Information on how to request funding to support pesticide education and CEU trainings will be posted on the APMC website and forwarded to CE faculty via email. While it is expected that this budget will primarily support faculty travel and meeting logistics, any expenses related to delivery of education may be submitted along with proper documentation (as described above), and will be considered. Funding requests that support the goals of the PSEP RFA (http://cals.arizona.edu/apmc/docs/APMC_2009PSEP_RFA_vf.pdf) will be approved.