Title: Status of the NYS IPM Website, **http://www.nysipm.cornell.edu**

Date: March 1, 2006

Project Leader: Karen English, Website Coordinator, NYS IPM Program

Project Collaborators: Cheryl TenEyck, Raj Smith and Richard Scott Adams

Abstract: The initial objectives for redesigning the NYS IPM Program website were achieved and the new website was launched on a new server. New features, current projects and future goals are discussed.

Introduction: On September 28, 2005 the newly redesigned nysipm website was launched. The website had been redesigned in order to better handle the volume of information the site provides (over 1800 pages), and update its look.

We achieved our initial objectives of re-building the interface so that it reflects modern standards and takes advantage of current technology:

a. Ensure that the website's physical server space is such to provide server-side technology, optimal bandwidth and storage, etc.
b. Update graphic design as needed in order to enhance eye appeal and navigation. Use advanced graphic software and server-side technology such as includes and Cascading Style Sheets.
c. Use Javascript and ASP technology to enhance the usability of the website and continue to make changes based on feedback from users and stakeholders.
d. Continue to utilize database technology to make the website more efficient and to personalize content for users (in terms of download time, ability to retrieve documents, and navigation for the visitor).
e. Guide others in the Program on ways they can take advantage of new technology, specifically when submitting content to the website.

Materials, Methods, and Progress So Far:
The launch of the new website included pointing the domain name to a new IP address, since the new website was installed on a new server. The transition went smoothly. Visitors to our site can now use the new features:

- A specialized search function for each commodity (except Vegetables; see Current Projects below) to help visitors find any online document; one can search our database by pest, crop, setting or management technique.
- An expanding left menu allows for easy viewing and navigation to all our sections.
- The top navigational bar gives quick access to the most popular pages: fact sheets, Cornell guidelines, brochures, etc.
- A new breadcrumb trail shows the path back home.

… and access new content:

- Fruit: Trac software, CCE commercial fruit programs, and IPM Elements for apples.
- Field Crops: weekly pest reports in a new, easier-to-read format.
- Vegetables: pheromone trap network and IPM Elements for peppers.
- About the Program: an updated IPM catalog and our latest annual report.
- New sections: Buildings, Teaching IPM, and Landscapes, Parks & Golf Courses.

All of this is being delivered more quickly because of the increased bandwidth available through the new server.

New endeavors always include new challenges; a glitch with our Search function was the first new problem to be solved. I had installed Google's Free SiteSearch For Universities as our search function, but once the IP address had changed, searching the site resulted in some pages being returned that were part of the old website, and no longer online. This was because Google, had not fully indexed the new site, and didn't respond to my requests to do so. Luckily, Cornell's Office of Web Communications recently bought Google Appliance ($30,000), a Search utility to be used university-wide. I installed the code and now search results are confined to existing pages. In Phase 2 of this project, the Office of Web Communications will provide code that will allow our search results pages to be styled like the rest of our website (currently search results pages look like Cornell University website pages).

Current projects for the website include:
- Fleshing out the Teaching IPM section of the website. So far seven new pages of original content have been added.
- Crafting the Vegetable IPM database and search function for online Vegetable IPM publications.
- Collaborate with staff writer to create new content for Vegetable IPM such as video clips and narrated PowerPoint presentations. Examples might be describing how to use Trichogramma wasps for corn borer control; describing how to choose and set up a weather instrument; how to scout various crops.
- Develop consumer oriented items for the website (again, collaborate with staff writer).

Future Goals:
- Work with the server manager, Raj Smith, to insure a smooth transition as our server changes ownership from Cornell Cooperative Extension to the Pesticide Management Education Program. After the server changes hands, there are plans to install WebTrends for statistical analysis of the website, and EZ Backup, Cornell University's automated backup/archive/storage service.
- Allow IPM scientists to bypass the webmaster and contribute and update some of their own information to the website. I continue to evaluate different content management systems that provide this feature such as CommonSpot, SharePoint, and MacroMedia's Contribute software.
- I plan to attend workshops on Cascading Style Sheets to further enhance the looks and functionality of our web pages.

Conclusion:
Our new website is a big success; the new features work as hoped and a problem regarding our Search function has been fixed. In the future I will be able to use statistics gathered by WebTrends to help verify that the website is able to deliver IPM information speedily and in a clear manner to visitors. Besides adding and updating content to the website, the next big goal is to empower more contributors to the website by utilizing a content management system.