

2004 EQIP Pest Management Guide

DESCRIPTION

Through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), NRCS provides financial and technical assistance to farmers who voluntarily apply pest management on eligible crops. The incentive payment requires development and implementation of a Pest Management Plan that, at a minimum, incorporates Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and IPM recordkeeping. In addition, the payment rate includes one or more additional pest management components that reduce environmental risk. The pest management calculator is a tool for determining the incentive payment rate. Payment is based on performance of the planned objectives.

PEST MANAGEMENT COMPONENTS

- Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
IPM strives to balance economics, efficacy and environmental risk. **IPM is the minimum extent of pest management required by NRCS.** The degree of implementation is measured using *Massachusetts Integrated Pest Management Guidelines: Crop Specific Definitions* point system. Incentive payments are available for two levels of application: a) **Medium: 50-66% of the guideline items + at least one additional component to reduce environmental risk;** b) **High: \geq 67% of the guideline items + at least two additional components to reduce environmental risk.**
- IPM Record Keeping
Required. Needed documentation includes a certified version of the IPM guidelines, indicating which items were implemented, plus supporting documentation provided by the producer or consultant.
- Weather Monitoring:
In lieu of regularly scheduled applications, weather data is used for prediction modeling and application decisions that work to increase the efficacy of treatments. In many cases, it results in the elimination of unnecessary chemical applications. Documentation includes reports from **services provided by a consultant**, or reports produced through the use of **on-site weather stations**.
- Predator Augmentation/Conservation
Sustainable pest management depends largely on the augmentation and conservation of biological predators. *Augmentation* means periodically supplementing populations of predator insects; while *conservation* provides for the food and habitat required to maintain the population. This incentive also encourages the use of pest specific pesticides, or predator-friendly pesticides.
- Crop Rotation
Crop rotation is extremely effective in **breaking pest cycles**. When planned and implemented for this purpose, it is eligible as part of a pest management incentive.
- Cranberry Bog Sanding
Sanding is a cultural practice that breaks pest cycles by burying insect eggs and preventing a hatch. The incentive payment is limited to **once per land unit**.
- Old Orchard Removal & Renovation
Pesticide use can be dramatically reduced by the removal of abandoned orchard trees adjacent to and/or removal of standard orchard trees from a productive orchard. Action requirements include: **removal and destruction of old/standard orchard trees; root rake land followed by seedbed preparation.** Tree destruction may include burning or windrowing.
- Low and Very Low Environmental Hazard Chemicals
Significant risk prevention is obtained by selecting the least hazardous pesticides for application in environmentally sensitive areas. **This incentive is for selecting 'low' and 'very low' rated pesticides in environmentally sensitive areas.** Pesticide application records in combination with NRCS *WIN-PST* hazard rating reports are used to document implementation.
- DFA Storage Guidelines
Accidents involving pesticide spills or leakages may have serious health and environmental consequences. This incentive supports a producer's **efforts to meet the state's storage guidelines** in their operations. (See *Storage, Mixing and Loading of Pesticides: Guidelines*, 1999. MDAR Pesticide Bureau.)
- Direct Injection Pesticide Sprayer
The use of **direct injection sprayers** potentially reduces the risk of point-source losses, and improves precision of pesticide applications.
- Retrofitted Sprayer with Improved Efficiency
Retrofitting sprayer equipment with new technology helps improve efficiency and reduce environmental pollution. New technologies may include: **low-drift nozzles (i.e. air induction nozzles), shielded booms or air-sleeve booms, over-the-row hoods, or built-in tank washers.** Nozzles should produce droplets in the range of 50-150 microns to reduce environmental risk. Applicators must consider recommended procedures for reducing drift, including: nozzle type and size, pressure range, lower boom height, spraying when wind speeds are $>0 < 10$ mph, forward speed, moving away from sensitive areas, and using a drift-control additive when needed.
- Laser Guided Precision Sprayer
"Smart" sprayers are sensor guided sprayers that allow more precise herbicide spraying and thus reduces environmental impact. This incentive supports farmers' use of this innovative technology.
- Spot Treatment
Instead of broadcast applications of pesticides, spot treatment targets portions of a field based on scouting records, resulting in reduced quantities of pesticides applied and hence less environmental impact. **No more than 20% of a field** can be treated to classify as "spot" treatment. Documentation required for certification includes pesticide records of amount and acres treated.