

Region 1 * New England
State-FIFRA Issues Research and Evaluation Group (SFIREG)
Meeting Report
June 26-27, 2017

1) Pre-SFIREG Meeting:

EPA Region 1 meeting held at the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture in Concord, NH on May 10, 2017.

State Lead Agency Participants:

Taryn Lascola (MA), Megan Patterson (ME), Cam Lay (ME), Dave Rousseau (NH), Robert Bruleigh (NH), Kathryn Hurley (NH), Ron Morris (NH), Howard Cook (RI), Linda Boccuzzo (VT) & Jeff Comstock (VT).

Note: Diane Jorsey (CT), Mary Tomlinson (ME), Ray Connors (ME) & John Pietroski (ME) by phone

EPA Regional Office Participants:

Sharon Hayes, Rob Koethe, Andrea Szylvian & Kan Tham

Note: Richard Pont (HQ) by phone

2) Agenda Outline:

C&T Rule Webinar (Remote)

WPS Outreach & Implementation Activities Webinar (Remote)

EPA Regional Office Updates & Reports

State/Tribal Reports

3) C&T Rule Presentation

Richard Pont (EPA Certification Branch) conducted a conference call webinar presentation on the status of the C&T Rule. Points of focus included:

- A) Effective date of rule is delayed for 1 year to provide for executive branch review of the rule. Structure of the 3 year implementation timeline will remain based on new start date(s).
- B) Revised State Certification Plans will be required. Attorney General opinion/verification of state authority is required but not a new Governor's letter.
- C) Rule will require addition of fumigant competency to private applicator exams.
- D) SLAs and Regional Office have significant confusion/uncertainty related to ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) criteria for reading proficiency requirements. Variability among state requirements will/may have impact on status of inter-state/regional reciprocal certification agreements.
- E) SLAs and Regional Office discussed proposal for a regional certification plan review workshop. This topic also suggested as addition to EPA project officer training curriculum.
- F) SLAs also asked about continued support of worker safety activities including support of CTAG and PSEP through PRIA and other potential mechanisms.

4) WPS Implementation Activities Report/Discussion

Richard Pont (EPA) also provided presentation on the status of WPS outreach and implementation activities. Points of focus included:

- A) The NASDA postponement request/letter (post-election version) is under consideration by the Agency. Response id TBD with Federal Register notification pending. Therefore, the WPS Rule remains in effect.
- B) Federal Register Notice will provide for comment period on the delay request but not related to content of the WPS Rule.
- C) WPS Rule implementation by EPA is undergoing an audit by the Office of Inspector General (OIG). Final report is not due/expected until August, 2017.

- D) SLAs and PSEPs will be responsible for funding the printing/publication of How-To-Comply manuals.
- E) Rule-Specific Interpretations: The crop advisor waiver is intended to be a national provision, not a state-by-state determination. And, SLAs are asking for guidance on Application Exclusion Zone (AEZ) spray quality parameters/criteria.

5) Regional Office Updates & Reports:

- A) Regional office staff reported that EPA-wide priority initiative for School IPM is/will be transitioned to Vector Management – responding to tick and mosquito borne diseases. This activity is not yet a pick list option.
- B) EPA is developing a Hive Science app for mobile devices.
- C) The Region 1 Office, the EPA Office of Research and Development, Research Triangle Park and the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station are initiating a Regional Applied Research Effort (R.A.R.E) research project for the 2017 growing season to evaluate exposure of bees to pesticides applied in normal nursery crop production.
- D) R1 PIRT scheduled for March, 2018 at EPA Laboratory, Chelmsford, MA. VT is host for 2019 PIRT.
- E) National Program Managers (NPM) Meeting is scheduled for June 6-8, 2017 and therefore, will not coincide with re-scheduled Full SFIREG Meeting.

6) State Report Highlights:

- A) Apiary Inspection: SLAs struggle to maintain apiary inspection staff and operational resources. **RI** has inspector retirement pending with replacement uncertain. **ME** has recently hired a replacement inspector.
- B) Tick & Mosquito Surveillance: **CT** reports increase in tick pressures and requests for treatment recommendations, by school districts. **ME** reports an increased number of tick-borne cases of powasson and is conducting surveillance research with Maine Medical Center (Southern Maine). **NH** reports a large increase in requests/issuance of municipal mosquito control permits.
- C) Product Registration & Use Regulation: **CT** reports on State RUP status for neonicotinoids (“used on plants”). No sale of existing stocks after Jan 2018. No use after Jan 2019. **CT** to establish railroad right-of-way vegetation management plan rule. **ME** to initiate registration requirement for GMO late blight resistant potatoes (plant incorporated protectants). **VT** establishing producer establishment, applicator certification and dealer sales requirements for (insecticide) treated livestock feed production facilities.
- D) Pollinator Plans: **MA** completed and released its’ pollinator plan. It reports lack of coordination from state Fish & Game Dept. based on honeybees not meeting native pollinator priority/focus.
- E) Cannabis: **MA** reports that it submitted a workplan that proposed 12 new staff positions to meet demand for inspection, education and administrative operations.
- F) Finances: **CT** reports state budget and staffing security as dire. State financial solvency at risk.

G) Unresolved Issues:

Drones - Region 1 SLAs and **ME** are requesting guidance on aerial application permit status for drones utilized for pesticide applications.

Reciprocal Certification Agreements - **NH** is proposing to host a Region 1 Certification Coordination Summit during 2018. Purpose of summit is to rebuild regional reciprocal agreements consistent with the new C&T Rule. Region 1 SLAs and PSEPs use Cornell University applicator training manuals as a common resource.

- 5) Next Meeting:** Scheduled for November 14, 2017
@ EPA Region 1 Laboratory, Chelmsford, MA.