WASHINGTON REPORT

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Lee Van Wychen

2022 Science Policy Fellow: Navdeep Godara

The Science Policy Fellowship is a unique opportunity for graduate students to assist me in my role as Executive Director of Science Policy for WSSA while gaining experience dealing with a broad array of weed science policy issues. Our second Science Policy Fellow for 2022 is Navdeep Godara at Virginia Tech.

Navdeep is a first-year Ph.D. student at Virginia Tech, pursuing his doctorate degree with Dr. Shawn Askew. Navdeep's dissertation project is focused on evaluating the effects of herbicides and other crop protection chemicals on pollinator foraging behavior, ultraviolet floral reflection, and floral nectar production in common weeds of managed turfgrass systems. In this project, he strives to develop best management practices for mitigating risk of pollinator exposure to harmful pesticides as an alternative to pesticide bans. Prior to his Ph.D., he completed his M.S. degree in Crop, Soil, and Environmental Science from the University of Arkansas under the direction of Dr. Jason Norsworthy. He received a B.S. in Agriculture from CCS Haryana Agricultural University, India. Navdeep's family is comprised predominately of farmers and distributors of crop production products. He witnessed firsthand how technology and knowledge can make the difference between success and failure in agriculture systems of Northwestern India. Navdeep wants to hone his research and communication skills in a manner that will allow him to significantly contribute to the field of Weed Science for ensuring food security on a global scale. The Science Policy Fellowship exposes him to the complex nature of science policies as he seeks his doctorate. Navdeep will be able to leverage this knowledge to improve his impact on agricultural systems throughout his career. Navdeep is thankful to the WSSA and Science Policy Committee for selecting him for this opportunity.

WSSA Comments on Atrazine Interim Registration Decision

The WSSA submitted comments on October 7, 2022 addressing EPA's proposed revisions for its interim registration review of atrazine. Among the various mitigation measures, the Agency's proposal calls for prohibiting applications in saturated fields, limiting annual application rates and requiring growers in watersheds with atrazine levels above 3.4 ppb to choose from a "picklist" of practices to mitigate runoff. It is estimated that the proposed changes would impact over 65 million acres of corn, sorghum and sugarcane.

The WSSA remains committed to cooperating with EPA to address the concern of off-field atrazine movement, and identifying practical but effective practices that are sustainable, economical, and achievable for the many growers who utilize atrazine around the country.

The WSSA would also like EPA to schedule a FIFRA Science Advisory Panel (SAP) to seek external peer review of atrazine's risks to aquatic plant communities, including the 3.4 ppb level of concern (LOC) since past ecological and scientific reviews have concluded higher LOC's for atrazine.

A huge thank you goes out to WSSA President Stanley Culpepper and Science Policy Fellow Taylor Randell for pulling together the comments and the literature review, as well as edits and reviews by Bill Chism, Anita Dille and Bill Curran. Thanks also goes to the WSSA Extension Committee members for their input.

FY 2023 Appropriations Update

The House passed a continuing resolution (CR) on Sep. 30, following passage by the Senate a day earlier, that will fund the federal government at FY 2022 levels through December 16. The federal fiscal year begins on Oct. 1.

The House has passed all 12 of their FY 2023 appropriations bills out of committee and six of 12 have passed the House in a minibus bill on July 20. However, the Senate has not passed any their 12 appropriations bills out of committee, but the text of the bills is available.

The table below includes the House and Senate appropriations for FY 2023, as well as the final appropriations for FY 2021 and FY 2022 for various Federal programs important to weed and invasive plant research and management. If there is a difference between the House and the Senate in FY 2023, the higher amount is highlighted.

	Final	**Final**	**House**	**Senate**
	FY 2021	**FY 2022**	**FY 2023**	**FY 2023**
	----------$ millions----------			
USDA-ARS	$1,492	$1,633	$1,736	$1,756
-Herbicide resistance initiative	n/a	$2	$2.5	$1
USDA-NIFA	$1,570	$1,637	$1,768	$1,691
-AFRI Competitive Grants	$435	$445	$500	$455
-Hatch Act (Exp. stations)	$259	$260	$265	$265
-Smith Lever (Extension)	$315	$320	$330	$325
-IR-4 Program	$11.9	$14.5	$15	$14.5
-Crop Protection and Pest Management	$20	$20	$20	$22
-SARE: Sustainable Ag Research & Educ.	$40	$45	$50	$50
USDA-APHIS: Cogongrass management	$3	$3	$3	$3
Army Corps- Aquatic Plant Control Research	$7	$8	$11	$14
EPA - Great Lakes Restoration Initiative	$330	$348	$368	$358
NOAA - National Sea Grant College Program	$75	$76	$82	$90
DOI - BLM: Rangeland Management	$106	$109	$113	$110

DOI - FWS: National Wildlife Refuge System: Wildlife and Habitat Management	$240	$250	$282	$261
DOI - NPS: Resource Stewardship	$362	$382	$553	$531

We continue to advocate for these programs through various means including coalitions and congressional visits and are pleased to see potential increases in the IR-4 Program and the Crop Protection and Pest Management (CPPM) program.

There is appropriations report language in both the House and Senate for a regionally focused **Herbicide Resistance Initiative** for the Pacific Northwest. In FY 2022, $2 million was allocated to "*support research to address weed management strongly affecting the long-term economic sustainability of food systems in collaboration with USDA-ARS, research institutions, and stakeholder support"*. For FY 2023, we support the $2.5 million recommended by the House appropriations committee.

There is also appropriations report language in both the House and Senate stating their concern over the rapid spread of **cogongrass** and its impact on forest productivity, wildlife habitat, and private landowners. Both the House and Senate provide $3 million in FY 2023 "*for APHIS to partner with State departments of agriculture and forestry commissions in States considered to be the epicenter of infestations to assist with the control and treatment of cogongrass"*.

There is also two pieces of appropriations support language in the House directing APHIS for ***Arundo donax*** (giant reed, Carrizo cane) management, but no similar provisions in the Senate. Specifically, the House appropriations committee provides $5 million "*for APHIS to continue to coordinate with ARS, CBP, Department of the Interior, the International Boundary and Water Commission, the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board, and other stakeholders on control efforts."*

On the aquatics side, the Aquatic Plant Management Society continues to advocate for the **aquatic plant control research program** in the Army Corps of Engineers. We are pleased to see increases recommended for that program in both the House and Senate. In particular, we strongly support the Senate provision that recommends $6 million in additional funding "*for **hydrilla** control, research, and demonstration work in the Connecticut River basin*".

New Head of USDA-APHIS PPQ

Dr. Mark Davidson was appointed Deputy Administrator for APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) in May 2022. APHIS PPQ's primary role is to safeguard U.S. agriculture and natural resources against the entry, establishment, and spread of economically and environmentally significant pests and diseases and facilitates the safe global trade of agricultural products.

Before joining APHIS in 1998, Davidson spent two years with USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service. Then, after joining APHIS, he spent 19 years

with Veterinary Services (VS) in various positions in the field, their regional office in Fort Collins, CO, and in Riverdale, MD. Davidson has a D.V.M. and master's degree in veterinary pathology from Auburn University and a B.S. in agriculture from Western Kentucky University.

2023 Farm Bill Update

While there is a long way to go, work is progressing on development of the 2023 Farm Bill with hearings and listening sessions taking place in Washington, DC, and around the country. Members of Congress are scheduling listening sessions in their states or districts to receive input directly from their producers and the public on priorities for the farm bill. Recordings of some of the sessions are available on the House Agriculture Committee website.

We are working with the National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research (NCFAR) and the Supporters of Ag Research (SoAR) on talking points for use in support of ag research in the Farm Bill. Collectively, we are recommending an **increase of $5 billion** allocated to agricultural research in the 2023 Farm Bill.

We have also worked with the North American Invasive Species Management Association (NAISMA) to advance four invasive species policies for the 2023 Farm Bill. See: https://naisma.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/2022NISAW_positionpaper_FarmBill.pdf
Our top recommendation is to update the definition of plant pest to include all noxious weeds, not just parasitic plants. Currently, under 7 USC 104 Section 7702: the term "**plant pest**" means any living stage of any of the following that can directly or indirectly injure, cause damage to, or cause disease in any plant or plant product:
(A) A protozoan.
(B) A nonhuman animal.
(C) ~~A parasitic plant~~ **noxious weed**.
(D) A bacterium.
(E) A fungus.
(F) A virus or viroid.
(G) An infectious agent or other pathogen.
(H) Any article similar to or allied with any of the articles specified in the preceding subparagraphs.

In addition to hearings and listening sessions, House Agriculture Committee Chairman David Scott and Ranking Member Glenn "GT" Thompson have offered the opportunity for members of the public to submit their feedback and ideas for the 2023 Farm Bill through an online form available here.

EPA Withdraws Glyphosate Interim Decision

At the end of September, the EPA announced withdrawal of the Interim Registration Review Decision for glyphosate because the Agency was not able to meet the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals deadline of October 1 to complete an Endangered Species Act (ESA) review and conduct a new health-assessment analysis.

EPA's underlying scientific findings regarding glyphosate, including its finding that glyphosate is not likely to be carcinogenic to humans, remain the same. Herbicide products containing glyphosate can continue to remain on the market and be used according to the product label and are unaffected by this action.

EPA has determined that withdrawal of the Interim Registration Review Decision for glyphosate is appropriate in consideration of the Ninth Circuit's June 17, 2022, decision. EPA is unable to finalize a new ecological portion in a registration review decision for glyphosate by the court-imposed Oct. 1, 2022 deadline because of the time needed to address the issues for which EPA sought remand of for the ecological portion and satisfy ESA requirements. EPA initiated formal ESA consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service for glyphosate in November 2021, and consultation is ongoing. Moreover, before issuing any decision, EPA must first prepare a proposed decision, publish for a 60-day public comment period, and consider any comments received. EPA could not complete these processes by the court-imposed deadline.

A copy of the *Withdrawal of the Glyphosate Interim Registration Review Decision* is posted to the glyphosate registration review docket at EPA-HQ-OPP-2009-0361.

IR-4 Completes Horticultural Crop Safety Summaries for Four Herbicides

IR-4 research examined whether over-the-top applications of dimethenamid-p, indaziflam, oxadiazon and s-metolachlor caused injury to various environmental horticulture crops when applied for pre-emergent weed management. Close to 1,700 individual research trials are represented in the summaries, which span experiments from 1972 to 2022.

This research has resulted in numerous crops being added to these labels. Some of the commonly tested crops include rose, hydrangea, evergreens (such as junipers), young trees, and herbaceous perennials (like hosta).

To view and download these summaries, please visit:
https://www.ir4project.org/ehc/environmental-horticulture-research-summaries/

NISAW: February 20-26, 2023

National Invasive Species Awareness Week (NISAW) will be digital again in 2023. If you have topics or issues of concern, or would like to help plan next year's NISAW, please let me know.
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Meetings of the National and Regional Weed Science Societies

Dec. 5 - 8, 2022 North Central Weed Science Society (NCWSS), St. Louis, MO www.ncwss.org
Jan. 23 - 26, 2023 Southern Weed Science Society (SWSS), Baton Rouge, LA www.swss.ws
Jan. 30 - Feb. 2, 2023 Northeastern Weed Science Society (NEWSS), Arlington, VA www.newss.org
Jan. 30 - Feb. 2, 2023 Weed Science Society of America (WSSA), Arlington, VA www.wssa.net
Feb. 27 – Mar 2, 2023 Western Society of Weed Science (WSWS), Boise, ID www.wsweedscience.org
Jul. 24 - 27, 2023 Aquatic Plant Management Society (APMS), Indianapolis, IN www.apms.org