

Committee: AAPSE Professional Development Conference Planning Committee

Chair: Patrick J. O'Connor-Marer

Date of Report: February 19, 2002

Committee Members: Kathleen Dictor
George Hamilton
Rick Hansen
Bill Hoffman
Joyce Hornstein
Joanne Kick-Raack
Carol Ramsay

Committee's Purpose: The committee's charge is to plan a full-day professional development conference based around the theme "Our Changing Clientele."

Summary of Activities: The planning committee for the AAPSE Professional Development Conference scheduled for June 13 in Des Moines met by conference call on October 17, 2001. All members of this committee participated in the conference call. Committee members identified several ways in which clientele are changing, including:

- pesticide application emphasis that is shifting from agricultural to urban settings
- individuals coming into the field having little or no agricultural background
- populations of pesticide handlers whose primary language is not English
- cultural differences among foreign-born pesticide handlers
- individuals from lower economic groups getting into structural and landscape pest control
- declines in the numbers of private applicators due to declining numbers of growers and the possible shift to using commercial applicators
- changes in the types of people who are becoming private applicators— part-time or hobby farmers, employees of farming operations rather than farmers or farm managers
- laws that are requiring non-traditional pesticide handler groups to be licensed—such as organic growers (in some states) and people who use general-use pesticides

The committee identified four topic areas to consider for the professional development conference. These are:

- identifying and reaching underserved, non-traditional clientele
- redefining the private applicator and changing our programs to accommodate these new clients
- working with new pesticide handler certification categories
- adapting training programs to fit the learning styles of different cultures

Issues for consideration by the AAPSE Board:

Discussion Item A

Committee members discussed the feasibility of holding a conference based on these topics in conjunction with the North Central meeting in Des Moines. Members expressed concern about the ability of individuals, especially those from SLAs, to travel during the upcoming year because of state economic constraints. A general estimate of the cost for someone to fly to Des Moines, spend 2 nights at the Marriott Hotel, meals, and conference registration fees would be

about \$1,000, Many states are limiting out-of-state travel in the upcoming fiscal year and this is complicated by the North Central meeting coming at the very end of most state funding cycles. If a professional development program is planned, it should be most applicable to individuals working in the mid-western states. The above topics suggested by committee members meet these criteria.

Recommendation. Because of economic uncertainties in the current fiscal year that will impact the ability of AAPSE members and others to travel, the planning committee recommends against holding a professional development conference on June 13 in Des Moines.

Discussion Item B

Committee members expressed their willingness to keep the planning committee intact and explore other opportunities for professional development courses. They discussed several options, including:

- plan a meeting or meetings for 2003 – in this case, planning should begin now
- wait until after the national meeting in 2003 and hold a course or courses in 2004
- tie in a professional development conference with the September, 2002 Southern Region meeting – again, planning should begin now – and consider scaling down the course to _ day

Recommendation. The planning committee recommends that the AAPSE Board of Directors consider one of the three options listed above for the first professional development conference.

Discussion Item C

Committee members explored the concept of having the professional development conference be a traveling event that is conducted in conjunction with all the regional meetings each year. This would provide a way to extend similar information to a greater number of AAPSE and non-AAPSE members without them incurring an additional travel burden. The downside would be extra expenses for travel for speakers and facility charges, and it would require more time commitment from the presenters.

Recommendation. The planning committee recommends that the AAPSE Board of Directors consider holding the same professional development course in association with all regional meetings during the year, beginning in 2003 or 2004.

Discussion Item D

The planning committee explored focusing professional development curricula on other timely topics that could possibly generate some financial support from various agencies to offset the costs of putting on these programs. They identified two topics:

- **Chlorine gas certification** – it may be possible to partner with EPA to help support this training because it would provide EPA with an expeditious way of implementing this regulation and reaching larger numbers of people.
- **Security issues as a topic to be incorporated into pesticide applicator training** – AAPSE could seek out other partners, such as law enforcement agencies, for instructors and other forms of assistance.

Recommendation. Explore the concept of offering professional development courses focusing on important and timely national issues as a way to develop opportunities for outside support to offset costs.