

Initiatives to Provide Comprehensive Pest Solutions through Integrated Pest Management

1. Amend AFRI to include all IPM tools. The statute lists only “biocontrol” which is one of many IPM tools.
2. Establish the position of “National IPM Coordinator” to manage regional and multi-agency pest control initiatives.
3. Provide legislative authorization for the IPM Regional Centers.
4. Amend NIFA to create a positive obligation on the Secretary to continue to assist producers in adapting to changes in the availability of pesticides due to regulatory or voluntary industry changes.
5. Allow the Secretary to waive the match requirement for applied research if it is of national importance.

(1)

Amend AFRI to include all IPM tools

Background:

AFRI lists six priorities. The priority related to “plant-pest interactions” is limited to research on “biocontrol.” This implies that “biocontrol” is the only or the most important tool to address “plant-pest interactions.” Biocontrol, as defined by USDA, is essentially limited to the use of beneficial forms of life utilized to counter harmful pests.

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/biocontrol/index.shtml “Plant-pest” related research opportunities should be comprehensive. The term “integrated pest management” should be substituted for “biocontrol.” This will make the section comprehensive because the term “IPM” includes the full suite of pest control options.

Proposed Language

7USC 450i(b)(2)(A) is amended by striking the word “biocontrol” and inserting in lieu thereof the words “integrated pest management”. (2008 Farm Bill, section 7406(b)(2)(A)(4) is amended by striking the word “biocontrol” and inserting in lieu thereof the words “integrated pest management”)

It will read as follows:

TITLE 7--AGRICULTURE

CHAPTER 17--MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

Sec. 450i. Competitive, special, and facilities research grants

(a) Establishment of grant program

(1) In order to promote research in food, agriculture, and related areas, a research grants program is hereby established in the Department of Agriculture.

(2) Short Title.--This section may be cited as the ``Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act''.

(b) Competitive grants

(1) The Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to make competitive grants, for periods not to exceed five years, to State agricultural experiment stations, all colleges and universities, other research institutions and organizations, Federal agencies, national laboratories, private organizations or corporations, and individuals, for research to further the programs of the Department of Agriculture. To the greatest extent possible the Secretary shall allocate these grants to high priority research taking into consideration, when available, the determinations made by the Joint Council on Food and Agricultural Sciences and the National Agricultural Research and Extension Users Advisory Board identifying high priority research areas.

(2) High Priority Research.--For purposes of this subsection, the term ``high priority research'' means basic and applied research that focuses on both national and multistate research needs (and methods to transfer such research to onfarm or inmarket practice) in--

(A) plant systems, including plant genome structure and function; molecular and cellular genetics and plant biotechnology; plant-pest interactions and ~~biocontrol~~ **integrated pest management** systems; crop plant response to environmental stresses; unproved nutrient qualities of plant products; and new food and industrial uses of plant products;

(2) Establish the position of “National IPM Coordinator

Background:

A excellent example of the importance of an IPM Coordinator is the program developed against Asian Soybean Rust. This program has saved soybean farmers over \$1 billion, according to USDA. (2013 Budget Submission, 17-100) In 2004, Asian Soybean Rust (ASR) first threatened soybean production. A multi-organization, multi-state effort was developed that has successfully protected soybeans against ASR. The effort involved RMA, NIFA, APHIS, ARS and the IPM Regional Centers at the Federal level. In time, over 100 experts from universities, producer associations, State departments of agriculture and federal agencies participated. The group developed an ipmPIPE -- a strategic protection plan. Soybean farmers, co-ops and dealers have accessed the Soybean ipmPIPE website thousands of times for real-time pest information. <http://sbr.ipmpipe.org/cgi-bin/sbr/public.cgi> It has been supported financially by the Soybean Checkoff.

At present no person or entity in USDA has the responsibility to bring together this type of broad -scale effort which has proven to be so successful. The National IPM Coordinator would play this and other coordination roles. See <http://www.ipmpipe.org/> for other examples of interagency coordination involving specialty crops such as onions, pecans and cucumbers.

Proposed Language

Section 7 U.S.C. § 7653, is amended by adding the following at the appropriate location.

a) There shall be established in the Office of the Deputy Secretary the position of “National IPM Coordinator.”

(b) The Coordinator shall have the following responsibilities

1. Chair the National IPM Coordinating Committee
2. Provide leadership in the adoption of the National Road Map for Integrated Pest Management.
3. Communicate across agencies to promote the development of IPM strategies which reduce the economic, environmental, and public health risks from pests as well as the tactics used to control them in agricultural and natural resource environments
4. Coordinate with and provide liaison support to the four U.S. Regional IPM Centers and to the [IPM Pest Information Platform for Extension and Education](#) (ipmPIPE) program.
5. Provide a liaison to the State IPM Coordinators.
6. Promote communication and coordination among Federal Departments with IPM programs to help assure efficient interdepartmental activities and reduce duplicative programming efforts through the Federal IPM Coordinating Committee (FIPMCC) and Core Group (CG).
7. Provide information and be consulted by the agencies of the Department in the preparation of the annual budget related to IPM activities.

(c) Qualifications: The National IPM Coordinator shall:

- i) Have a strong scientific background in a relevant discipline such as entomology, plant pathology, weed science etc.
- ii) At least 5 years of leadership experience in IPM and related programs.

(3) Provide legislative authorization for the IPM Regional Centers.

Background: Four regional IPM centers were established by administrative action. An independent review team found that the four regional IPM Centers have shown an "impressive use of limited resources" to maximize output of projects. In 2006 the review team advised USDA to use IPM Centers as a "model for future programs." IPM Centers serve as a hub where groups such as farmers, regulators, scientists, consumers, government agencies, pest control companies, and environmental organizations can share information and work together toward common goals. The Centers also complement and strengthen state IPM programs by promoting communication among programs and encouraging states to collaborate and build on each others' successes. The IPM Centers:

- organize responses to regional and national pest problems
- create information networks that promote good pest management decisions

- manage funds to ensure the greatest possible benefit from public support of IPM
- communicate successes so that the benefits of IPM are fully understood and valued.

The IPM Centers coordinate the ipmPIPE systems which have proven to be so successful for farmers.

Proposed Language

Title VI, Subtitle B, of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA) (7 U.S.C. 7626) is amended by adding a new section 621, to read as follows:

- a) There are authorized to be established four regional IPM centers in the north central, northeastern, southern, and western regions of the United States.
- b) Purposes - The purposes of the centers shall be to --
 - (1) strengthen the Department's connection with production agriculture, research and extension programs, and agricultural stakeholders throughout the United States.
 - (2) increase the effectiveness of providing pest management solutions for the private and public sectors.
 - (3) quickly respond to information needs of the public and private sectors.
 - (4) improve communication among the relevant stakeholders.
- (c) To accomplish these purposes, the centers shall:
 - (1) develop regional strategies to address pest management needs
 - (2) assist USDA and its partner institutions to identify, prioritize and coordinate a national pest management research, extension, and education program implemented on a regional basis.
 - (3) establish a national 2-way pest management communication network which includes USDA and other government agencies, scientists at colleges and universities, and stakeholders focusing on pest management issues.
 - (4) serve as regional hubs responsible for ensuring efficient access to pest management expertise and data available through colleges and universities.

(5) On behalf of the Department, manage grants that can be most effectively and efficiently delivered at the regional level.

(4) Obligation to Assist Farmers to Adapt to Pesticide Changes

Amend AFRI and Related grant programs to create a positive obligation on the Secretary to continue to assist producers in adapting to changes in the availability of pesticides due to regulatory or voluntary industry changes.

Background: Integrated Pest Management is a crucial tool that has been used to assist producers and growers to adapt to changes in pesticide availability. IPM budgets have been reduced under the mistaken assumption that now that the FQPA process has come to an end that there is no need for IPM services to producers and growers. This assumption is incorrect. In fact, the efforts to assist producers and growers to adapt to FQPA are now playing out in the field and IPM services more important than ever. The pesticide registration review process is also continuing and is likely to result in the limitation on the use of certain pesticides. Pesticides are also voluntarily withdrawn. Thus there is a continuing need for IPM services for farmers and growers as they adapt to changes on permissible pesticide use.

Proposed Language

7 USC 450i is amended by adding a new subsection (m) which reads as follows:

“In implementing the programs and activities under subsection (b) and (c) the Secretary shall have the obligation to provide funding to applications which assist producers to adapt to changes in the availability of crop protection inputs due to regulatory or voluntary industry actions.”

(5) Waive the match requirement for applied research in certain instances.

Background: The AFRI statute rightly requires that 40% of the projects be “applied research.” No match is required for basic research but a match is required if the applied research projects are commodity-specific or not of national scope. This will tend to discourage applied research. In other statutes the Secretary has the authority to waive a match requirement if the results of the commodity specific research are likely to benefit agriculture as a whole or if the research related to a “minor crop” is “scientifically important” and the small crop organization cannot meet the match requirement. This same authority should be available under AFRI.

The Secretary should also be required to match contributions from farm organizations on a 2/1 basis. Projects in which check-offs have participated have been very successful. The law should provide incentives for private organizations to fund research. The check-offs cannot increase their dues sufficiently to meet an equal match.

7 U.S.C. 450i(b)(2)(8) by adding a new section (C) to read as follows:

(C) Waiver

The Secretary may waive the matching funds requirement of this section, if Secretary determines that -

- (1) the results of the project, while of particular benefit to a specific agricultural commodity, are likely to be applicable to agricultural commodities generally; or
- (2) the project involves a minor commodity, if the project deals with scientifically important research, and the grant recipient is unable to satisfy the matching funds requirement.
- (3) The secretary shall match the funds contributed by a farm organization to IPM research on a two to one basis.

This language also removes a conflict between the AFRI statute and Section 406 Agriculture Research, Extension and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 USC 7626). Section 406 contains the waiver language in (1) and (2) above.