

Draft Minutes, Sept. 26th, 2014
National Stakeholder Team for Pesticide Safety Education Program
(PSEP) Funding

All documents and minutes of the Team and its workgroups are posted at <http://psep.us/>

1. Welcome to New Team Members (attachment 1 in agenda)

Jim Burnette indicated that 4 additional members have joined since the last meeting, bringing the total organizations represented to 93. Jim reminded everyone to visit the website to view all the Team's documents; recent additions include an updated version of "Legislative Action at the State Level to Support PSEP".

2. The Case Against the Privatization of PSEP (attachment 2 in agenda)

Carol Somody thanked everyone who submitted comments for the first draft, and those now submitting comments on that draft. Comments should be sent by October 3 to be considered for the second draft. Comments received this week include:

- PSEP research collaborations with other experts in Land Grant Universities
- Many applicators do not want State Lead Agencies (SLAs) doing the educational/training component
- PSEP's repetitive adult education methods provide reinforcement that is less likely to occur with private trainings
- Is PSEP really best positioned to meet the increasing need for on-line and distance education classes?
- PSEPs must change their business model

Carol noted that having only one source of income or putting all the cost on the applicator, registrant, SLA, or university is not in the best interest of sustainability or impact on safe use.

Carol requested that everyone take a very hard look at this document, because its content is at the center of why this team was formed. As with the IPM statement, someone will respond to your comments if they are not addressed in the next draft, which has a maximum target length of 2 pages. Note that there are robust PSEPs that already engage in all the activities in draft 1. Do not confuse the desire to have robust PSEPs able to engage in all these activities in all 50 states with the current state of many PSEPs.

Comments on draft 1 were then accepted on the call:

Kerry Richards indicated that one of the most important things missing is the immediate/direct link to science-based, balanced, unbiased information (no offense to

industry, but industry is often product-focused). Andrew Thostenson added that, at just one recent meeting of ND extension specialists, there were 12 individuals providing research/extension support to help Andrew's PSEP.

Jim Burnette expressed concern about the capacity of industry (private trainers, registrants, etc.) to handle all continuing education efforts, and noted that his SLA has been involved in the effort since 1980. Jim added that there is a great opportunity for industry to provide continuing education as part of recertification, but that Extension is still doing 90% of it. Carol Somody mentioned her own attempts over the last 12 months to get industry involved in conducting core pesticide safety education training as part of re-certification, with no success.

Bob Bellinger explained that university/extension has specialists in many areas of expertise, while many companies have a strong focus in more limited areas. Bob also wondered how industry would accomplish standardization of core pesticide safety education content and how industry would update and maintain such a program over time. Bob noted that industry is a valuable resource and does specialized recertification training; Jim Burnette reiterated this.

Linda Johns indicated that she does not even see it as industry's responsibility to provide core training. Linda noted that SLA's collaborate with industry and Ronda Hirnyck added that industry does have a strong supporting role in some ongoing re-certification efforts (e.g. fumigation) but often comes to PSEP to develop training programs.

Carol Black pointed out that universities and SLAs must answer to the citizens and, in most cases where the PSEP is robust, have a healthy relationship. Carol indicated that the SLA would be questioned if it worked with industry rather than with the PSEP – with privatization, there would be a real disconnect between the educators and the SLA.

Bob Bellinger recognized that industry is under-utilized in recertification training, and Jim Burnette agreed that industry efforts are valuable but that private trainer capacity is not sufficient.

Amy Brown commented that there are several levels of privatization and that professional organizations often ask Extension to do training at the same time they are in competition with Extension. Amy said that Maryland is becoming very "green" and that many trainers would like to get in the pesticide safety education business with non-science based information (rather than responsible, accountable training that shows real impacts).

Don Renchie said that the need for Land Grant University-based PSEPs goes back to the issue of public trust – Congress amended FIFRA in 1975 to clearly indicate Extension's role in educating pesticide users. Don noted that, by PSEPs participating in the process, potential amendments to the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits, etc. were based

on science, that this participation also helped mitigate the impact of these regulations, and that there would have been no confidence in these amendments if driven only by industry. A nationally harmonized program is critical. Bob Bellinger pointed to the current concerns expressed in the media – that EPA and industry are too close concerning research data. This distrust would extend to training if conducted largely/only by industry.

3. PSEP 50-Year Anniversary Press Release (attachment 3 in agenda)

Jim Burnette indicated that the Weed Science Society of America (WSSA), Entomological Society of America (ESA), and American Phytopathological Society (APS) released this and that it has gotten good pickup by a number of news carriers. WSSA, ESA, and APS have publicized PSEP and its challenges since 2011.

4. Update on PSEP-IMI (PSEP Improvement and Modernization Initiative)

(attachment 4 in the agenda includes the list of enhanced and new resources funded in year 1)

Andrew Thostenson reviewed this industry partnership to build PSEP capacity (Goal 1), develop/enhance resources, etc. Half the states are expected to pursue Goal 1 (a 3-year plan). In 2014, the PSEP-IMI Steering Committee also funded 17 states to develop or enhance training materials or learning assessment tools, and 2 states to look at the adequacy of pesticide safety education in recertification training. PSEP-IMI has also funded the NC PSEP to develop a password-protected website for PSEPs, and the TX, OH, PA, and MN PSEPs to solicit resources that other PSEPs throughout the US are willing to share with each other.

Andrew added that PSEP-IMI is currently evaluating RFP procedures for next year's funding of resource update/development, but won't be soliciting additional states to build capacity. Andrew also hopes that the next RFP will continue to support states interested in assessing the adequacy of pesticide safety education content in recertification training.

Carol Somody added that 19 PSEP members and 16 SLA members of the 25 states' Goal 1 advisory committees have accepted one or both of the first optional Goal 1 teleconferences being sponsored by the Steering Committee of the Stakeholder Team. Although the introductory comments will be similar between both teleconferences, the questions could certainly be different. Q&A will be documented and distributed to all PSEP and SLA advisory committee members. Although university administration members of the advisory committees did not receive invitations to these first teleconferences, PSEPs are certainly welcome to invite them.

Jim Burnette reminded everyone that Oct. 1st and 6th are the dates of the first teleconferences (11 AM ET), for Goal 1 advisory committee members only. Carol Somody noted that there was much to discuss, for example, the huge difference between the advisory committee and the state stakeholder team.

Mickey Taylor asked when updated and new resources would be ready for PSEP use. Andrew replied that most would probably be ready within a year – exact dates will differ because contract discussions took varying amounts of time. Thus, some will be ready for at least part of the 2015 training season, others for 2016. Andrew stated that website access will be provided to PSEPs as soon as the website is operational and reiterated that it would not only include PSEP-IMI sponsored materials.

5. Distribution of 2014 PSEP PRIA Allotment

Carol Black explained that EPA again has a cooperative agreement with the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture Research Foundation (NASDARF) to move the Pesticide Registration Improvement Act (PRIA) allotment to PSEPs. Carol is currently contacting PSEPs – some will have the funds by October.

Part of the same cooperative agreement supports travel for one PSEP and one SLA to attend the 2015 Pesticide Applicator Certification and Training (PACT) workshop. Carol would like others (e.g. industry associations, registrants) to attend PACT to understand what it does. In 2015, PACT will be held from August 4-6 in Philadelphia, preceded by an optional tour on August 3. Carol indicated that industry is always welcome at PACT, and that several topics discussed today would be part of the agenda.

6. Other Business

Carol Somody indicated that work has started on a request from a Goal 1 state for talking points when reaching out to potential state stakeholder team members – why join a state stakeholder team to pursue a robust PSEP? Carol noted that it is very important how and when Goal 1 states approach potential stakeholders. A first draft will be circulated to the team shortly.

Andrew discussed the significant effort being funded by PSEP-IMI on business planning. NASDARF started to engage the University of Minnesota Business School over a year ago, and PSEP-IMI is now funding the project. A team that includes both experienced and new PSEPS has been brought together for the first focus group meetings this week. UMn has a great deal of experience developing business plans, and this project will benefit all PSEPs. A number of Goal 1 states particularly need this. It is hoped that the initial roll-out will take place in the first half of 2015. Bob Magee indicated that this tool will help PSEPs investigate sustainable funding at the state level without dependence on federal funding.

A new version of “Effective Land Grant University Pesticide Safety Education Programs: Mission, Need, Requirements, Target Audiences, Goals, and Key Activities” was posted to the psep.us website in August – the one change from the July version is that the document has been endorsed by the American Association of Pesticide Safety Educators (AAPSE).

Jim Burnette adjourned the meeting.