WSWS Officer and Committee Report
2017 Coeur d'Alene, ID
March 13, 8am to 5pm

Office or Committee Name: Southwest Regional Coordinators for the 2017 Herbicide Resistance Listening Session
Officer or Chairperson Name:
Date of Preparation (include year): March 10, 2017

Committee Activities during the Year: On February 15, 2017, the Southwest Regional Herbicide Resistance Listening Session was held at the University of California Cooperative Extension office in Tulare, California. The listening session was a half-day event, initiating at 8:00 a.m. and concluding at 12:30 p.m. The listening session coincided with the World Ag Expo, which is a multi-day exhibition that attracts over 100,000 people to Tulare annually. The Southwest Regional Herbicide Resistance Listening Session was one of seven listening sessions held across the U.S. The national effort was jointly sponsored by the USDA – Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, United Soybean Board, and the Weed Science Society of America.

The listening session was planned with periodic conference calls among members of the WSSA Herbicide Resistance Education Committee, session moderators and session coordinators from all regions. Regional coordinators, moderators and organizers conducted an initial planning meeting in Washington D.C. in August 2016.

The Southwest Regional Listening Session had 58 participants, with most participants from agricultural sectors in California. Participants included growers of horticultural and agronomic crops, pest control advisors, crop consultants, industry representatives, state transportation department officials, extension specialists, commodity group representatives and municipal officials with vegetation management responsibilities. Invitations were sent to approximately 250 individuals in California, Arizona and New Mexico. Bill McCloskey assisted with the distribution of invitations in Arizona. Invitees were identified using expertise from cooperative extension colleagues, regional organizer contact lists and an online survey tool (described below).

The listening session asked the diverse set of stakeholders their ideas on: 1) the severity of herbicide-resistant weeds in their systems, and 2) next steps needed to address herbicide-resistant weeds. Participant responses were both recorded and documented. Concerns and experiences with herbicide-resistant weeds were also collected with an online survey published on the University of California Weed Science website. Participant responses have yet to be systematically reviewed, but preliminary observations suggest that: 1) herbicide-resistant weeds can be severe in specific systems (most notably rice production), whereas in other cropping and vegetation management systems in the U.S. Southwest, herbicide resistant weeds are a moderate concern, and 2) stakeholders believe that herbicide-resistant weed management programs require new control tactics (including, but not limited to, new herbicides), educational programs and improved farm economics.

Online and in-person responses, as well as participant invitation procedures, were sent to listening session organizers who are currently preparing summary reports. Regional session organizers will review and contribute to a final report that will be shared with WSSA membership.

Recommendations for Board Action:
This report is for informational purposes only.

Budget Needs:

Suggestions for the Future:
The Southwest Regional Herbicide Resistance Listening Session was an opportunity for the western region to influence the national dialogue on herbicide-resistant weeds. Because western challenges and solutions for herbicide-resistant weeds likely differ from those in other regions, the Southwest Regional Herbicide Resistance Listening Session is expected to contribute to the advancement of herbicide-resistant weed management strategies that are effective and appropriate for the western U.S.

Current Committee Members: Brad Hanson, University of California Davis; Brian Schutte, New Mexico State University

Name of Person Preparing This Report: Brian Schutte