



*Advocating for progressive integrated pest management to improve environmental, social and economic conditions through the application of scientific principles.*

## IPM Voice Update

December 20, 2011

### **IPM Voice Calls On Broussard to Make AFRI IPM Friendly**

IPM Voice worked hard - and successfully - to restore funding for IPM in the recent USDA funding bill. The IPM budget is higher by several more million dollars as a result of efforts made by IPM Voice members and IPM stakeholders.

IPM Voice recently wrote to Dr. Meryl Broussard, Deputy Director for Agriculture and Natural Resources at the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), USDA, on behalf of IPM professionals and customers.

In the letter IPM Voice made three points:

First, IPM Voice let the NIFA leadership know that there is an effective organization working on behalf of IPM. There has never been such an organization in the past.

Second, IPM Voice made it clear that the low level of funding that was included in the USDA budget, which was exceeded by the congressional funding bill, was unacceptable. In our advocacy of IPM funding we pointed out during the period 2000-2011, IPM funding had been cut 36% while NIFA's overall budget increased by 36%. In essence, the cuts in IPM funding over the last decade have been used to increase the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI).

IPM Voice stated clearly that the present level of IPM funding is not commensurate with the benefits it provides to both the users of IPM and the taxpayer. IPM Voice reminded NIFA leadership that IPM has a long record of benefits to farmers and the public, citing the example of the Asian Soybean Rust (ASR) initiative. A review by the USDA Economic Research Service (ESR) concluded that the savings to farmers from IPM PIPE for ASR has saved as much as \$300 million in a single year. This is more than the total investment in IPM over the last 10 years.

Finally, IPM Voice called on the NIFA leadership to ensure that the AFRI requests for applications (RFAs) are IPM friendly. In particular, it is very important that the RFAs for the AFRI program clearly state that IPM activities are encouraged and eligible for funding.

IPM must be able to compete successfully for AFRI grants because AFRI contains most of

the funding for agricultural research. Dedicated IPM funding in the recent bill was about 1% of the overall NIFA budget.

IPM Voice has asked for a conference call with the NIFA leadership to discuss how IPM can be an integral part of the AFRI program. A copy of the letter is posted [here](#).

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## **Join IPM Voice in 2012!**

Thanks to strong support from our members, IPM Voice has been able to accomplish several significant goals in 2011:

- We officially incorporated as a non-profit organization, paying all legal fees to do so.
- We hired Jim Cubie, former chief counsel for the US Senate Agriculture Committee, to advise and assist with our efforts to educate policymakers.
- IPM Voice members spearheaded parallel efforts to keep USDA Regional IPM Centers in the FY 2011 budget, initiating a single contact to a key House decision maker who successfully reinserted the Centers into the budget, albeit at a reduced level.
- In October, Jim Cubie and Tom Green visited congressional offices in Washington, DC to inform key House and Senate members and staffers about the importance of IPM programs.
- We assembled a set of fact sheets ([www.ipmvoice.org/resources\\_links](http://www.ipmvoice.org/resources_links)) to inform policymakers and others about the importance of IPM and its benefits to constituents.
- IPM Voice's work in Washington and the contacts made by IPM supporters locally paid off - funding for IPM Centers and programs in FY 2012 has been restored to 2010 levels.

As a new year approaches, there is much work to be done. A few of our goals for 2012 include:

- Educating participants in the Seventh International IPM Symposium about the decline in IPM funding and the benefits IPM Voice can bring to the table as a strong advocate for IPM with their membership support.
- Educating NIFA leaders about the importance of support for IPM and ensuring a clear path for IPM funding in NIFA requests for applications for funding.
- Co-sponsoring a summit on how IPM can synergize with organic and sustainable production.
- Exploring support from foundations.
- Enlarging our Board of Directors to better serve our goals and constituents.

We're proud of what we've accomplished with the help of our members and are looking forward to another successful year. Please take a few moments to join or renew your membership for 2012 through our secure server: [www.ipmvoice.org/join](http://www.ipmvoice.org/join).

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**Support active advocacy for progressive IPM.** Please forward this email to colleagues and ask

for their support and participation.

*IPM Voice is an independent, non-profit organization advocating for integrated pest management (IPM) that is genuinely progressive and seeks continuous improvement of environmental, social and economic conditions through application of accepted scientific principles. IPM Voice was formed in 2010 by more than 35 professionals working to expand the benefits IPM has provided to agriculture and communities for more than 40 years.*

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