

Region 4 Report to SFIREG

December 3, 2018

Submitted by Tim Drake, Region 4 SFIREG Representative

The Region 4 Pre-SFIREG meeting was held in Athens, Georgia on October 16-17, 2018. The meeting was hosted by the Georgia Department of Agriculture. This was a very well-attended meeting that included control officials (24) from all states within the Region (AL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN) except for Florida. Also attending and participating in the meeting were 14 Region 4 EPA officials. Florida did not send delegates to the meeting because of the extensive response efforts taking place in that state following the devastating hurricane that had impacted the gulf coast just prior to the meeting.

In addition to Region 4 EPA reports, topics covered in the meeting were as follows:

- Current Status and Discussion of Dicamba Issues in 2018 (Tony Cofer)
- WPS/C&T Update (Richard Pont)
- Requirements for EPA Quality Assurance Documents (Denise Goddard)
- Regional Training Update (Patricia Livingston, Rick Hayes)
- Inspector Credentials (Anthony Toney)
- PREP Update (Dea Zimmerman)
- PIRT Update (Kelly Engle)
- Enforcement Update (Phillip Beard)
- Discussion of UAV/UAS for Pesticide Applications (Pat Jones)
- Foam Insulation and Termites (Ryan Okey)
- Updates from AAPCO, ASPCRO, POM/EQI

Region 4 State Lead Agencies (SLAs) continue to have a very good working relationship with Region 4 EPA administrators, project officers, and team leaders. There was some concern among the states over the announcement that there would be a reorganization within the Region 4 EPA office.

Region 4 hosted two regional inspector trainings this year. They were well-attended.

All states in the region except for one (MS) stated that they have experienced a low or reduced number of dicamba-related complaints this year. Tennessee did not have nearly as many complaints this year as last year. Even though the total number of complaints was reduced, acreage affected has increased in at least one state (NC).

Several states identified the misuse of MSMA (off-label uses) in their states as being a problem (residential lawns, hay for livestock, etc.).

There has not been much adoption of UAV/UAS for the application of pesticides in states within this region. Most states will require pesticide applicators to become licensed in the Aerial Application category plus the specific category most relevant to the particular application being performed (Right of Way, Forestry, Agricultural Plant, Public

Health/Mosquito Control, etc.). SLAs in Region 4 are not planning to develop a category specific to this application method at this time.

The use of spray foam insulation and crawl space encapsulation in buildings continue to be of major concern in the region due to the resulting concealment of subterranean termite activity and damage in structures. Damage can become quite extensive where this method of insulating structures is used. Appropriate inspection of structures by Pest Management Professionals cannot be performed in many instances after this insulation has been installed.

Most of the issues brought forward during the states-only portion of the meeting were resolved in discussions with Region 4 EPA leadership during the meeting. A few of the issues that still need some work to resolve are:

- A better explanation/understanding of the steps now required in the federal credentialing process is needed. All states in the region continue to be very frustrated with this process and the length of time it takes for credentials to be approved.

- Improved communication from EPA Headquarters through the regional office to the states is desired with regard to various important issues that may arise between scheduled meetings. Resuming monthly regional EPA/SLA calls was suggested as a solution.

- A few states are having problems getting QMPs and QAPPs approved now.

- All states in the region desire to have a meeting next year (2019) to discuss how the new federal C&T requirements will be implemented by various SLAs. National consistency in dealing with these changes is desired where possible.

The next Pre-SFIREG meeting for Region 4 will be held in April of 2019.