

Member Minute

MCFA welcomes EPA, USDA, allied leaders

MCFA's June 8 Technical Committee featured a packed agenda and notable guests from Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of Pesticide Management Policy and allied agricultural groups. The hybrid in-person/Zoom meeting was widely attended.

The agenda was devoted to discussion of **EPA [registration reviews](#) that are at critical points** for several crop protection tools important to the specialty crop community, and the status of **EPA's ESA Workplan implementation**:

- In March, EPA [announced](#) plans to **expedite risk mitigation measures for four common organophosphates**: diazinon, phosmet, ethoprop and tribufos. Citing updated risk assessments showing unacceptable risks to pesticide applicators and from spray drift, **EPA Deputy Assistant Administrator for Pesticide Programs Jake Li and EPA Pesticide Re-registration Division Director Elissa Reaves** reported EPA is taking unprecedented steps to change those chemicals' labels before the public – including growers – can comment. MCFA leaders expressed concern that environmental NGOs have been able to provide input while the specialty crop community has not. MCFA plans to send a letter to agency officials, requesting EPA return to the prescribed review process.
- EPA has put its Interim Decision for **atrazine** on hold pending an August [Scientific Advisory Panel](#) to review 11 controversial microcosm/mesocosm studies.
- The group discussed status of **neonicotinoid regulatory reviews**. Proposed interim review decisions are due this fall. EPA is also conducting its biological evaluation of three neonics (imidacloprid, thiamethoxam and clothianidin); a draft was released in May. It included a jeopardy/adverse modification of designated critical habitat (J/AM) analysis that IDed jeopardy or adverse habitat modification for 220 species of invertebrates, birds, fish and plants. Registrant guests IDed several issues with the draft, and are working with EPA to refine its analysis.
- The committee also welcomed guests from several **allied organizations**:
 - **National Association of State Departments of Agriculture's Jose Montoney-Crawford** reported that NASDA's priorities include EPA's Endangered Species Act [work plan](#), a shared focus with MCFA.
 - **U.S. Beet Sugar Association's Carrie Meadows** reported on a [lawsuit](#) brought by USBSA and 19 other ag groups, urging EPA to reinstate chlorpyrifos food tolerances and associated uses that the agency had publicly stated were safe before it [revoked](#) all chlorpyrifos tolerances in 2021.
 - **IR-4 Executive Director Jerry Baron** provided a 60th anniversary update on [IR-4's](#) activities, demonstrating the continued importance of IR-4's work on behalf of specialty crop growers.

Is PFAS on your radar screen? MCFA member Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine's Eric Venturini reported his state is moving to ban 76 pesticides, including some common ones, because they contain per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). He reported 35 other states are weighing PFAS bans, not all are targeting ag chemicals. **END**

Dave Epstein recognized for service to MCFA, industry

At the June 8 meeting, MCFA Chair Jim Cranney thanked Dave Epstein for his longtime service to the special crop community and MCFA. Dr. Epstein retired on July 1 from Northwest Horticultural Council, where he was vice president of scientific affairs. He has served as MCFA's vice chair since 2020. Prior to joining NHC he was a senior entomologist with USDA's OPMP.

Cranney noted that Epstein's experience at the university/extension and federal levels has been invaluable to his work for industry and for MCFA. Epstein earned his Ph.D. in entomology from Michigan State University. **END**

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- **Share this update.** Show your members and colleagues that MCFA's work is an important, vital investment. **END**

About Minor Crop Farmer Alliance

MCFA advocates for use of sound science in government minor-use pesticide policies, so that growers have access to safe, effective, affordable crop protection tools. Founded in 1991, we are funded and led by fruit, vegetable, nut, ornamental plant and other specialty crop producer organizations from across the United States. To learn more, visit us [online](#).