

IPM Travel Grants Program Impact Summary, 2007-2008

The following summaries are based on reports submitted by Educators who were funded through this program (previously called IPM Vegetable and Strawberry Educator Exchange Grants) and attended conferences from January 2007 to October 2008.

Report prepared by Andrew Cavanagh, UMass Extension Vegetable Program.

Sandra Manasha, a Cornell Cooperative Extension agent from eastern NYS attended the Mid Atlantic Vegetable and Fruit Conference in Hershey, PA. She published two articles based on talks at the meeting, including one on Perimeter Trap Cropping based on a talk by Ruth Hazzard (250 subscribers) and another on potato late blight (120) and organized a weed management workshop which reached 40 growers. She established an IPM scouting program for 16 growers, and conducted a replicated trial on alternative weed management strategies which was viewed at a field day (20).

Total audience: 430.

Lauchlin Titus, an agricultural consultant from Maine, who works with many potato growers, attended the International Potato Scab Conference in Guelph, Ontario. He wrote an article about what he learned about the most current research on potato scab. This article was published in Maine, in the Massachusetts Vegetable Notes, and other publications. He also presented his findings at the New England Vegetable and Fruit Conference.

Total number of farmers reached: at least 750.

Lauchlin Titus also applied for and received funding to attend the Empire Fruit and Vegetable Conference in Syracuse, New York in February of 2008. His outreach was mostly one on one settings with clients and others that we work with here in Maine agriculture. He has 55 full season clients for whom he provides crop consulting services. He discussed something of what he learned in Syracuse with at least 40 of them. He has had conversations or passed on information to non-clients about various topics probably on 20 or more occasions. He attend a lot of field days and grower meetings in both the role of presenter and audience participant. Several examples from this summer allowed him to pass on information learned in this particular Educator Exchange Program. These include Maine Vegetable and Small Fruit Growers Twilight Meeting in June (60 present), Rogers Farm Field Day in early August (50 present), as a presenter on soil quality at Southern Aroostook SWCD meeting in late August (40 present), as a presenter again on crop management strategies to manage diseases in vegetable production to Maine NRCS staff in mid-August at an IPM training on-farm field day (50 present), presenter in evening of same day to twilight meeting of Maine Vegetable and Small Fruit Growers Association (8 present), and lastly as an active participant in NRCS workshop on no-till in late August in another on-farm field day (50 present).

Total contacts: 298.

Anne DeMarsay, an extension fruit pathologist from Maryland, attended the New England Vegetable and Fruit Conference in Manchester, NH on December 11–13, 2007. She has given two talks on integrated management of multiple strawberry and red raspberry diseases at fruit schools in Kearneysville and Romney, WV, on March 5 and 6 respectively, to a total of some 70 people. At the Strawberry Twilight Meeting on May 21 2008 in Queenstown, MD, sponsored by Maryland Cooperative Extension/MAES, she discussed the field research on the use of rapeseed cover crops and solarization as alternatives to fumigation in strawberry production, before an audience of approximately 45 people. She also wrote a 1500-word article for the *West Virginia Mountaineer Grower*, a quarterly publication of the West Virginia Horticultural Society (70 members), on identification, prevention, and management of matted-row strawberry and red raspberry diseases for new growers, which will be published in the summer edition. This article will also be published in Production Pointers, a quarterly extension newsletter (950 growers).

Total number of farmers reached: 1,135.

Julie Kikkert, extension educator on processing vegetable crops in western NY, attended the Midwest Processing Crops Conference and Midwest Food Processors Convention on November 28-29, 2007. She was able to bring her new knowledge to the annual New York processing advisory board meeting, which resulted in the development of a project on CMV in snap bean which was funded at \$325,000. Another result of her networking at the Midwest meeting is collaborative research on organic snap bean production between Cornell and WI, the results of which are to be shared with growers at the 2008 processing advisory meetings (estimated attendance: 45) and the 2009 Empire State Fruit and Vegetable Expo (estimated attendance at bean session: 75). In addition, she will bring speakers from WI to speak at the 2009 expo, and has been sharing information in the form of newsletters with new contacts in WI.

Total farmers reached: at least 120.

Molly Shaw, an extension agent from South Central NY Agricultural Program, traveled to the New England Vegetable and Fruit Conference in Manchester, NH on December 11–13, 2007. She used the information that she received there in publishing three articles for Southern Tier Produce News.

Total farmers reached: 300.

Dorothy Noble is a writer/researcher specializing in agriculture. She attended the Great Lakes Vegetable, Fruit, and Farm Expo on December 4-6 2007 and has published numerous articles based on the information she received. The list so far includes:

- “Improve Soil for Next Season’s Cucurbits.” Based on presentations by Elaine Roddy, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Darryl Warnecke, Michigan State.
- Appeared in September 2008 *Growing*. (North edition). Print circulation 22,000 (11,200 North edition) Also on Moose River Media’s website, www.mooserivermedia.com.
- “Manage Powdery Mildew in Cucurbits with IPM.” Based on Prof. Meg McGrath’s presentation with June 2008 updates. Appeared in October 2008 *Growing*. (North edition) (see circulation *supra*.) In addition, the website highlights this article.
- “Weed Management Strategies for Cucurbits.” Based on Leslie Huffman, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture. Accepted by *Growing*. Article focuses on the critical weed periods of various tillage systems.
- “Cultural Practices to Reduce Cucurbit Pests.” Slated for the Nov–Dec issue of *Passages*, published by the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture. Circulation 3,500. Article highlights the non-pesticide strategies (except for the organic-approved fungicide, copper) of Mohammad Babadoost, University of Illinois presentation of cucurbit fruit rots. Plus, the tillage portions of Huffman presentation and the soil improvements of Roddy presentation.
- “Alternate Fungicides for Continued Control.” Slated for early October for the weekly, *Delmarva Farmer*, circulation 12,000 in Delaware, Maryland and Virginia, and for the bimonthly, *New Jersey Farmer*, circulation 4,000 in New Jersey. (Both published by American Farm Publications). Article points out how and why fungicides must be alternated for effectiveness and to limit pathogen resistance, with an identification of the different chemical groups.

Total farmers reached: the subscription base of these publications numbers in the tens of thousands.

Ken Crary is an organic crop inspector from Connecticut. He attended the Mid-Atlantic Vegetable and Fruit Conference on January 28-31 in Hershey, PA. He has shared the information he received there with 30 organic growers over the course of this summer.

Total contacts: 30

Robert Koch works for Apple Leaf, which is an independent firm offering a range of services to support environmentally sound and economic activities for growers, with a focus on integrated pest management. Based on what he learned at the National Alliance Independent Crop Consultants (NAICC) conference in Seattle, WA, he published articles in:

- *Good Fruit Grower*: May 1, 2008; Vol 59; No 9:
<http://www.goodfruit.com/issues.php?article=2050&issue=77> (Subscription base: growers across the U.S. and international, <http://www.goodfruit.com/about.php>),
- *Farm Progress*: July 2008; <http://magissues.farmprogress.com/CLF/CF07Jul08/CF01%20to17.html>, see *Simpler Food Safety Makes Strides* (Subscription base: growers across the U.S. and international, <http://www.californiafarmer.com/index.aspx>).

Both articles are also posted on their website: <http://www.appleleafusa.com/resources.html>, averaging over 15,000 hits per year. Additionally, in New York and New England, extension offices (UMASS and Cornell) will circulate tailored versions of these articles.

Total contacts: subscription base of magazines and extension newsletters, website viewership.

Eric Sideman is the crop specialist for the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association. He the staff scientist and work daily with farmers and gardeners giving them advice on crop production. In addition, he writes fact sheets, a "Pest Report" newsletter during the growing season, articles for the MOFGA newspaper, and gives presentations all year long.

The information he gathered during the North American Strawberry Growers Association meeting helped him keep growers abreast of pest and disease situations that arose this growing season through the Pest Report (subscription base: 450) and direct grower contact by email and telephone. In addition, he disseminated the information during his general presentations including Master Gardener lectures on organic pest management on April 8, 2008 (Kennebec County) and May 2, 2008 (Cumberland County), at MOFGA chapter evening meetings, and in his Introduction to Organic Farming Course (taught March 25-26, 2008 in York County). He did a presentation on Organic Strawberry Production for the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension on February 28, 2008 at the Tri-County Vegetable, Fruit and Cut Flower Seminar, Gilman, NH. There were 27 people attending, 16 male and 11 female.

He is currently putting the final touches on the new MOFGA Fact Sheet "Organic Strawberry Production" and attending the meetings helped greatly in updating this fact sheet with new developments in strawberry research. It will be posted on the MOFGA website (<http://mofga.org/>).

Total growers reached: 477, plus numerous gardeners.

Rebecca Grube is the sustainable Horticultural Crop Specialist at UNH Cooperative Extension. The educator Exchange program helped to fund her travel to the North American Strawberry Growers Association (NASGA) meeting, which was held in conjunction with the Mid Atlantic Fruit & Vegetable Convention and the North American Bramble Growers' Association in Hershey PA.

She used information from the conference to update the strawberry and bramble variety recommendations for NH, incorporating information learned from presentations at the NASGA/NABGA meetings. These recommendations were developed into fact sheets. The bramble fact sheet is available currently (http://extension.unh.edu/Agric/Docs/fs_bramb.pdf) and the strawberry fact sheet will be posted by the end of 2008. She also provided information on the following topics during direct one-on-one contact with growers:

- Strawberry varieties adapted to hanging basket production (1 grower)
- Nutrient management in strawberries (2 growers)
- Strawberry IPM (2 growers)
- Bt sweet corn (1 grower)
- Day-neutral strawberry production (3 growers, 1 researcher)

She presented information on High Tunnel Tomato Nutrition at the NH Vegetable and Berry Growers' Annual Meeting in March, 2008. (85 growers and 5 extension educators), and published an article in the NH Vegetable and Fruit Newsletter (>200 growers and extension educators) about Kocide being no longer permitted for organic production. http://extension.unh.edu/Agric/Docs/April08_2.pdf.

In addition, she identified several candidate speakers on various topics, to be invited as presenters for future workshops.

Total contacts: 300.

Wade Esbenschade works with vegetable growers in Lancaster County, PA. His work involves weekly, on-farm, one-on-one learning sessions with individual growers. This past growing season he worked intensely with 12 growers and their soil health and pest management programs. During on-farm visits, growers learned pest identification, pest life cycles, and IPM techniques. They also learned to effectively use crop scouting and record keeping; crop rotation; sanitation; cultural, mechanical, and biological controls and biorational and reduced-risk pesticides, when appropriate. Growers learned to identify pest problems specific to their location and develop a practical plan of control that fits into the production constraints of their own farm, creating a more natural and sustainable pest control management system.

Throughout all of these learning sessions, he was able to draw on knowledge and information on the latest research in IPM and sustainable agriculture that he'd gained from attending the NEVFC and integrate it into his educational program. Lancaster County vegetable growers involved in the IPM program grow a wide range of produce and therefore require information on a wide range of topics. Information from the conference on topics such as conventional and organic insect management in peppers and eggplant, ID and management of foliar diseases of tomatoes, biocontrol and lower risk options for sweet corn insect control, and organic cole crop production was disseminated to participating growers throughout the growing season.

In addition to the outreach program that took place throughout this past growing season, a workshop for Lancaster County vegetable growers on soil health and IPM will be taking place in November. This will be another opportunity to use the information gained through the Educator Exchange Program to educate local vegetable growers. The half-day meeting will be open to all vegetable growers who have an interest in learning more about soil health and its relationship to IPM. We are anticipating approximately 35-50 local growers will attend.

Total farmers reached: approximately 60.

Laura McDermott has been working in extension for many years, and recently became a Berry Extension Specialist in Eastern NY. She received funding to attend the New England Vegetable and Fruit conference in Manchester NH. She used information from the conference in talks at the following meetings:

- January 11th – Long Island Agricultural Forum, Riverhead, NY (about 60 people)
- February 2nd – Fulton/Montgomery County (about 35 people)
- February 28th – Hudson Valley Fruit School, Kingston, NY (50 in attendance)
- June 30th - Wading River, NY (Long Island). There were 14 growers at this meeting.
- November 2008 – Northern NY Agricultural Meetings, St. Lawrence and Franklin counties. (3 separate meetings in St. Lawrence, Jefferson and Lewis counties - a total of 110 people)

She also ran some field trials to test a system that she learned about at the conference, and presented a poster detailing her results:

- Heidenreich, M.C., Iungerman, K., McDermott, L., and Pritts, M. Using Biofilm to Reduce Herbicide Use and Hand Weeding Labor in New Small Fruit Plantings, 2009 Berry Session, Empire Expo, Syracuse, NY.

She published the following newsletter articles containing information from the conference:

- McDermott, L. 2008. Blueberry Nutrition Update from the New England Conference, New York Berry News 7(3).
- McDermott, L. 2008. Jones Family Farm Strawberry School: Employee Training at its Best, New York Berry News, 7(6). (follow up article on Connecticut grower she met at NE conference)
- McDermott, L. 2008. Plant Tissue Analysis - What's Really Happening Inside Those Plants? New York Berry News 7(6).

Total growers reached:

At conferences: total of 269, plus the audience for the poster at the Expo

Through newsletter articles: NY Berry News has a subscription base of 330.

Lewis Jett is a state Extension Horticulture Specialist with an emphasis in commercial vegetable and small fruit production at West Virginia University. He was funded to attend the North American Strawberry Growers' Summer Tour in Ohio, August 20-21, 2008. This tour offered him the opportunity to discuss strawberry IPM with growers and researchers from Ohio, and to establish contacts with growers and researchers in adjacent

states. He extended the information he acquired on the strawberry tour to growers at a regional strawberry twilight meeting in September, 2008. There were approximately 50 growers in attendance.

Total farmers reached: ~50

John Howell has been a contributor and co-editor of the New England Vegetable Management Guide for about 20 years. In 2001 he became the editor of the Guide as well as co-editor for cultural practices and a contributor. This Guide is published by Cooperative Extension in the six New England States. A hard copy of the Guide is published every other year. It is also posted on a web site, which is updated on a continuing basis.

Cooperative Extension Specialists in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia collaborate to publish a similar management guide for growers in their respective states. They meet to discuss changes updates for the new edition. John was invited to participate in their most recent meeting. His participation in this meeting allowed him to gain insight into the process they use to edit their guide, including time lines, subject assignments and the way in which new material is incorporated into the guide, especially the interface between updating the web and print versions; to learn about the format in which they present information in their guide, particularly that which concerns IPM and organic production. He also had the opportunity to confer with colleagues working in areas in which he makes contributions; specifically nutrient management and soil health, irrigation and cultural practices in tomatoes, greenhouse tomatoes, onions and asparagus and share information about his experiences in publishing the New England Vegetable Management Guide.

Total farmers reached: Approximately 1,000 growers use the New England Vegetable Management Guide and will benefit from improvements and additions.

Lutie Batt is a Cornell University Cooperative Extension Community Educator in Wyoming County, New York. The Educator Exchange program funded his travel to a North American Strawberry Growers Association Summer Tour in Columbus, Ohio. They toured farms growing strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, and vegetables to learn about new ideas developed by these growers.

He is incorporating information from this tour in a 4 part Small Fruit IPM Scout Training sponsored by Cornell Cooperative Extension that is happening in winter and spring of 2009.

The following growers received grants at the end of summer 2008 and have not yet reported on their outreach.

Richard Brzozowski has served as an Extension Educator in Cumberland County, Maine with the University of Maine Cooperative Extension since July, 1987. His work includes designing, implementing and evaluating educational programs for farmers and gardeners. He was funded to attend the National Association of County Agriculture Agents meeting in Greensboro, NC.

Kathryne Everts is an extension Vegetable Plant Pathologist for the University of Maryland and the University of Delaware. She received funding to attend a field day sponsored by Future Harvest-CASA in Wheatland, VA. This meeting was beneficial to her in increasing her awareness of local disease challenges of sustainable vegetable growers, and allowing her to meet a larger contingent of mid-Atlantic vegetable producers that use organic and sustainable procedures.