

Surveying NYS ornamentals growers for implementation of IPM practices (in-progress)

Project leaders

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Abstract

Surveys of NYS greenhouse, nursery and Christmas tree operations in 2007 indicated that many growers implemented integrated pest management methods throughout their production but that gaps in knowledge and application existed. In order to determine if the ornamental growers of NYS have increased their adoption of IPM procedures, we created and ran surveys for each of the grower groups. Evaluation of results are ongoing.

Background and justification

Surveys of NYS greenhouse, nursery and Christmas tree operations in 2007 indicated that many growers implemented integrated pest management methods throughout their production but that gaps in knowledge and application existed. Evaluations from IPM presentations and training programs in the intervening years emphasize growers' requests for additional information on IPM tools. We will re-evaluate the level of IPM adoption by ornamental growers in NYS to determine the effects of the past 10 years of education and training, and to identify specific areas of knowledge and practice that need addressing in the future. For each of the three primary ornamental commodity areas in NYS – greenhouse, nursery and Christmas tree production – we will work with a professional organization to survey IPM adoption.

Objectives

Expected outcomes include the development of electronic and printed resources and training programs, both face-to-face and online, based on the identified gaps in IPM adoption for each commodity area (short term); an increase in the adoption of a wide variety of IPM practices by producers in each commodity area with reductions in pesticide use and increases in crop quality and yield (medium term); and reduction of environmental risk and potential for exposure to pesticides by growers and customers (long term).

Procedures

We worked with The Yasamin Miller Group to run surveys for 3 groups of ornamental growers: greenhouse, Christmas tree, and nursery. Addresses for each group were based on NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets list of licensed operations, grower organizations, and NYS IPM grower lists. For each survey, a focus group of growers met to review the questions on a draft survey based on the 2007 surveys. Surveys were sent by email. The Greenhouse Survey ran from March 17-May 3, 2019 and there were 220 responses. Results are being evaluated by size of operation and other demographic information. The Christmas tree Survey ran from July 25-August 27, 2019 and there were 204 responses. The initial evaluation of the data is in progress. The Nursery Survey ran from Dec 2, 2019 – Jan 20, 2020 and there were 127 responses. This data has not yet been reviewed.

Initial impacts

Since 2007, based on NYS IPM surveys of IPM adoption, use of biocontrol by greenhouse growers has increased from 15% to 42%.

Most Christmas tree growers regularly control weeds by mowing and consider the environment when deciding which species to plant. Few growers clean equipment between blocks or test their water.