

St. Regis Mohawk Tribe Pesticide Risk Reduction Outreach

Project Leaders: Lynn Braband, Claudia Coen, Carrie Koplinka-Loehr

Cooperators: St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

Type of Grant: Public Education. Funding to St. Regis Mohawk Tribe from the US EPA.

Project Location: Franklin County

Abstract: The NYS IPM Program has partnered with the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe for two outreach events to assist tribal members to reduce risk associated with pesticide use. One event will train elementary school teachers in the use of IPM curricula. The second event will involve an interactive booth and seminar presentations at the Tribe's Health Fair.

Background and Justification: The ecological health of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe's lands is influenced by its unique location. Nestled in the St. Lawrence River basin, at the foot of the Adirondack Mountains, the reservation is home to the convergence of four main tributaries with the St. Lawrence River. A 2001 assessment of the need for a watershed management plan indicated possible impacts from agriculture and industry. The Tribe has completed studies on the impacts of industrial inputs of aluminum into the rivers.

This project will contribute to the long-term goal of improving watershed water quality by educating Tribal members about low risk methods of pest management. Concurrently, the Tribe's Environment Division will be sampling the rivers for pesticide residues.

Objectives: Organize two outreach events that will assist tribal members in reducing risks (including water quality impacts) associated with pesticide use.

Status: As originally conceived, the project would consist of two workshops, one held in the afternoon and the second in the evening of the same day. These workshops would be mirror events to different audiences and survey the concepts of IPM over a range of relevant agricultural commodities and community topics. In subsequent discussions with St. Regis Water Quality Program staff, the nature of the outreach events has changed.

In April 2005, we will hold a workshop with a "train-the-trainer" format. We will meet with seven kindergarten and first grade teachers to familiarize them with our age-appropriate IPM curriculum and interactive materials. Participating teachers will be provided with an evaluation form to fill out and mail to us after they have had an opportunity to use the curriculum.

During June 2005, we will have a booth at the Tribe's annual Health Fair. The booth will have several interactive displays including one illustrating the impact of choices on water quality. Also at the Health Fair, we will present seminars on "Managing Pests Safely" and "Wildlife Pests". Impact of the booth and seminars will be determined by recording the number of participants and the number and types of responses to the information provided.