

**E10 Weed Control for Specialty Crops Committee Report.  
Meeting 3 February 2021.**

1. **Attendees** are listed in the table below.
2. **IR-4 update** for 2020, please see poster #24 and abstract. Presented potential new herbicide uses, research plans etc. There was considerable discussion around the IR-4 projects and needs for weed control in brassica vegetables. S-metolachlor and pyroxasulfone were discussed in some depth.
3. **Other Herbicide discussions.** S-metolachlor Post emergence applications on pumpkin use and looking for a standard use pattern that will be shared with the group.
4. **Biologicals, robotic weeding, and mechanical control updates** – There was discussion regarding automated weeding and weed control methods other than with herbicides. Some progress has been made in the past few years but more is needed. It was also highlighted that many of these alternative weed control systems start with specialty crops research.  
There was a comment made (warning) regarding an organic product being contaminated with an herbicide(s) that compromised some of the screening studies.

Noted - There is another Symposia for automated weed control in 2021 WSSA meeting.

5. **Other Hot topics, Labor shortages, injury reports -**  
Branched broomrape was discussed as an emerging problem in tomato production and likely other crops.  
Labor shortages are getting better with the H2A program but application process could be easier. Problems with dicamba, 2,4-D and glyphosate drift continue to be an issue on specialty crops throughout the eastern US. The NC Region has developed a related series of fact sheets: <https://ipm-drift.cfaes.ohio-state.edu/dicamba-and-24-d-fact-sheet-series>  
The OSU will be launching a multi-state survey of specialty crop growers with hopes of getting a better handle on the impact of herbicide drift in the region.
6. **Grants – successes, places to solicit grants etc.**  
  
Maryland and New Jersey were recently awarded an USDA-NIFA grant for *Using Spring-Seeded Grass Cover Crops to Reduce Herbicide Inputs in Plasticulture Production*. A weed zapper proposal was rejected, in part, because the equipment is made by only one company, which seemed like a unmerited reason for rejection.  
Increased attention is noted on grants regarding soil health. The committee discussed soil microbes, perhaps for the first time.  
Multi state grant request may help to be successful. Critical Ag Research Extension (NIFA-CARE) grants maybe another source.  
Some discussion regarding successes in CA with state funds and possible approaches in other states.
7. **Feedback for the WSSA BOD.**  
Continued support from the Board is appreciated for the IR-4 grant, and other NIFA support for grants on specialty crops is very important. The committee also wanted the board to think about greater bandwidth of weed control measures, mostly around automation. There have been several symposia around automation, but is there somewhere this research can go within WSSA?
8. **Brad Hanson was elected as the new Chair of the committee.**

**Members present.**

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