

Funding Recommendations and Discussions by the PMAC Alliance
Grant Review Subcommittee
May 6, 2008

Reviewers: Tom Babb, Bob Blakely, Mark Cady, Nasser Dean, Karen Heisler, Brian Hill, Cliff Ohmart, Dave Tamayo, Renee Rianda, Lisa Ross, Rebecca Sisco

Minimum score for funding: 70 points

Rank: 1

Developing BIOS and Corresponding Market Certification Rewards for Canning Peaches in the San Joaquin Valley
“Peaches”

UC Riverside – Dr. Marshall Johnson

Subcommittee Evaluation:

Final Score: **85.0**

Requested: \$292,155

Recommended for funding: \$195,000.

Subcommittee comments

1. Good Management team and overall organization.
2. Field demonstration plan is good, many fields, many growers involved. Very good grower buy-in. The field level aspects of the project are likely to be successful.
3. This project will expand implementation and adoption of a complete, recognized IPM program (not a research project).
4. Overall goals and plan are likely to bring about a significant benefit.

Areas in need of revision

1. The title of this project is a bit misleading since it included “Certification”. However, this is not a certification project. Certification is a minor component (the last task indicates the team will “evaluate” a certification program, yet no scheme or certification plan is specified, nor were budget dollars devoted to this task).
2. If they intend to promote certification, they should have specified if they intended 3rd party certification. They should have explicitly justified the rationale for growers to want to join such a certification program. Note: DPR will need to work with the PI to adjust the work plan given the final budget recommended by the subcommittee.

Budget change recommendations: Reduce budget request by \$97,155.

Explanation and budget/task changes proposed:

This group has already received an FQPA grant from the USEPA for \$97,155 for an overlapping project. Grant is reduced by that amount. Note: DPR will be in contact with Cindy Wire at USEPA to work out details of work tasks, budget and funding supported by each agency.

Comment: (Mark Cady recused himself from this decision.)

7/17/2008

Rank 2

An IPM Curriculum for Urban Childcare Programs
“Childcare”
UC San Francisco – Dr. Abbey Alkon

Subcommittee Evaluation:
Final Score: 78.1

Requested: \$264,830
Recommended for funding: \$215,000

Subcommittee comments

1. Takes conventional wisdom of IPM and brings it to the childcare setting.
2. Reflects the recommendations for changes from last year’s subcommittee—they addressed committee concerns about IPM expertise. They provided a basis for believing that the program will work with this particular audience. Experience with target audience is well articulated.
3. The survey requires skill and knowledge that are provided by members of the team at UC Berkeley.

Areas in need of revision

1. The roles of each member of the team are not clearly specified.
2. Measures of success are not obvious. Although the survey capacity of team members is recognized as strong, a survey alone seems inadequate as the basic measurement device and yet this is receiving a large share of the budget. Needs some quantitative corroborating measure of success in addition to survey. Recommend asking for additional measurement such as business receipts for pest management before and after. This could provide a quantitative measure to validate implementation of the program. Should request other ideas for measures of success.
3. Several details of the budget are problematic. The IPM person’s role is not funded. The budget is very heavy on a couple of individuals, in particular the UC Berkeley group who will be surveying the target audience. DPR is already funding this groups’ survey work. Overhead is not clearly accounted for nor located in one place in the budget.

Budget change recommendations: Reduce budget request by \$49,830.

Explanation and budget/task changes proposed:

This project is requesting \$26,000 for a survey of 200 childcare facilities, which can be cut. The additional \$22,464 should come from things to be supported by UC, such as telephone (\$2,050), rent (\$10,340), GAEL (\$228) and center reimbursements (\$900) for a total of \$13,518. That should decrease overhead costs by \$4,852 (now \$18,370). The additional reduction of \$4,460 should come from operating expense (laptop and projector, \$3,300 and office supplies, \$2,160)

Rank 3

Management of Pesticide Runoff in the San Joaquin-Sacramento Delta and San Joaquin County Waterways

“SJCRCD”

UC Davis – Dr. Michael Johnson

Subcommittee Evaluation:

Final Score: 77.5

Requested \$297,816

Recommended for funding, \$175,000

Subcommittee comments

1. Strong team with clear goals and scope of work. This work is needed.
2. Relationship between monitoring and individual self-regulation/self-assessment is very good
3. Good strategies, best management practices to eliminate pesticide run-off.

Areas in need of revision

1. Anticipated pesticide reduction goal is not great enough to be separated from normal variation or chance events. Cannot be measured during the term of this grant by the proposed strategy. Proxy measures would be more appropriate.
2. Budget details were weak, unclear, and need to be more tightly related to tasks delineated in the proposal.

Budget recommendations: Reduce budget request by \$122,816.

Explanation and budget/task changes proposed:

Eliminate task 1.2 (reporting and invoicing) by \$57,441 from \$70,000. Remove baseline analysis of water-quality data and comparison of baseline to latest data sampling (tasks 4.1, 4.3, \$40,000). This should be done by the Coalition as part of routine or required work. Also cut website tasks (5.1, 5.2, and 5.3, \$25,375). The website tasks are insufficient to cover the costs of website development. Workbooks are more useful to growers and the project should focus efforts there.

Comment: (Cliff Ohmart recused himself from this decision.)

Rank 4

Practical Field Management to Reduce VOC Emissions from Soil Fumigation
“VOC”
USDA-ARS – Dr. Suduan Gao

Subcommittee Evaluation:
Final Score: 76.1

Requested \$269,962

Recommended as an alternate if funds become available. See comment below.

Subcommittee comments

1. High priority area. Project is significant and timely. This is an important project.
2. Because of the current regulatory climate, if this project succeeds, as is likely, these strategies to reduce fumigant emissions would be rapidly and broadly adopted in California
3. This trial would effectively demonstrate techniques to reduce fumigant emissions to growers.
4. Very highly rated team.

Areas in need of revision

1. Almost exclusively a research project, though the group calls it “demonstration”. Does not meet minimal requirements of the grant solicitation. No outreach component, no growers included.
2. Fumigant emission reduction strategy presented is not IPM.
3. Even as a research project, the scale is too small, only one field, and no replication so the experiment does not allow adequate statistical analysis. Without replications and other appropriate controls results would be inconclusive. Poor research design, No real data would be produced.
4. High team rating is misleading because that score only relates to the quality of the team as researchers. This is not an Alliance. The proposing organization, USDA-ARS, does research, not necessarily outreach.

If funded, the subcommittee recommends inclusion of growers, replication of plots, and some demonstration component (USDA-ARS does not usually do outreach). It was suggested that matching funds be requested from industry.

Comment: Subcommittee opinions about this project were split, with the majority not in favor of funding due to the project being primarily research and not demonstration, and not meeting IPM criteria as defined in the solicitation. Despite key deficiencies, the project is internally consistent and well presented. The group recognizes that because of the importance of VOC emission reduction as a regulatory issue, adoption of successfully demonstrated research (without outreach) could be high, and reached agreement to fund as an alternate.

Rank 5

IPM in Urban Environments

“Urban IPM”

Cal State University, Fresno – Dr. Andrew Lawson

Subcommittee Evaluation:

Final Score: 74.1

Requested \$263,412

Not recommended for funding

Subcommittee comments

1. Good buy-in by local stakeholders identified in the proposal. Good cooperation between university and city government. Included well-placed knowledgeable cooperators.
2. Good evaluation scheme.
3. May provide a good example to other municipalities.

Areas in need of revision

1. Focus too narrow, only the city of Fresno. Unlikely to extend to outside contractors—those beyond the city of Fresno.
2. No demonstration sites planned.
3. The literature and information developed as part of this project are already available.
4. Top level players identified (mayor, CSU, etc) but not clear who is doing the work.

Recommendation

Request this project resubmit with outreach to other cities, cost sharing, or inclusion of other cities in the area as members of the team. This project should have clear demonstration components to make this more than simply a training program.

Rank 6

Perimeter Ant Bait Stations

“Ant Bait”

Clark Pest Control – Mr. Darren Van Steenwyk

Subcommittee Evaluation:

Final Score: 73.4

Requested \$113,730

Not recommended for funding

Subcommittee comments

1. Important project and priority area.
2. Proposed a significant pesticide reduction goal.

Areas in need of revision

1. Focus is too narrow. With only one company and route, this is not an Alliance. Results will be hard to generalize.
2. Role of the management team is not described.
3. Mostly a research project with a narrow focus.
4. This project should have been set up as side-by-side comparisons so that other pests would not confound results.

Note: The current Alliance project (Mike Rust, UCR as PI) has a Structural Pest Control Board grant that started 2 years ago. Lloyd Pest Control is doing a cost analysis of a baiting program vs. spraying for Argentine ants, i.e. callbacks, servicing time etc. This grant will evaluate customer satisfaction with a survey. This is a demonstration project from the pest control company's perspective and was considered duplicative with this proposal.

Rank 7

Water and Landscaping Partnerships: Expanding IPM Training to Landscape Professionals in Santa Clara Valley

“Landscape Partnership”

Santa Clara County – Dr. Naresh Duggal

Subcommittee Evaluation:

Final Score: 67.8

Requested \$154,000

Not recommended for funding

Subcommittee comments

1. Good curriculum.
2. Urban project, high priority area.

Areas in need of revision

1. Recommendations made by the subcommittee last year were not addressed.
2. No demonstration or appropriate outreach component identified to extend this project.
3. The survey plan and survey funding are not adequate. There is a lack of expertise on the team to develop the survey and analyze the results.
4. Project is not cost effective. Only a small number of people would be trained and the benefits of training will not be expected to grow or even continue after the project.
5. Did not include appropriate cooperators, such as PAPA. Roles of group members not well defined.
6. Low need because other agencies are funding this kind of work. Should be funded locally rather than with an Alliance grant.

Rank 8

Advancing Reduced Risk and Sustainable Approaches in California Specialty Crops
“Specialty Crops”
CA Specialty Crops Council – Dr. Lori Berger

Subcommittee Evaluation:
Final Score: 67.0

Requested \$300,000
Not recommended for funding

Subcommittee comments

1. Current need.
2. Lots of bang for the buck including water, air and consolidated planning for many crops.
3. Team is well qualified and has broad range of connections.
4. The project will facilitate discussions that are important to agriculture.

Areas in need of revision

1. Goals are too broad and ambitious for a 3-year grant. A focus needs to be identified.
2. Growers and PCAs are not included and there are no commitments from specific people.
3. Project lacks enough details about deliverables.
4. The scope of work is not well described. No quantitative measures of success were identified.
5. Little follow-up and evaluation of the project results. The lag in PUR reporting will make it difficult to get data in time for the project’s needs.

Rank 9

Healthy Preschools Project
“Healthy Schools”
Action Now – Dr. Mitzi Shpak

Subcommittee Evaluation:
Final Score: 64.3

Requested \$259,986
Not recommended for funding

Subcommittee comments

1. Clear stakeholder involvement.
2. Culturally relevant to target audience.

Areas in need of revision

1. IPM strategies are unclear; no clear connection between this project’s environmental efforts and pesticide reduction.
2. Limited to small audience. Although strong support from larger organizations, such as the LA Unified school district, project deliverables are not likely to expand to a larger audience.
3. Measure of success depends on survey and the group has no demonstrated survey skills.
4. Limited technical information for the team to accomplish goals.
5. Low benefit for project cost, partly related to high overhead.

Comment: (Brian Hill recused himself from scoring this project.)