

WSSA Liaison to EPA (Office of Pesticide Programs – OPP)
Interim Report to the WSSA Board of Directors – Quarter 2 2013
June 26, 2013

Second quarter activities: The second quarter was the beginning of the transition. Jill Schroeder made one trip to the agency in April, prior to board approval of Mike Barrett as the incoming SME to EPA. Mike and Jill traveled to visit EPA/OPP to begin to introduce Mike to the agency in June. We both participated in Science Policy teleconferences during the quarter.

April 15-17: Jill Schroeder visited EPA/OPP and visited with individuals from the Herbicide Branch of the Registration Division, the Biological and Economic Analysis Division (BEAD), and Mark Whalon, SME Entomology. On Tuesday April 16, Schroeder attended the Insecticide Resistance Action Committee (IRAC) meeting with Skee Jones, Bill Chism, and Clayton Meyers, all representing EPA/BEAD, and Mark Whalon. Most of the discussion revolved around resistance management. There is a great deal of interest in resistance management at all levels and throughout the week. Some of the topics included:

1. IRAC and EPA discussed Resistance terms with Mark Whalon. In 2010/2011, Frank Wong (SME for APS), Gene Reagan (SME for ESA), and I worked with the EPA Resistance Workgroup and our societies to develop a set of definitions for resistance terms that EPA staff see in their work (Please see the EPA liaison first and second quarter reports for 2011). The goal of the activity was to have a set of definitions that shows where resistance terminology is consistent across our disciplines and where it is different. Mark was shown the definitions from ESA and indicated that there is still a great deal of disagreement across their society for how these terms are defined – and he is planning on redoing some of the definitions. Bill Chism and I had a side discussion deciding that we all need to revisit the definitions keeping in mind EPA's goal which is not to have an academic definition of the terms as much as definitions that someone reading or reviewing a label would understand – EPA wants to publish these definitions so that users can use them to help interpret herbicide labels vs. insecticide labels, etc. This will be a near term project for Mike with my assistance since I am familiar with the past discussions.
2. EPA is planning to issue a revised PR notice on resistance management and MOA labeling (still voluntary) in the near future. In addition, the EPA web page on resistance will be available in the near future.
3. EPA discussed the percentage of labels that currently contain MOA information – the numbers are increasing but not yet at 100%. Industry compliance with supplying MOA information on labels is voluntary.
4. They asked me to summarize WSSA activities in the area of herbicide resistance – I talked about the following:
 - National Academy of Science Summit on Herbicide Resistance that was held in 2012 (link to the proceedings are available on the WSSA website).
 - the symposia on Herbicide Resistance held at the 2013 WSSA annual conference
 - the Herbicide Resistance training modules that were finished in 2011 (downloads of the training modules are available from the WSSA website at no cost. Several IRAC members promptly looked at our training modules – and were impressed that we had a Spanish version as well as English)
 - the agreement with Penton ag media where users can receive CEUs for reviewing the modules and taking a test; and our plans for FAQ information sheets.
 - I talked a bit about our plans to work with sociologists/economists to address the next steps identified at the summit and symposium.
 - I also stressed that all of educational materials rely on MOA labeling for resistance management planning.....

5. Jim Steffel (independent member of IRAC representing consultants) was there and talked a bit about NAICC discussions with EPA (EPA folks talked about how much they learned from a previous meeting with NAICC representatives). NAICC is planning a training workshop on resistance management at their next conference – Jim and I talked about the need to keep each other in the loop as our respective agendas take shape and to work together. There was also some discussion about the meetings between EPA and CCA representatives.
6. EPA members discussed the need to generate cross-taxa resistance management discussion.

June 3-7, 2013: Jill Schroeder and Mike Barrett visited with EPA/OPP and met with personnel from the Herbicide Registration Branch of the Pesticide Registration Division and the Biological and Economic Analysis Division (BEAD). Dr. Kurt D. Getsinger, the SME for the Aquatic Plant Management Society (APMS), was also visiting the agency this week. We spent considerable time with Dan Kenny, Herbicide Registration Branch Chief, and discussed the role of the WSSA SME and policies and procedures for working with the agency. During these conversations, Dan asked a number of weed management questions that covered a wide range of topics. Kurt invited Jill and Mike to sit in on meetings he had with Dan and other Herbicide Branch personnel and we listened and contributed to the discussions on particular aquatic herbicide registration and use issues. We also sat in on a Herbicide Registration Branch meeting and Mike was introduced to the branch personnel. During the week we met with the Resistance Working Group. Jill informed them of progress towards organizing a herbicide resistance workshop as a follow-up to the Herbicide Resistance summit. Part of this discussion revolved around the contribution social and economic sciences can make in helping to understand what factors drive decisions made by growers and others to adopt, or not, herbicide resistance management plans. The attendees were quite interested in this and said they would seek out other federal programs that had successfully encouraged adoption of policy; the Energy Star program was mentioned. We also discussed the possibility of organizing a seminar to bring one of the persons who presented on this subject at the WSSA meeting in the Resistance Symposium to the agency. Jill and Mike were also asked several questions on impact of proposed herbicide uses on resistance management. Throughout the week, discussions occurred concerning the decision of APHIS-USDA to conduct Environmental Impact Studies on both the 2,4-D and dicamba tolerant crop varieties before deciding on whether to deregulate them. Mike and Jill also attended a meeting of the Plant Technology Team. This group includes members from the Environmental Fate and Effects Division (EFED) and the function of the meeting was to discuss various plant studies, how they are conducted and how to interpret the data, required for pesticide risk assessment. Jill, Kurt and Mike contributed to the discussion at several points.

During the week, Mike learned some of the history behind creating the first SME position and the impact it has had from Kurt. He also met Don Stubbs who was the Herbicide Branch Manager when the first SME position was created.

Besides meeting with people from EPA/OPP, Jill, Mike and Kurt also attended meetings of the IPM Center Directors and the IPM Coordinating Committee at the invitation of Harold Coble of the USDA-ARS Office of Pest Management Policy and Skee Jones from BEAD. Jill and Mike discussed issues and initiatives surrounding management of herbicide resistance and the WSSA SME position at these meetings.

Jill and Mike also visited with Michael Bowers, the National Program Leader who oversees the Weedy and Invasive Plants Panel, and Meryl Broussard, Deputy Director for Agriculture and Natural Resources, of USDA-NIFA. They discussed the possibility and procedures for establishing a position at NIFA analogous to the EPA SME. This discussion began with Sonny Ramaswamy, the Director of NIFA, at the WSSA meeting in Baltimore. Both Michael and Meryl reiterated NIFA's interest in such a position but several issues needed to be worked out. However, by the end of the meeting, Michael and Meryl were confident this could work.

It was a very busy week; Lots of new people to meet, acronyms to try to learn, and lots of policies and procedures to try and understand. But, Mike was impressed by the welcome he received at EPA and how quickly he was included in substantive discussions. He was also impressed by the how WSSA's leadership on weed management is recognized at the agency. The efforts of the previous SMEs, Steve Dewey and Jill Schroeder, have really established the reputation and creditability of the position and WSSA.

Third quarter plans: Jill will be accompanying Mike Barrett one last time the week of July 29. Mike is making contact with Dr. Mark Whalon, the SME representing the Entomology Society of America, as well as others at EPA. This will probably be Schroeder's last trip to Washington, DC as the role of EPA SME has transitioned to Mike Barrett.

Respectfully submitted,
Jill Schroeder
Michael Barrett
WSSA SME/liaisons to EPA