

Region 4 SFIREG Report

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The Region 4 spring pre-SFIREG meeting was held on October 29-30, 2019. The meeting was held in Decatur, GA. All states in the Region (AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN) were represented along with EPA regional staff. This meeting also served as a training for revising/rewriting state Certification and Training Plans required by the federal rule change. Approximately one-quarter of the meeting time was dedicated to discussions related to state plan updates and anticipated problems in getting the plans implemented in Region 4 states.

The updates given by our EPA partners were:

- Region 4 EPA update (Carol Kemker, Region 4)
- Regional grants update (Richard Corbett, Seema Rao, Region 4)
- WPS focused inspections (Carol Galloway, US EPA)
- Inspector credentials (Anthony Toney, Tammye Cross, Region 4)
- Regional training update (Patricia Livingston, Region 4)
- PREP Update (Cindy Wire, US EPA)
- PIRT update (Kelly Engle, US EPA)
- Enforcement update (Kimberly Bingham, Phillip Beard, Region 4)
- EPA CID (Chuck Carfagno, US EPA)
- C&T Presentation (Matt Lloyd, Carolyn Schroeder, US EPA)

Topics covered by SLA personnel and invited speakers were:

- Structural fumigations vs. agricultural commodity fumigations (Kelly Friend, FDACS)
- Dicamba Research Update (Dr. Stanley Culpepper, UGA Extension)
- AAPCO update (Derrick Lastinger)
- ASPCRO update (Derrick Lastinger, Ryan Okey)
- SFIREG/POM update (Tim Drake, Dwight Seal)
- EPA / FDA Coordination (Kelly Friend, FDACS)
- A lengthy discussion related to State Certification and Training Plans (Group)

Other Issues Discussed:

Region 4 states had **no significant issues** to carry forward for consideration or action by SFIREG. However, several topics were discussed related to problems being encountered in the Region:

Credentials: Several states in Region 4 stated that they still are having significant issues getting federal credentials approved / returned in a reasonable amount of time.

Structural Cases: A couple of states are seeing a significant increase in structural cases. Some states are seeing an increase in spray foam insulation being used on buildings and termite infestations resulting from the inability to inspect foundation walls and the wooden substructure of buildings. Building codes need to be amended in most states regarding spray foam insulation use in crawl spaces.

Poor Federal Agency Communication: Florida has had a problem with getting an answer from EPA headquarters regarding a misuse case involving guava. The EPA and FDA have not communicated well on this, and Florida has been left without a good answer related to crop destruction.

Hemp: All states in the region are seeing an increase in the production of hemp, and they are being pressured to release lists of approved products. Some states have done this, and they have based their lists on the lists released previously by Washington and Oregon.

Pollinator Issues: There have been no significant pollinator issues or bee kills in the region this year. States have generally increased their communication with bee/pollinator groups and with mosquito control agencies.

Dicamba: There have been no significant issues with the use of dicamba products in the region this year. All states reported that they are about the same or much better than last year regarding dicamba cases (fewer cases).

SFIREG Devices Survey: When will this survey go out to states? States are anxious to respond because of concerns over the increased use of pesticide-generating devices in the region.

SFIREG Representatives were asked to gather information on several current issues and report back to SFIREG for our Regions. The questions and answers for Region 4 are as follows:

- 1) *Have there been any problems so far in revising state C&T Plans or are any problems anticipated?* All states answered that they have not encountered significant problems, and that none are anticipated in the drafting of plans. Some problems may be encountered during implementation when statutes and regulations will need to be changed within several states in the region.
- 2) *What states are planning to take advantage of the Multi-Purpose Grants, and for what will they be used?* All states in Region 4 are planning to apply for the Multi-Purpose grants. The funds will be used for a variety of projects. Some of the proposed uses are: Inspector training; applicator training (C&T and WPS); equipment for inspectors; outreach to the public; waste pesticide disposal programs; unwanted agricultural chemical collection programs; pesticide container recycling programs; pesticide applicator certification testing program; collaborative water sampling project; developing a searchable inspection/investigation and case-tracking system.
- 3) *Have there been any significant problems in your state with Dicamba this year? Is this year better, worse, or about the same as last year?* No state in Region 4 had what they consider to be a significant problem with dicamba use this year. Four states said that it was better this year (fewer reported cases), and four states said it was the same this year as last year (these states had very few cases last year).
- 4) *States were asked which of three Options they preferred regarding the PIRT program.* Three states preferred Option 1. Two states preferred Option 2. Three states preferred Option 3.

A site for the Region 4 spring pre-SFIREG has been chosen. It will be held in Asheville, North Carolina in April of 2020.