

DEVELOPMENT AND UTILIZATION OF AN INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT TOOL. Lisa M. Behnken, Ryan P. Miller, and Fritz R. Breitenbach, Extension Professor, University of Minnesota, Rochester Regional Center, Rochester, MN 55904-4915, Assistant Extension Professor, University of Minnesota, Albert Lea Regional Center, Albert Lea, MN 56007-4001, Associate Extension Professor, University of Minnesota, Rochester Regional Center, Rochester, MN 55904-4915.

The University of Minnesota Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Assessment for Field Crops in Southern Minnesota was adapted from the University of Wisconsin Pest Management Assessment for Field Corn (12-6-01). The Minnesota IPM assessment was started in 2003 and has been revised yearly through 2006 to provide the most accurate and relevant IPM Assessment. The Minnesota IPM Assessment covers all major agronomic crops in Southern MN and includes questions on general agronomics, weed management, insect management and disease management. The IPM assessment was conducted in 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006 at Private Pesticide Applicator Training (PPAT) meetings in Southern Minnesota. A total of 1727 assessments have been completed with 150, 415, 440, and 722 private applicators completing the assessment in 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006 respectively. The farmers attending the PPAT meetings completed the self assessment at the beginning of the session and various IPM topics were covered during the remainder of the meeting. Results from the assessments were compiled and analyzed to expose opportunities for increased IPM adoption, and to help educators develop programs that would assist farmers in implementing more IPM practices. When participants were asked about their weed control philosophy 15 to 20 percent of growers were resolved to complete weed control, while 40 to 50 percent of growers wanted to achieve a high level of weed control while tolerating some weed escapes, and only 25 to 45 percent believed in weed control with the greatest net return. Another example is that only 70 percent of growers scout all of their fields for weeds, and only 50 percent of growers scout their fields 7-14 days after a postemergence herbicide application. From the 2006 assessment 77 percent of growers are planting Roundup Ready or Roundup Ready/Liberty Link stacked corn hybrids, and 86 percent of growers planted Round Ready or Roundup Ready/STS stacked soybean varieties. Also in the 2006 survey growers listed their most problematic broadleaf weeds as common lambsquarters (43%), giant ragweed (36%), waterhemp species (35%), velvetleaf (29%), common ragweed (21%), and pigweed species (12%). IPM assessment summaries demonstrated opportunities for additional educational programming due to the incomplete adoption of IPM tactics.