NDSU Weed Science – A Regional Epicenter for Unbiased Information

The Situation
Declining budgets at many universities in the North Central region have resulted in loss of weed science positions or an extended lag time to refill the positions. Unfortunately, the result has been a loss of unbiased information flow to growers both from research and Extension sources.

Weed Science at NDSU has remained strong (13 scientists) with more positions than at any other university in the US. NDSU has also added new positions with weed control responsibilities at Carrington, Hettinger, and Williston Research and Extension Centers. These scientists conduct research and publish in both scholarly and Extension venues in each of the following areas: weed genetics, weed ecology, small grains, major and minor crops, noxious and invasive weeds, sugarbeet, potato, and high value crops.

Impacts
Despite a reduction in the number of growers in North Dakota as farm size increases, the number of weed guides printed each year remain near 20,000. A significant number of weed guides are requested from growers and industry representatives in surrounding states and Canadian provinces.

The following is a summary of contacts primarily from South Dakota, Minnesota, Montana, and the prairie provinces of Canada.
- A total of 1,025 telephone calls were received with 37% from out-of-state.
- A total of 2,710 information requests were received with 39% from out-of-state.
- A total of 520 office visits were made with 16% coming from out-of-state.
- A total of 188 field visits, or weed ID or crop injury samples were diagnosed with 31% from out-of-state.

Extension Response
The North Dakota Weed Control guide continues to be the flag-ship publication of the NDSU Extension Service. The North Dakota weed guide contains information not included in other state weed guides. For example, weed control recommendations in 26 minor crops, adjuvant classification, active ingredients, and mode of action, herbicide mode of action classification with brand and generic name listing, labs that analyze for herbicide residue, safe limits for herbicide residue on several crops, control options for volunteer glyphosate resistant crops, and a herbicide compendium with trade name, brand name equivalency, active ingredients with formulation, cost per unit, low, medium, and high rate, and cost associated with the three rates.

In 2016, the number of in-state and out-of-state contacts were recorded in the areas of telephone calls, information requests through email, office visits, and field visit/diagnostic samples evaluated.

Feedback
Many out-of-state contacts compliment the strength of our weed science group and complain that they do not have the same experienced and applied sources in their state or province. Many contacts mention they contact us based on referrals from those who have previously contacted us.

Public Value
Accurate weed control information enhances producers’ ability to manage weeds, including resistant biotypes which enhances the sustainability of agriculture communities and increases the profit of diverse crop production systems.

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