

Current Pest Management Practices of School Districts in NYS

Report on a Community IPM Project

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Collaborators: NYS Dept. Education, NYS Dept. Health, Cornell faculty, USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (possibly)

Introduction: Some NYS school districts have successfully adopted IPM. However, other districts have had problems in adopting pesticide-reduction programs or still depend upon “conventional” pesticide treatments. A comprehensive picture of the status of pest management in NYS schools is lacking. Such information is important for gauging pest management needs and as a baseline for measuring changes.

Objectives: A draft survey had already been developed before this grant. The draft had also been pilot tested in a few BOCES and school districts. Cornell faculty and computer support personnel will be consulted concerning the survey’s final draft, administration, and analysis. The target audience will probably be school district superintendents of buildings and grounds. Once developed, the survey will be distributed, collected, and analyzed.

Status: I interacted with several Cornell agencies and faculty about the survey. Mike Duttweiler, in particular, provided helpful feedback on question design. I also approached the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) about the possible role they might play.

In November, I learned that the State Education Dept. and State Health Dept. were planning to administer a survey very similar to ours. On December 15, I met with representatives of these two departments to plan a combined survey. Currently, we are redesigning the survey to fit all our needs. We are also negotiating with NASS about the possible role they might play. To date, the proposed timeline is:

January, 2001 – State Education Dept. will send out the survey to all public school districts in NYS.

February – Possibility of a second mailing to school districts that have not responded. NASS (first choice) or the State Health Dept. (second choice) will receive and code the results.

March – Hopefully, a telephone survey of the remaining school districts will be undertaken by NASS. Coding of results finished and basic analysis of results conducted.