

Pesticide Use Report Analysis Workgroup

Meeting Minutes

Date: 20 April 2004, 8:45am - 3:30pm

Place: Cabernet room in the Silo

Attending: 12 ANR participants, 26 from outside ANR

Opening:

Co-chair Lynn Epstein discussed the purpose of the Workgroup and gave a brief description of the previous meeting last fall (2 October 2003). Lynn also mentioned some of the resources available on the Workgroup web site.

Meeting minutes and presentation abstracts are posted on the PUR Workgroup Web site
<http://agis.ucdavis.edu/pur/>.

Presentations:

Tracking down nonresidential users of urban pesticides. Mary Lou Flint and Nila Kredich, UC Davis.

Summary: Structural pesticide use data from the PUR are relatively reliable and analysis shows some interesting trends, especially with fumigants and organophosphates.

California's Urban Pesticide Use Information: Past and current efforts in obtaining useful urban-related data. Nan Singhasemanon, California Department of Pesticide Regulation. Summary: Urban pesticide use data from the PUR have many limitations but provide rough estimates which, when combined with surveys and other data, allow for analysis opportunities.

Estimating pesticide releases to urban surface waters: Strengths and limitations of California Pesticide Use Report data. Kelly Moran, TDC Environmental. Summary: Urban pesticide use data are very important to regulatory agencies but efforts to use the data are hampered by a poorly devised data collection system.

Trends of dormant OP use in California almonds. Karen Klonsky, UC Davis. Summary: Analysis of organophosphate (OP) use has decreased in almond production over recent years but was correlated with the previous season's price of almonds, harvest size, and strength of export market and negatively correlated with wet winter months, and whether UC educational programs had been conducted in a region.

Learned experiences of analyzing the PUR data. Romeo Favreau, UC Davis. Summary: There is much potential for automating PUR analysis though many real-time data analysis applications are not possible given the tardiness of the current data collection system.

Understanding PUR – good, bad and ugly. Larry Wilhoit and Minghua Zhang, California Department of Pesticide Regulation. Summary: There are many useful software applications for PUR analysis but successful analysis requires a good understanding of the database and its idiosyncrasies.

The development of pesticide related spatial data in California. Rosemary Neil, California Department of Pesticide Regulation. Summary: Many California counties have digitized their agricultural field boundaries, allowing for more robust spatial analysis.

Pesticide Action Network's pesticide poisoning project. [title?] Susan Kegley, PAN. A database, which includes PUR data, is being constructed to help medical practitioners better diagnose pesticide poisoning incidents.

Open Discussion About Workgroup Activities and a Next Meeting

The group had another discussion of the limitations of the urban pesticide use data in the PUR (see minutes from the 2 October 2003 meeting) and concluded that some very small changes in the data collection system could have large beneficial effect on analysis potential. This discussion ended after a review of the difficulties associated with changing anything in the state's system and the group resolving to stick to issues pertaining to analyzing the data in its current state.

Meeting Minutes, steering committee meeting minutes

Date: 20 April 2004

Place: UC Davis

Attendees: Joe Browde, Lynn Epstein, Gary Obenauf, John Steggall, Joyce Strand, Larry Wilhoit, Minghua Zhang.

The group agreed that the meeting was successful and that attendance was excellent. There may not be enough presentations to have another meeting within six months so it was decided to plan the next meeting for March [?] 2005. We have probably exhausted the pool of urban pesticide use presentations for awhile.

Future meeting topics include under-reporting (Larry Wilhoit, Steve Orme, and/or Susan Kegley), and Greg Montez, who works with Beth Grafton-Cardwell, mentioned that he has a PUR project he would like to present.

Minghua opened up a discussion of a potential workgroup project -- a compendium of articles relating to the PUR. Publication possibilities include a book (a limited audience would make it difficult to find a publisher), a special report published by DPR (limited distribution is a problem plus less incentive for authors), or a special issue of California Agriculture. The group agreed that the Cal Ag option held the most promise though it may be difficult to include non-research topics.

The group also discussed preparing a white paper that covers PUR strengths, issues, limitations, needs, and what can't be done under the current system. This paper could be part of or separate from the publication Minghua introduced.

Lynn brought up the possibility of encouraging the state to track retail pesticide purchases as a homeland security issue. Pesticides could be used as terrorist weapons and a tracking system might alert authorities to nefarious activities. Tracking retail sales would also have the significant side effect of increasing our knowledge of urban pesticide use.

Actions:

Joyce volunteered for three tasks: 1) to find a room and a date of the next PUR Workgroup meeting, 2) to speak with Cal Ag editors about a special edition, and 3) to find a room for a follow-up meeting where the steering committee could continue the discussion on the Cal Ag project. John volunteered to determine who in the state is dealing with homeland security, who is a liaison with the federal efforts, and discuss the potential of pesticide retail sales tracking.