



## **Pesticide Safety Education Program: Assessment of Funding Reductions**

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**Andrew A. Thostenson**

AAPSE President and North Dakota State University Pesticide Specialist  
[andrew.thostenson@ndsu.edu](mailto:andrew.thostenson@ndsu.edu)

AAPSE is an association of nearly 180 educators providing science-based pesticide safety education programs through land-grant university cooperative extension services, tribal and government agencies, and industry associates. The organization seeks to protect human health and the environment through education.

Federal support for Pesticide Safety Education Programs has been in decline (\$1.7 in 2008, \$1.6 in 2009, \$1.3 in 2010, and \$0.5 million in 2011). In response to the latest reductions and because state funding has also been dramatically reduced, this survey was commissioned by the AAPSE Board of Directors. PSEP Coordinators nationwide were polled via SurveyMonkey® (a web survey tool). Responses were collected during the first half of September, 2011.

Forty-seven states and territories responded. Those that did not include: Alabama, American Samoa, District of Columbia, Georgia, Guam, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Mexico, Puerto Rico, Tennessee, and the Virgin Islands.

The survey asked PSEP Coordinators about the financial condition of their program in both specific and narrative form. The specific responses are summarized on page two. Narrative responses are summarized on pages three and in appendices beginning on pages four through nine. Editing of the narratives was conducted to retain the anonymous nature of the comments. Some were withheld because again, they could jeopardize the confidentiality of the author. Other style and punctuation issues by and large retain the original data as entered by the survey participant.

Finally, the survey asked questions regarding each PSEP Coordinator's desire to either **accept** mentoring support from AAPSE members or **provide** mentoring support to other AAPSE members. These results can be found on page nine.

**1. Single best impact statement that describes your response to reduced funding (n=44).**

No appreciable impact .....	2.3%
Program will absorb reductions by economizing or offsetting with other revenues, but otherwise will not significantly change clientele offerings .....	29.5%
Program may reduce pesticide safety educational activities for certified applicators and/or redirect efforts into other related areas (i.e., IPM in Schools, WPS Training, Master Gardeners) .....	13.6%
Program will have significant reductions in program, but will not likely reduce personnel time .....	6.8%
Program will have substantial reductions in offerings, and will reduce personnel time commitments .....	18.2%
Program will have significant reductions in offerings and key personnel will be lost or reassigned .....	9.1%
Program will likely be eliminated .....	2.3%
Other responses and narrative responses are captured in Appendix 1--Funding shortfall.....	18.2%

**2. Full Time Equivalents (FTE) estimated to be cut as a result of this and next year’s funding reduction (N=33; 12 skipped).**

- 15 responses indicated that no FTE positions would be lost
- 18 responses indicated a cumulative loss of 9.5 FTEs
- 20 narrative responses to this question can be found in Appendix 2—FTE losses

**3. Need to seek income not related to PSEP in order to maintain the program or the current personnel.**

- 42 entities responded
- 69% Yes, anticipate a need; 14.3% No, don’t anticipate the need; 16.7% Not Sure
- 13 responded with a narrative. This can be found in Appendix 3—Looking elsewhere for income

**4. Ability over the next 1-3 years to raise funding from various program activities (n=41).**

Answer Options	Can easily increase funding	Can increase funding but will take time	Need regulatory / policy changes to allow increase	Cannot increase	Other (please specify)	Response Count
Manual sales	7	16	3	10	4	40
Training fees	12	14	5	4	5	40
Examination fees	0	0	15	9	13	37
Certification fees	1	1	14	8	13	37
* Other	2	3	1	0	2	8

\* Other and narrative responses can be found in Appendix 4—Increasing income

**5. Likelihood of getting additional financial support in the next 1-3 yrs. from the following entities (n=41).**

Answer Options	Very likely	Likely	Not sure	Not likely	Will not be able to receive this support	Response Count
Your educational institution	0	1	4	24	11	41
State lead agency (SLA)	2	4	11	18	6	41
State government	0	2	1	30	8	41
Local government	0	0	3	26	11	40
*Other	0	1	3	3	1	9

\* Other and narrative responses can be found in Appendix 5—Local institutional support

## 6. Additional narrative responses regarding PSEP funding:

- This is a critical issue at this point in time. The need for continued support is paramount to the success of our customers. Every effort to correct or balance the situation is greatly appreciated.
- If we did not charge fees to applicators that attend our training we would not be able to operate or provide any pesticide applicator training.
- We are often asked to do many things for the EPA that were above and beyond the things we were doing for the small amount of funds that were provided. The situation with XXX herbicide, where they wanted damage to be assessed by the only sources they would accept was from the SLA and CES. In our state that effort required a significant amount of time and effort.
- The Cooperative Extension Service's (CES) state budget will be cut XX% over the next two years. Most specialists will be terminated. We will have minimal ability to continue meaningful programming unless we increase fees substantially or obtain other funds. With the additional federal cuts, I don't see how we can continue to provide a quality pesticide education program.
- We have never had a dedicated FTE to PESP as the funding would not support one. The Ag Agent that currently manages the program has put a priority on the use of the grant funds to cover travel expenses for the few PESP instructors to provide trainings in various locations across the state. This will likely need to change to a "smart classroom" type of training (where possible) to reduce expenses. There are reservations for going this direction as some of these communities have little to no opportunities to spend face to face time with a pesticide "expert".
- Federal funding provides a small percentage of the funds needed to run the PSEP program. Our funding is primarily by SLA pass through, training fees, and publication sales. However, the federal funding does provide primacy to the University's PSEP program to provide pesticide safety training. Even a small amount of funding is a recognition by the federal government that the University's PSEP is designated and authorized to provide this training.
- Funding from other sources is sporadic and diminishing. Therefore our PSEP programming will decrease as funding continues to decrease.
- I do understand the change in direction with EPA. However, at the state, and multi-state level, the best way to maintain and/or improve pesticide stewardship is through educational programs, such as this. It just seems in these times, that such an effective program would be reduced in funding to such a drastic degree. We were a bargain, before. I will not be able to maintain any staff support, so my efforts will be minimal, for this program. We have lost most of our ability to request funds at the state level.
- Many of us have put in extraordinary amounts of time trying to generate dollars...time that could have been better spent on programming. It will be hard to attract people to these positions in the future if stable funding is not available. It will be hard to get institutions to invest in these programs with expertise and dollars if EPA does not invest in the program.
- We are a very small state with a large commercial application industry. Some categories rely on Extension for education/training. Our region provides reciprocity for private applicator recertification credits. Private applicators have numerous avenues for recertification via commodity meetings, many of which are regional. However, specific pesticide safety education topics frequently are not addressed; rather pest management topics provide recertification credits. There is a need to hold independent PSEP as stand-alone training/workshops and to provide education to specific commodity groups, especially where problems are known to exist.
- Each state is different in how they approach funding. It is important that we share our ideas and promote pesticide safety on a unified front. I often think people don't realize the impact unless something is downsized or cut, maybe this is an opportunity for us to show the importance of what we do!
- My position is funding by extension base funds at XX% and the rest is raised by me through pass through funds (drying up), National Plant Diagnostic Network funds (drying up). So my position is very precarious.

## Appendix 1—Funding shortfall

Indicate the single best impact statement that describes your response to reduced funding:

- Too early to tell. I have already lost two specialist positions. With funding reductions at both the state and federal levels, we will have to rely more on fee based activities. However, there is only so much elasticity in what customers are willing to pay.
- The program will increase offerings on a fee-for-service basis and raise the price of study manuals to offset loss of funding.
- The only reason we will not face significant reductions is because, unlike other states, we are blessed to have significant funding support from our Department of Agriculture. If it were not for that support we would be facing the loss of two positions.
- The Extension Service is moving from a county based system to regional centers. This will effectively mean that the county support for educator travel, printing, supplies, etc. that were used in the pesticide applicator certification and training program will need to be generated. This coupled with the reduction in EPA pass-through funding will likely require instituting a fee based system for private applicators and increasing fees for commercial applicators. The SLA is strongly opposed to this. The SLA has not given a firm commitment regarding their support of generating the fees needed to operate the system. They indicate that they may be considering options other than Extension to provide training and testing for certifying pesticide applicators.
- Previous reductions in PSEP funding had more serious impacts on our program and we had to let personnel go several years ago. The current cuts are less threatening because the program has been rebuilt on training fees and contracts and we have added personnel. We have been forced to be 100% self-supporting outside of the EPA funds. However, our new business model means our program is not necessarily responsive to new initiatives from EPA. Our new funding sources dictate where our priorities are. The decline in infrastructure for this program and stable funding has been detrimental to the overall program nationwide.
- The impact of losing the federal funds is less of a monetary issue these days because there were so few funds currently available (even before the latest cut). This latest loss signals a disinterest by our federal partner. Are we now only a series of state programs with no importance nationally? That is what it means to lose federal support! We haven't had significant federal support since 1980 when the EPA funds were cut in half and continued to be manipulated year after year. This sent a negative signal to our SLA. They got a significant amount of funds from EPA. Our small amount of funding indicated to us and to our SLA that the EPA didn't regard Extension as being of much value to training pesticide applicators. USDA apparently shared this same perspective of the state Extension programs. They put very little money into the program. That wasn't always the case. In 1965, USDA put over 1 million dollars annually into the program nationwide. The funds were eventually allowed to be absorbed by the states and the program was de-emphasized at the federal level, even though the pesticide coordinator positions were maintained in many states. So both USDA and EPA have sent the same signals. No wonder Extension has struggled in many states with their relationship with their SLAs. That has changed in our state after many years (of effort). Our relationship with our SLA is great and they are the key to our success because they have helped us restore our program through their funding and support. A few years ago there was promise that the federal funds might be restored. The latest cuts came as a complete surprise. So here we go again! There has never been consistency with the feds, all of this sends the wrong signals to the states. Sure the cuts hurt. They tell us we aren't important to our federal partners. They hit us at a vulnerable time. The current cut impacts a key position and if we lose the funds for what was half an FTE prior to the latest cuts (now it is 14%), we will lose the support of our institution (which picks up the other half of the position). If we lose that support we lose the whole position and a critical part of our program. The assistant coordinator's position is critical to communication with our field agents and those agents are the primary pesticide safety educators who do the work in our state. We have XX agents committed to the program. A loss of support there would impact our program quality and impact for years to come.

- Unknown. We are working on allocating alternative funding sources through our SLA. If alternative funding is not found, the program will likely be eliminated by 2013. The SLA would then be solely responsible for coordinating the certification programs, and many more of the trainings.

## Appendix 2—FTE losses

As a result of this year's reduction in PSEP funds, as well as the new fiscal year's reductions, how many FTE do you estimate your program would cut?

- We will not experience any reduction in staff or training or other services due to the reduced and/or no federal funding. We are primarily user fee supported so we'll need to adjust our user fee schedule instead.
- Our state PSEP charges a fee to all applicators who attend training. We may have to raise the fee we charge applicators. We will need to raise fees as we cannot cut personnel and still run the program as it exists today.
- We are forced to find alternative funding to continue the program at the existing level, but do not plan to reduce FTE.
- The only reason we will not face significant reductions is because, unlike other states, we are blessed to have significant funding support from our SLA. If it were not for that support we would be facing the loss of two positions.
- Our program is very small - one part-time faculty, one part-time program assistant. We will lose our program assistant as a result of the funding cuts. This means less support for program events and materials.
- It is dependent upon the success of finding options for funding the program.
- We will not need to reduce staff this year, however, if the level of funding does not increase to at least pre-2010 levels, a 50% staff reduction will most likely occur.
- There will be no expansion in FTE as was needed to reach out to non-traditional audiences, such as Latino.
- Our program is new, and it currently only includes one FTE, who started as the funding cuts were finalized. We will not be cutting FTE. We were expecting \$XX,XXX which would allow our program to grow faster, but we have been reduced to \$10,000, so growth and development will be slower, will rely more on outside grants (taking the focus away from core PSEP goals), and user fees. We will be more limited in our travel and other activities. We will focus more on WPS than on pre-cert/re-cert because our partner agency is funding those activities.
- We are 100% self-supporting on fees and grants so there will be no cuts. However, it would be preferable to have some base funding that is stable and that we could use to leverage dollars and people resources.
- We have had 40% of one FTE assigned to the program this year due to the cuts mentioned above we have cut that to 20%. If there are further reductions we will lose the remaining 20% of one FTE and jeopardize the program. There simply is not enough support to make a program viable.
- The entire pass-through (and now, Pesticide Registrations Improvement Act—PRIA) funding has always gone to support my salary. I am the ONLY person truly assigned PSE responsibilities in the state. I do all of the staff development to supply our Extension field faculty with the training and materials they need to offer high quality educational experiences for pesticide applicators. Providing my colleagues with materials and training has become increasingly important in recent years because our Extension is reducing efforts they perceive as duplicative. I.e., there are far fewer Extension field faculty who actually offer PSE as any part of their programs. As a direct result of the loss of EPA dollars, my time is increasingly being reassigned to teaching on campus, leaving me less time to support my Extension colleagues in PSEP. I continue to run this program only because it is a labor to which I've devoted my career. When I retire in a few years, my administration will likely not replace me at all, and PSEP will be subsumed under other programs, with only the most elementary parts of pesticide safety education retained, if any at all. It would probably become a matter of static, non-updated on-line presentations that would provide little if any real-world situational training.
- Normal time commitment of PSEP Coordinator is reduced to under 50% from 80%. Single part-time program assistant reduced from 30 hours per week to 5 hours per week. Cut is not only direct, but reduced programming reduces generation of training fees.

- The overall FTE reduction will be between 0.10 and 0.30, depending on which staff's FTE are cut. We will not know how much FTE will be cut from which staff until we know the results of competitive grant applications (for non-PSEP activities) later this calendar year.
- I am shifting to fee-based funds in order to continue existing FTEs.
- In our state, the funds that were cut were used for salary for the only coordinator, therefore we will probably commit more time to other areas where funding is available. Salary is paid strictly from grant and federal funds. This is forcing us to look at how we do business to see if we can make up those funds in other ways.
- The ramifications for this year are not too great, but if this level of funding cuts continue along with other programs that support the PESP coordinator's salary (i.e., NPDN funds, Risk Management, etc.) we will do very minimal PSEP work.
- This is contingent on whether we can allocate alternative funding.
- We do not expect to reduce FTE at this time.

### **Appendix 3--Looking elsewhere for funding**

Do you anticipate that your program would need to seek income or grants not related to PSEP in order to maintain the program or the current personnel?

- We have a huge number of applicators to certify based on our population and this requires full time work effort(s). Attempting to move into areas beyond our education edict would further limit our ability to serve our customers.
- We will seek grants if it's germane to the goal and purpose of our training effort. Otherwise, we will not seek grants just for the money sake and where we would be consuming or redirecting resources to efforts unrelated to PSE.
- We plan to start charging for training materials as well as a workshop fee for both private and commercial applicators.
- This is dependent upon finding mutually agreeable funding options between CES and SLA.
- The future sustainability of the PSEP in our state will be finding ways to generate revenue from educational outreach outside of the formal pesticide certification program. Efforts to find such compatible and synergistic efforts have already started in small ways with education for Master Gardeners, some IPM efforts, invasive species, small farms/small acreage land owners, organic growers etc. More significantly it is a planned effort to offer online and face to face education for those seeking certification and that also has value for individuals who do not need pesticide certification.
- This program will not exist if we cannot continue to get grants and income. We are facing serious challenges at the county and state level for Extension.
- Since I'm the only one in the PSEP, and all of my time is currently overcommitted, seeking grants NOT RELATED to PSEP will not help sustain PSEP. It would be fraudulent to take money for a research or teaching project and divert it to PSEP. My research, which is often supported by various grants, is certainly connected to my Extension program in that I do research that helps us understand how to better educate and influence pesticide applicators to adopt better practices, but someone still has to turn it into implementation. It's not free -- it actually costs, primarily in terms of having an experienced person my research results to CHANGE and IMPROVE my extension PSE program. If this isn't done by me, then I would have to train someone else to use my results in an implementation project. I would need money for that person as well as to hire someone to do some of my other tasks while I train the individual. This is just a downward spiral.
- Yes, definitely! Our current position is also supported with Master Gardener funds and other grant funds.
- Cannot make up funding; lost here is lost. Part-time assistant hours will be cut.
- We are already looking into how we can make money from our manuals, training and fees to establish funding for the program!

- We have applied for grants from the IPM in Schools Initiative.

#### **Appendix 4—Increasing income**

Indicate your ability over the next 1-3 years to raise funding from various program activities:

- Both Examination fees and Certification fees are governed by the SLA.
- We do not receive fees collected by the state lead agency for testing, certification, registration or any other state source. Zero funding for PSE from the state government.
- Our last fee increase was in 1999. Thus, to increase fees now or in a few years is totally justifiable.
- Examination and Certification fees are paid to the SLA and not our university so raising the fees would not help our program
- Pesticide marketing companies may put some financial contribution into our safety education program.
- We plan to develop additional educational training and on line course to generate revenue. In addition, we plan to develop value added services, sprayer calibration etc. that we can offer to generate revenue.
- Training and certification fees are paid to the SLA, these aspects are not available to my PSEP Extension program
- A "proctoring fee" is being considered for those folks who chose to self-study then come to a CES office to take the exam. Currently we do not have computerized testing as an option so if an individual did not attend a training opportunity they have to schedule a time to take their exam.
- We receive significant funding from the State on all pesticides sold in the state. These fees are provided to the SLA who passes some of these funds on to the university PSEP program. The pesticide registration fee was increased by the state legislature within the past few years to provide additional revenue to offset inflation and other costs.
- Currently the SLA is limited by regulation to collecting a maximum of X per private applicator. We currently do not have a training or testing fee for private applicators. Extension would have no limit if we collected the training fee, but the SLA maintains that they should be the agency to collect fees to maintain consistency. There is a possibility of raising commercial fees. We currently do not have a fee established for testing.
- Extension does not charge for examinations and certification.
- Examination and certification fees are not handled by my program. Grants will need to be written and received but given the current opportunities these grants will not be directed at PSE.
- PSEP has unilateral authority to raise our own fees for private certification. CES developments and implements the private exam and all private recertification workshops. The SLA private certification fee is set in state law, has not been raised in decades. For commercial applicators we also have unilateral authority to raise our recertification training fees and manual sale prices. CES is not involved in commercial exams and receives no income from commercial exam fees and pesticide license fees charged by the SLA.
- My program does not in charge exam or certification fees; the SLA does.
- It's unfortunate that the applicators will have to provide the source for additional funding (in lieu of additional grants funded)
- Examination fees; "other" -- SLA administers exams and collect fees; PSEP does not get funding from these fees. Certification fees; "other" --Same response as for above Examination fees.
- We can go after grants in specialized areas to support personnel but that can take people away from core mission of pesticide education. In our current state climate, increasing licensing or exam fees would be discouraged and be detrimental to small businesses and jobs.
- We have already lost a significant number of participants as we increased the training fees. Companies used to send several people; now, they only send the supervisor, not those who work under his/her supervision. Thus, raising fees actually doesn't generate extra income. (2) We don't get any money from our SLA, (they have none to give), so we don't benefit even if they did raise certification or exam fees. (3) In states with less of an ag base, we just don't have

high numbers of applicators, yet we must still serve all of the needs of all of the applicators in all of the categories. This is expensive. I have some categories with 10 - 20 people. How would I ever be able to raise the fee enough to cover the true cost?

- We don't sell manuals for a profit. We don't charge for private applicator recertification program other than cost recovery. Commercial certification courses do generate some resources but are limited due to the general economy. Fees for commercial training are primarily for cost recovery. To make a change to income generation would require policy changes.
- Our PSEP does not 'own' and cannot sell manuals. SLA does exams, therefore no income from these. Do not get any funding from SLA Certification / licensing fees.
- Training fees can/will be increased gradually, but these increases will be to keep our fees comparatively equal to fees charged by other entities. These increases will not cover most FTE nor travel costs.
- Right now, as it stands we cannot make money off of extension publications or training, so it will take some work to get this changed to allow this! Examination fees and certification fees must be increased by legislative action and they also want those funds for their own programs. Other funds may come from other grants focusing on specific impacts.
- We would need to seek an increase in our funds from our SLA to make up this loss. They have been generous to us and have indicated they will help. But other federal and state cuts leave an uncertainty to this issue. The timing of this cut is terrible. We have already lost 1.5 FTEs from our PSEP due to other cuts in grants and contracts we know are coming this fall.
- We do not receive any funds from our SLA for manual sales, exam fees, cert fees. I could increase my charge for recert trainings but it is hard to pass that on to growers and industries that are already struggling.

#### **Appendix 5—Local institutional support**

Indicate your likelihood of getting additional financial support in the next 1-3 years from the following entities:

- The majority of our PSE funding is generated through manual sales.
- Since the inception of PSEP we have never received any financial support from the university, Extension, SLA, or state government (other than in-kind support of county and state specialists time to conduct private and commercial applicator training).
- If anything we are being asked to find outside financial support for what little money we do receive from our educational institution.
- SLA has indicated some willingness to provide direct in-kind support for manual development and possibly help in costs of printing manuals. PSEP in our state has never received any direct support from the land-grant university for staff or expenses and increasingly PSEP is required to pay more for institutional systems needed to support the program (accounting, IT, etc.). Our PSEP also provides extension educators and faculty and county offices funds that match their level of participation in the PSEP programs beyond travel and other direct expenses incurred. These are unrestricted funds that can be used to support other extension programs. In 2010 we estimated PSEP provided almost \$XX,XXX of such funds. Given these funds and the increase in PSEP covering support operations formerly provided by the university/extension, PSEP is becoming a net cash cow for state extension when considering full cost accounting for expenses, salaries etc.
- Annually our PSEP gets zero from our Extension Admin. It is federal funding; so in the coming years, I guess it will follow the trend for fed funding. For SLA -- Not sure means: SLA provided significant (though intermittent & much appreciated) funding for PSEP for the past six years. But, now that all State agencies are tightening budget and funding priorities are shifting, I can't be sure what will available to support PSEP. It's a year-by-year guess.
- The SLA has provided substantial support for the next two years. After that, it will have to be renegotiated. Without their support in the future, the program will probably be discontinued at our institution.



- Not likely to receive support from grower groups or commercial applicator groups.
- Our educational institution has been hit with cuts and I don't for see them paying my salary. The state lead agency could pitch in funds for manuals etc., but it will take legislation and some lobbying groups have been a hindrance in accomplishing this goal.
- We will seek funding for other activities through contracts and grants. This is not a certainty and could easily move our program to reduce our support of PSEP.
- We are a self-supporting program. We need to generate income from program activities in order to cover the expense of our mission.

## Questions Regarding Mentoring

Would you be open to <u>accepting mentoring</u> support from AAPSE members to assist you in developing strategies to obtain sustainable funding?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	39.5%	17
No	18.6%	8
Maybe	41.9%	18
Other (please specify)		8
<i>answered question</i>		<b>43</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>4</b>

Would you be willing to <u>provide mentoring</u> support to AAPSE members in other states to help them develop strategies to obtain sustainable funding?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	39.5%	17
No	34.9%	15
Maybe	25.6%	11
Other (please specify)		14
<i>answered question</i>		<b>43</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>4</b>