

WSSA Liaison to EPA (Office of Pesticide Programs – OPP)  
Interim Report to the WSSA Board of Directors – Quarter 1 2011  
April 12, 2011

First quarter activities:

February 7-10: I attended the Weed Science Society of America annual meeting. Activities included participating in the Science Policy, Herbicide Resistant Plants, and S71 Committees, HRAC, and the business meeting where I presented information on my activities as SME. I also met with the S71 subcommittee (member) on February 10-11 to work on revising the herbicide resistance management educational modules. I had the opportunity to meet and visit with Michael Downs, Section Head, Herbicides and Plant Growth Regulators, Pest Management Regulatory Agency, Canada. I appreciate having the additional contact and information about how their agency functions.

February 15-17, 2011: I spent three days in Washington at the EPA Office of Pesticide Programs. The other subject matter experts (SMEs), Drs. Frank Wong (APS) and Gene Reagan (ESA), were also on site during the week. This offered us an opportunity to discuss our various goals with each other and with agency personnel. We also had the opportunity to meet with several workgroups and EPA staff during the week. I see a great benefit to all our professional societies when the SMEs can arrange schedules to be in Washington at the same time.

**Resistance Workgroup meeting:** The SMEs attended a Resistance workgroup meeting led by Bill Chism (BEAD). We continued our discussion about the similarities and critical differences in resistance terminology and management among our disciplines. Jonathan Becker, OPP-BEAD, had sent out a list of resistance terms that agency staff find confusing. The goal of the SMEs is to, within each of our organizations, get input from pertinent committees to determine what additional terms should be added to the list, which terms are commonly used, occasionally used, or not used by each of our disciplines, and definitions for the commonly used terms. We will then compile the information to show similarities and differences in terminology across the disciplines. We hope to have a working draft of the terms by April 15.

**Future Directions Workgroup:** The SMEs had a good conversation with members of the OPP Future Directions Workgroup. This workgroup has been asked to develop a plan for the future of the agency; this directive includes the need to recruit and attract new talent to the agency. They will be working to attract young professionals from all educational levels – B.S., M.S. and Ph.D., ranging from specialists to generalists. We discussed the need to educate WSSA (ESA and APS too) members about what EPA scientists do, what skill sets are needed by successful EPA scientists, and that scientists with a research background are regularly hired by the agency. We also discussed the need to develop a better communication network between the agency and our society members about career opportunities. Finally, we discussed the fact that they have an internship program within the agency and that they also host volunteers who come in to gain experience in different divisions; I told them of WSSA's interest in exploring opportunities to support an internship with the agency (provided funding is found). This interaction will require support from the WSSA professional development, graduate student, and education committees.

**Issue with pest management gaps:** SMEs met with Section 18 Staff to discuss reoccurring Sect. 18 applications and possible research strategies to address the concerns. A list of the current issues is attached to this report; please note that few of the reoccurring issues involve weed pests. The group requested input from the societies on additional issues/concerns about pests that have few management solutions (do they have the right pests listed, are there other unsolved pest management issue gaps, and are there any management solutions available). They also explained that there is an opportunity to establish Strategic Ag. Initiatives or EPA Regional Projects and explained that potential RFPs may address

- alternative uses of pesticides that have reduced non-target effects or are soft/green chemistry
- optimizing applications for overall reduced pesticide load per year

- development of cultural controls/IPM practices that reduce exposure to pesticides or total applications

**Seminar Given by Gene Reagan (ESA-SME):** “Environmental Issues Impacting IPM: A Field Crops Perspective”.

The seminar was well attended by some 20-25 OPP Staff and highlighted IPM and insecticide resistance issues.

**Endangered Species (ESA):** The SMEs met with staff from Environmental Fate and Effects (EFED) and Pesticide Re-evaluation Divisions. The EPA staff members provided an excellent overview of the issues and the risk assessments conducted by the agency as well as how and when they interact with National Marine Fisheries and/or Fish and Wildlife Services to obtain a Biological Opinion regarding a pesticide under re-evaluation. They suggested that the best way to keep updated on ESA activities is by monitoring the Endangered Species Protection Program website: <http://www.epa.gov/espp/>. The public has an opportunity to comment at three times in the process: At the beginning of Registration Review and the opening of a federal docket to lay out the scope of work (EPA Preliminary Work Plan (PWP)); when the draft risk assessment is published in the Federal Register (a PWP is started, there is approximately 18 months until a draft risk assessment action plan is published); and when the proposed decision, including the plan for mitigation, is published in the Federal Register. One of the problems in developing the risk assessment is a lack of information for crop/plant use by specific geographic area (e.g. if the label says it’s nationally registered for cotton, they must assume that it’s used on cotton in all 50 states); there is no way to adequately address what is or is not a potential “use site”. They are working with OPP/BEAD and USDA to develop better crop maps from which to determine the area of effect from a specific pesticide.

**EPA Public Policy Issues for Pesticides:** The SMEs met with Bill Jordan ((OPP Senior Policy Advisor) and Skee Jones (BEAD) to discuss some of the policy issues in EPA. Bill provided an update on the NPDES status and the issue that NPDES permits are subject to the rules of the Endangered Species Act. Consultation with the Fish and Wildlife and National Marine Fisheries Services prior to finalizing the permit is required under Endangered Species Act. Spray drift label language is still in draft form; Bill indicated that prescriptive language is not possible due to the difficulty in addressing all specific cases. We discussed the role of regulation in the resistance management issue. I had the opportunity to provide an update on WSSA Herbicide Resistance Education activities (APHIS I and II, herbicide training modules) for the group. Finally, Bill updated us on toxicology technologies under development which may eventually narrow the range of toxicological studies required for registration.

My next trip to EPA/OPP headquarters is the week of April 11, 2011.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jill Schroeder  
WSSA SME/liaison to EPA

## Pest Management Gaps in 2011

Repeating or Priority Emergency Exemptions	
Pest	Crop/Site
Bed bugs	Residential areas
Liverwort	Commercial greenhouse
Emerald Ash Borer	Woodlots
Nematodes	Raspberry
Green Mold	Mushroom
Blight	Walnut
Varroa Mite	Raised Honeybee
Thrips	Onions
Fire Blight	Apples
Billbug	Orchard grass
Grass Mites	Timothy
Phytophthora	Ginseng
Grasshopper	Alfalfa
Fly Control	Mushroom houses
Exotic Fruit Fly Larvae	Drench use pattern

Emerging Pest Management Gaps	
Pest	Crop/Site
Invasive Stink Bug	Tree Fruit
Lygus Bug	Cotton
Asian Longhorn Beetle	Forestry
Citrus Canker	Grapefruit

Septoria citri	Citrus
Bacterial Blight	Fruiting vegetables