

## Organic and Integrated Pest Management: Opportunities for Collaboration

*Brian Baker<sup>1</sup>, Thomas A. Green<sup>2</sup>, Daniel Cooley<sup>3</sup>, Susan Futrell<sup>4</sup>, Lyn Garling<sup>5</sup>, Grace Gershuny<sup>6</sup>, Jeff Moyer<sup>7</sup>, Edwin G. Rajotte<sup>5</sup>, Abby J. Seaman<sup>8</sup>, Stephen L. Young<sup>9</sup>*

Biointensive Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and organic production methods can work together to address the vital challenge to produce food for all in an ecologically responsible way. While there are significant differences that need to be understood and respected, the two approaches have much in common. Both organic and IPM share visions and mutual goals, while having complimentary approaches. The organic approach is wholly compatible with biointensive IPM and most IPM principles will work within an organic farming system.

IPM and organic production share more common ground than differences, yet collaboration between practitioners of both has been limited, each has misunderstandings of the other. Much is to be gained by working together (Baker et al. 2015). The prohibition of synthetic pesticides in organic production and the lack of a consensus definition for IPM are controversial and divisive. By focusing on mutual interests, organic and IPM can overcome the divide and combine efforts to advance knowledge, science and technology; communicate with one another and to a broader audience; producers; and effectively evaluate needs and report progress to farmers, researchers, practitioners, and the general public.

All producers, including organic, conventional, and those who practice true IPM share vexing pest management problems. Biointensive IPM approaches to managing pests are biologically and ecologically based and the knowledge for this practice exists in the public domain. Because systemic approaches cannot easily be exclusively controlled or marketed, input suppliers are not interested in their research and development. A viable program for innovative management alternatives that can serve both organic and IPM producers would require a paradigm shift by producers and input suppliers.

The collaboration between organic and IPM must become a public-private partnership recognizing the need and opportunity for policy and market forces to work together in both public and private spheres to address these challenges and achieve our goals.

<sup>1</sup>New York State IPM Program, Cornell University, Geneva, NY, [bpb33@cornell.edu](mailto:bpb33@cornell.edu).

<sup>2</sup>IPM Center, Madison, WI.

<sup>3</sup>Department of Entomology, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA.

<sup>4</sup>Red Tomato, Iowa City, IA.

<sup>5</sup>Department of Entomology, Penn State University, State College, PA.

<sup>6</sup>Institute for Social Ecology, Barnet, VT.

<sup>7</sup>Rodale Institute, Kutztown, PA.

<sup>8</sup>New York State IPM Program, Cornell University, Geneva, NY.

<sup>9</sup>Northeast IPM Center, Ithaca, NY.

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Our key recommendations include:

- Increase public and private support for long-term, interdisciplinary systems research that provides conclusive results, innovative new strategies, and inspires a whole generation of researchers working across the spectrum to transform production systems to be truly sustainable.
- Provide incentives for sustainable practices that contribute to ecosystem services, and eliminate programs that encourage unsustainable practices based on maximizing yield and profits.
- Provide incentives through registration reform for pesticide manufacturers to develop and formulate products that are compatible with organic production.
- Expand and develop new organic and IPM networks and media outlets to reach a wider audience; and to identify common research priorities, collaborate, and share information on what works.

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### **References**

Baker, Brian P, Daniel Cooley, Susan Futrell, Lyn Garling, Grace Gershuny, Thomas A Green, Jeff Moyer, Edwin G Rajotte, Abby J Seaman, and Stephen L Young. 2015. "Organic Agriculture and Integrated Pest Management: Synergistic Partnership Needed to." Madison, WI: National Organic and IPM Working Group. <https://organicipmwg.files.wordpress.com/2015/11/org-ipm-white-paper.pdf>.