Agenda Brief 9.3: Crop Protection Program Update

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Background:

An Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Working Group consisting of over 40 members and representing the key stakeholder groups with interest in crop protection/IPM was formed in May 2012. The group was appointed by the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU) Board on Agriculture Assembly (BAA), Budget and Advocacy Committee (BAC). It was charged to produce a set of recommendations that will guide the budget authorization process and ultimately any implementation of a new crop protection program. In forming the IPM Working Group, the BAC notes an erosion of previous funding for IPM from the National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA) within its integrated activities accounts by approximately $34M in the last five years.

The working group has been engaging by way of conference calls and emails to formulate recommendations on programmatic approaches defined as "Essential Elements" to a national Integrated Pest Management Program. Those Essential Elements include: the IR-4 (Interregional Research project #4), Regional IPM Centers, Extension IPM (E-IPM), Competitive Grants Programs, the Integrated Pest Management Information Platform for Extension (IPM PIPE_ and Community IPM. The Working Group recommendations attempt to retain functional equivalency of existing programs that align with the "essential elements." At a minimum the recommendations seek to maintain funding, and improved coordination and efficiency. Emphasis on coordination also includes attention to structural change at national, regional and at the state levels.

The Working Group's recommendations are targeted for implementation during the federal budget year of 2014. The resulting working paper (which includes several draft recommendations) was shared with the BAC and Policy Board of Directors during their July 23-24, 2012 meetings in Savannah, Georgia. The BAC recommended to the Policy Board of Directors that it is important to retain all "essential elements" (as described above) in the integrated IPM program. Furthermore, the BAC approved a specific resolution to the Policy Board of Directors that called for "a directed discussion be held with IR-4 and appropriate representatives of the Administrative Head Section related to IR-4's inclusion in a comprehensive IPM program and combined budget initiative." The working paper was also forwarded to NIFA for their consideration.

The Working Group will continue it activities through the fall. The working group will be tapped for input if issues arise before or when the President's 2014 budget is released early in 2013. Cornerstone will also be engaged as needed. During a recent conference call (Aug. 31) additional input was sought from working group members to further refine the working paper and its recommendations. A recurring theme from working group members is the diversity of stakeholders for which IPM is important ranging from growers to homeowners. Likewise there exists a number of organizations and state and federal agencies practicing IPM but more coordination, especially at the federal level is needed. Some type of national coordination such as a National IPM Coordinator position or National IPM Coordination Council, with appropriate authority, is seen as important.

Action Requested: For information