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## THE IR-4 PROJECT CAN HELP

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## THE IR-4 PROJECT CAN HELP

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You are probably wondering what IR-4 stands for. It means Inter-regional Project No. 4 and it is funded by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture and all of the state agricultural experiment stations. Its purpose is to obtain data to meet EPA requirements for registrations and tolerances on minor crops and specialty uses.

The pesticide industry will sometimes conclude that the potential profit from some minor use is too small. When this is the case, IR-4 attempts to fill the data gaps. Since the states and USDA have only limited facilities for toxicity and environmental studies, IR-4 limits itself to those projects where the data gaps are efficacy and residue studies. In other words, IR-4 is limited to working on those pesticides where industry has already provided the toxicity and environmental studies.

The IR-4 Project Coordinator's Office is at the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station on the campus of Rutgers University and consists of 7 professionals and 6 clericals. Each state has a part time IR-4 liaison representative. Here in Virginia it is Norman Lau at VPI in Blacksburg. There are also 3 part time ARS representatives from each of the 4 agricultural regions of the nation, one each for insects, weeds, and plant diseases. There are also four IR-4 Leader Labs, one in each of the regions. These are located at state experiment stations and conduct residue analyses for all the states in their region.

The normal procedure is for the person who discovers the minor use need to advise his state IR-4 liaison representative. The representative will, with the aid of the researchers in his state, fill out a pesticide request form. I brought 50 copies and will answer you questions after you have had a chance to look it over.

The state representatives forward these forms to the Rutgers office where I am one of the Assistant Coordinators. We compare the forms to see if more than 1 state has the same need and to see if the needs are the same in terms of dosage, timing, formulation, and so forth. We attempt to resolve any differences and draft a protocol for any field work necessary for efficacy data and residue samples.

It is the responsibility of the states with a minor use need to decide where the studies will be conducted, to make the observations during the studies, to report them, and to collect any samples for the leader labs to analyze. The IR-4 Project is completely dependent on the cooperation of the researchers in the states. The office at Rutgers is responsible for assembling the results of all tests and submitting them to EPA for review. However, it is not a registrant. Some company must be willing to apply to EPA for registration using any data IR-4 can help to develop.

To sum up, you seem to need new pesticides. IR-4 will be glad to coordinate whatever tests the individual states conduct including, if EPA requires it, Laboratory Analysis of Residue Samples. IR-4 will attempt to find a company willing to register any pesticide you suggest. But IR-4 has no funds to support toxicity and environmental tests. If the company that manufactures the pesticide does not have such data, it will cost at least \$200,000 to obtain them and perhaps double or triple that amount. Up to three years may be needed to conduct the studies. Your best bet therefore seems to be finding a pesticide that already has most of these expensive data.

If you have any questions I will try to answer them.