

NDSU Extension Service - Weed Management In-Service Training

The Situation

The NDSU Extension Service has numerous county ag agents with less than five years of experience. These agents, along with more experienced field staff, require training to effectively provide advice to farmers on weed management, especially herbicide-resistant weeds.

Extension Response

A weed management education committee, associated with the Extension cropping systems program planning team, planned and conducted two workshops in 2016 (March 29 and December 20 at the Carrington Research Extension Center) with the basic objective of providing training to allow extension agents to properly provide resources and recommendations to farmers on weed management. Twenty-nine participants plus nine speakers were involved in the first workshop and 22 participants and 13 speakers were involved in the second workshop. Key sessions included selected weed species identification, biology and management (lectures and live weed lab); emerging weed management traits in crops; herbicide site-of-action; spray application demonstration; and group sessions on writing weed management recommendations.

Impacts

Twenty-five percent of second workshop participants completing a written evaluation indicated the value of information = 4 and 75 percent indicated value = 5 (1=low and 5=excellent). After attending the second workshop, 75% of participants completing the evaluation indicated they were confident in providing recommendations on weed management to farmers. Based on written evaluations, 64 percent of second workshop participants also attended the first workshop. They used information from the first workshop while conducting 2016 pesticide certification workshops, and to assist farmers with weed identification and herbicide selection during the 2016 crop season.

Feedback

Selected comments second workshop evaluation:

* Comment on advising: "Today really helped!"

**Partial yes to advising farmers. Very intensive training -- my head is spinning."

* Comment on advising: "With practice I hope to feel more comfortable." Keep up the good work. + Critical thinking activities.

Public Value Statement

The cooperative effort between Extension and ag industry staff in conducting the workshops resulted in an educational program that will benefit rural communities due to better decisions being made on weed management and proper herbicide use (e.g. reduction of herbicide drift damage to trees and gardens, or avoidance of water contamination).

Primary Contact

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December 20 workshop participants working on weed management field scenarios.

Collaborators

Tom Peters, Alicia Harstad and Scott Knoke, workshops planning committee members

Non-Extension Collaborators

Vern Hofman, retired Extension ag engineer
Ken Deibert, BASF
Steve Valenti, Monsanto
Kevin Thorsness, Bayer CropScience
Patti Prasifka, Bridget Readell and Steve Snyder, Dow AgroSciences