

Farm-scaping for beneficials: a community-based biological control program

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Background

- OSU and Oregon Tilth have initiated a partnership to develop a grower-based program in **conservation biological control (CBC)**
- This partnership will be based upon the principles of **Community IPM**. Community IPM incorporates IPM in a strategy for local, sustainable agricultural development where farmers:
 - act on their own initiative and analysis;
 - identify and resolve relevant problems;
 - conduct their own local IPM programs that include research and educational activities;
 - elicit support from local institutions;
 - establish or adapt local organizations that include farmers as decision makers;
 - employ problem-solving and decision-making processes that are open and egalitarian;
 - create opportunities for all farmers in their communities to participate and benefit from the IPM activity;
 - promote a locally sustainable agricultural system.
- The program will consist of:
 - Grower to grower information exchange
 - Farm walks and demonstrations of techniques
 - On-farm research and development
 - Emphasis on farm planning as well as the techniques themselves

Current CBC Practices

- CBC techniques are widely practiced. Jeff Falen and Elanor O'Brien (Persephone Farm, Lebanon, OR) provided a brief summary of the practices that they use:
 - bird and bat houses;
 - plantings of sunflowers for birds and minute pirate bug (assumed to be a predator of cucumber beetle larvae);
 - plantings of dill, cilantro, fennel, *Agastache*, *Alyssum*, *Calendula* and orache interspersed with cash crops, to attract and sustain various beneficial insects;
 - emphasis on cover-cropping fields not in cash crops, many with flowering plants such as vetch and clover;
 - pastured poultry flock which hopefully consumes potentially harmful soil invertebrates;
 - vigorous wild population of mustards, radishes, chickweed, speedwell etc., to sustain a vibrant wasp community;
 - formerly: release of purchased ladybugs and lacewing larvae (no longer needed).
- Discussions on a Persephone Farm walk resulted in the suggestion that experimental beetle banks might be introduced to enhance ground predators

Farm Walks, 2003



Three farm walks in 2003 have exposed more than 30 growers to diverse farming types and to a variety of CBC techniques that are practiced by the farm owners, managers and interns. Initial walks have been for organic vegetable producers, but the program will expand to include conventional growers, and other crop types



Future events

Bugscaping 2003

Practical Conservation Biological Control for Your Farm

Monday, November 17th
at

Benton County Fairgrounds Auditorium, Corvallis, OR
10:00 - 3:00 P.M.
\$5 entrance fee

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