

The Value of Robust Land-Grant University Pesticide Safety Education Programs

National Stakeholder Team for Pesticide Safety Education Program Funding

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The value of Land-Grant University Pesticide Safety Education Programs (PSEP) is sometimes challenged, due to a variety of reasons, e.g. the current fragile condition of many PSEPs, high fringe/overhead at various universities, reduced capacity in PSEPs' expanded network of not-for-profit trainers (notably county agents), scarcity of on-demand PSEP training whenever employers desire employee training, and less PSEP capability to conduct specialized category training and reach non-English speaking audiences.

The exact role of PSEPs in core and category certification training, recertification training, and other educational outreach varies from state to state. This role may be impacted by state law, size and expertise of the PSEP, category of use, and other factors. In any case, a robust PSEP is best positioned to be the focal point of pesticide safety education efforts in its state and to foster pesticide safety education linkages between diverse stakeholders. PSEPs that are robust and well-supported provide value that cannot be duplicated, and struggling PSEPs must be restored to a robust condition to fully deliver these benefits:

1. Provide basic, essential and state-specific pesticide safety educational resources and outreach on the safe and legal handling of pesticides from purchase to use and/or disposal.
2. Expand and support the network of pesticide safety educators, by producing training resources for, providing training to, and/or assisting with training by county agents, associations, state regulatory agencies and other government personnel, university specialists, pest control companies, registrants, Master Gardeners, health professionals, first responders, non-English trainers, Worker Protection Standard trainers, etc.
3. Enhance educational opportunities for applicators seeking certification in minor categories, for non-certified groups whose jobs involve pesticides (e.g. technicians, dealers, mixers/loaders) and for the general public.
4. Fill a critical educational void left by extensive outreach efforts by many organizations that ignore or minimize attention to pesticide safety education.
5. Stimulate financial and other support for pesticide safety education from government, non-profit organizations, industry and other supporters.
6. Collaborate with their State Pesticide Regulatory Agency, linking certification and re-certification training content, study materials and outreach efforts to state priorities, state laws, exams and compliance efforts.
7. Cooperate with the network of PSEPs, and other Land-Grant University extension and research experts, to address complicated concepts, non-product-specific needs, controversial

subjects, and inaccurate messages/perceptions with science-based, objective education and research.

8. Furnish objective, science-based support to state and federal regulators who must increasingly assess proposed pesticide safety-related laws, and amendments and sunset provisions to existing laws.

9. Offer unique access to the state land-grant university's broad extension and research knowledge base, on-line, distance education and website support services, adult and other audience-appropriate educational techniques, service model, accountability standards, long-term continuity, reputation, and public trust.

10. Contribute leadership and/or support to a variety of national organizations, workshops, and initiatives that advance the quality and reach of pesticide safety education (e.g. *AAPSE, AAPCO, ASPCRO, TPSA, CTAG, SFIREG, PPDC, PACT, EPA Applicator Core Training Manual, PES).

Section 23(c) of FIFRA states that the (EPA) Administrator shall, in cooperation with the Secretary of Agriculture, use State Extension Services to inform and educate pesticide users about accepted uses and other regulations made under this act. Effective PSEPs have broad educational impacts, as detailed in "Effective Land Grant University Pesticide Safety Education Programs", but the benefits of robust PSEPs clearly extend far beyond those obvious impacts.

*AAPSE (American Association of Pesticide Safety Educators)
AAPCO (Association of American Pesticide Control Officials)
ASPCRO (Association of Structural Pest Control Regulatory Officials)
TPSA (The Pesticide Stewardship Alliance)
CTAG (Certification and Training Assessment Group)
SFIREG (State-FIFRA Issues Research and Evaluation Group)
PPDC (Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee)
PACT (Pesticide Applicator Certification and Training Workshop)
PES (Pesticide Environmental Stewardship website)