

National Stakeholder Team for PSEP Funding Guidance for SLA, PSEP, and University/Agency Administrators

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SLA Support for PSEP Workgroup

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The Workgroup's Mission: Identify Avenues of Support

There are various ways to strengthen state land-grant university Pesticide Safety Education Programs (PSEP). This workgroup focused on actions that state lead agencies (SLA), PSEP coordinators, Cooperative Extension Service (CES), and university and agency administrators can take to strengthen the PSEP educational mission of university CES. It is essential that CES and SLAs clearly support each other to ensure the safe and effective use of pesticides through coordinated educational and training efforts.

Goals Necessary to Build a Strong PSEP

- A documented commitment between the university/extension administration and the SLA to the educational mission of the PSEP.
- A solid relationship between the SLA and the PSEP that is based on the value that the PSEP provides to C&T
- A clear division of labor between the SLA and PSEP, with well-defined roles and responsibilities.
- A strong positive relationship between the SLA, PSEP, and university/extension administration.
- A continued dialogue about challenges and opportunities faced by educators and regulators.
- A clear understanding of what the PSEP currently does.
- A needs assessment to determine the gaps between current and desired PSEP activities.

Goals Necessary to Build a Strong PSEP

- Agreement on what the funding from or through the SLA will specifically support (e.g. manual development, publications, exam development, workshops).
- SLA and PSEP collaboration on guidelines to improve their ongoing working relationship – roles, type and timing of communications and meetings, and coordination of any joint pesticide safety education efforts.
- SLA and PSEP Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or equivalent with language that attains low/no overhead (with the assistance of university/extension administration).
- Collaboration on post-training surveys, questionnaires, etc. to measure the quality and value of the different educational efforts of PSEPs.
- SLA fees that promote PSEP training involvement and stimulate applicator attendance and use of PSEP resources.

Goals Necessary to Build a Strong PSEP

- Central role of the SLA in engaging with university/extension leadership to re-establish a defunct or inactive PSEP:
 - Education, experience, and job-related skill sets
 - Adequate time commitment to program management *and* implementation
 - Stable base funding that allows primary focus on pesticide safety education
 - Low/no university overhead on earnings from the sale of training programs and/or other educational resources
 - Combination of educational techniques that meet varied needs
 - Opportunities to participate in university curriculum development that fosters a strong understanding of and interest in pesticide safety education
- Willingness of states having strong PSEPs to mentor others, and willingness of states that need assistance to seek mentorship.
- Identification and establishment of key connections within and beyond the state-wide university/extension system.

Goals Necessary to Build a Strong PSEP

- Engagement of industry stakeholders (applicators, manufacturers, and associations) within the state:
 - Understand the needs of each industry and work together to meet those needs
 - Establish an ongoing dialogue and develop a trusting working relationship that is based on the value offered and recognized
 - Explain the current program and how increased funding and collaboration would benefit each industry
 - Discuss the needs of each industry that the PSEP could support
 - Discuss how training activities by the PSEP could complement and enhance industry efforts
 - Discuss how low/no overhead is being attained through the university so that industry partners will be interested in championing funding support from within their group or before state legislative bodies
 - Discuss potential fees that each industry would support as payment to the PSEP to promote more outreach

State Lead Agency Support

(1) Portion of SLA enforcement fines provided to the PSEP for educational efforts that support the mission of the agency.

(2) SLA policies and practices that support the robustness of the PSEP:

- Upgrade of manuals with ‘competitive’ grants earmarked to the PSEP
- Development of initial certification, continuing education, and re-certification programs where the criteria for educators favor the PSEP
- Certain types of training that are assigned only to the PSEP
- Level of funding tied to measurable outcomes (e.g. number of PSEP workshops)
- Certain fee/fine collection overages directed to the PSEP (e.g. from excess receipts)

State Lead Agency Support

- Partial/total funding of a technical or administrative position within the PSEP
- Providing transportation and other auxiliary support to the PSEP
- SLA assistance (voluntary or required) in the review/revision of training manuals or approval of C&T programs
- SLA and university MOU or grant specifications that ensure the SLA funding goes to the PSEP (Note that an MOU also has great value in defining tasks and responsibilities, even if there is no funding.)
- SLA/university MOU or grant specifications that stipulate low/no university overhead
- Manual review/printing/sales agreements that benefit the PSEP

State Lead Agency Support

(3) Portion of state pesticide registration fees directed to the PSEP (through formal law, regulation or policy). Most common challenges:

- Lack of one or two committed SLA champions to spearhead the effort
- Concerns that a fee increase cannot be directed to the PSEP (often based on perception rather than fact)
- Opposition by stakeholders who believe the cost will be passed down to their members, who do not recognize any positive impact for their members, or who view the PSEP as a competitor with their own educational efforts/earnings
- Product registrants that believe funds will be diverted into extension programs that have little to do with pesticide safety education, or largely lost to university overhead
- Legislators who view the increased fees as yet another tax on their residents
- SLAs that believe the PSEP program will not deliver the agreed upon work products

State Lead Agency Support

There also are actions that can enhance success when pursuing pesticide registration fee increases:

- Committed individuals from the SLA and university to champion the effort.
- Early discussions with the individual(s) in the SLA and/or university that may work closely with lobbyists.
- Discussions with key stakeholders concerning the many factors beyond an individual state's pesticide registration fee that impact product costs.
- Discussions with key stakeholders concerning the unique value of a robust land-grant university PSEP that synergizes other educational efforts.

State Lead Agency Support

- Identification of *supportive individuals* in each key stakeholder group (e.g. farm bureaus, trade/pest management/related associations, commodity groups, regional/local businesses, agronomic services, registrants) to promote the need for increased pesticide registration fees.
- Resolutions of support from key stakeholder groups.
- Preparation for any expected pushback from certain stakeholder groups.
- Legislative language that directs a designated portion of the fee increase to the PSEP.
- An MOU between the SLA and the university that *requires* low/no university overhead be taken from the pesticide registration fee.
- A simple grant process whereby the SLA awards the PSEP for the completion of specific tasks.

Summary

There is significant justification for the value of strong Pesticide Safety Education Programs in providing dynamic, up-to-date, state- and federal-specific core and continuing education outreach programs to farmers, industry, consumers, and trainers.

The SLA and industry groups should not look at the PSEP as a competitor for “their” funding streams but as a partner in protecting human health and the environment. SLAs can be supportive of industry educational efforts while still recognizing the unique value of a robust PSEP, and taking steps to strengthen these programs. PSEPs must be well-defined, organized, properly staffed, and effective to be championed by their university, SLA, and stakeholders, and the reverse is just as true.

