

A close-up photograph of a yellow flower, likely a dandelion, showing numerous stamens with dark, coiled anthers. The petals are bright yellow and slightly curved. The background is blurred, showing more of the flower and some green foliage.

Northeastern Weed
Science Society

NEWSletter

Spring 2024

NEWSS Executive Committee 2024 Officers



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Erin Hitchner

Comments from the President **Erin Hitchner**

As I write this, the view from my office is one of a snow-covered landscape with the thermometer hovering somewhere around 22 ° F. Although we've been long overdue for snow, I know by the time this newsletter reaches your inbox, I'll be ready for spring weather.

One thing that is keeping me warm are the memories from our recent 78th Annual Northeastern Weed Science Society which took place in Boston, MA from January 8-11, 2024. This was our first NEWSS only in-person meeting since 2020 and I could feel the energy of having our NEWSS

'family' back together again as a group. Just a few meeting recaps, we had a total of 92 titles submitted, categorized as follows: Student Poster Contest – 19; Student Oral Presentations – 19; Research Poster – 19; Agronomic Crops – 12; Fruit, Vegetable, and Tree Crops – 6; Turf, Ornamental, and Non-crop – 11; Weed Ecology and Invasive Species – 6. It was great to see the large number of Student Poster and Oral Presentations that were presented at the meeting. These submissions certainly kept our judges busy, and according to them the content was top notch which made judging a challenging task. Excellent job graduate students and keep up the great work. You are the future of this society! I would also like to extend my appreciation to the Program Committee, Section Chairs, judges, and many other volunteers that helped make this meeting a success.

Other meeting highlights included our very engaging symposium speaker, Patty Raun, 'Connecting Across Difference: Building Skills for Communicating with the Public'. In addition to providing the symposium for the general NEWSS group, Patty also hosted a separate graduate workshop, 'Learning to Listen and Listening to Learn: An Experiential Workshop in Understanding' which was well received by the students. I know she pushed my boundaries in terms of scientific communication skills and opened my mind to how important effective communication skills are in science, and I hope you left the symposium feeling the same way.

And now we all know not to offend Dan Kunkel since he has 12 siblings that have his back!

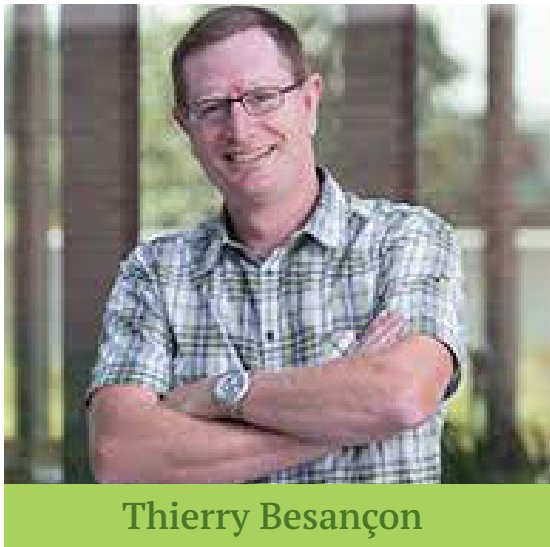
And of course, it goes without being said that our Dessert Social was another meeting highlight, and I would like to give special thanks to Hillary Sandler and Sudeep Mathew for working the crowd to solicit funds for the Endowment Committee. These funds have been used to support things like the Graduate Student Writing contest and Graduate Student awards. Lastly, the Quiz Bowl, which took place on Wednesday evening, was an entertaining and most certainly competitive knowledge competition for students and NEWSS members. A special thanks to Jacob Barney for creating the Quiz Bowl and hosting the event. I've already hinted at a repeat performance for our next meeting!

As we look forward to our next Annual Meeting on January 6-9, 2025, I am very enthusiastic that we will be meeting at The Graduate Hotel in Annapolis, MD. The city has a lot to offer in terms of historical sights, great views of the water and plenty of opportunities to walk around and experience restaurants and other local venues. I know President-Elect Thierry Besancon and the rest of the Program Committee are working to ensure we have a successful 79th Annual NEWSS Meeting.

As we count down to warmer days, make sure to mark your calendars for the Northeastern Weed Science Society Collegiate Weed Contest which will be hosted by Wes Everman and North Carolina State University in Raleigh, NC on July 30, 2024. July 29th will be a travel day and the NEWSS Board and Chairs will be meeting on July 31st. Please be on the lookout for team registration and volunteer sign ups.

In closing, I am delighted and honored to serve as the NEWSS President for 2024 and am looking forward to leading the society over the next year. This will be a year of transition as we work with our newly restructured NEWSS Board and Chairs. Many thanks to Jacob Barney for putting the time and effort into achieving this lofty goal. We hope with this new restructuring to increase NEWSS member participation, make some of the workload requirements a little lighter, and increase the pool of future NEWSS leaders.

I hope to see many of you in North Carolina at the NEWSS Collegiate Weed Contest!



President Elect's Report **Thierry Besançon**

I'd like to briefly summarize the 2024 meeting that took place in Boston, Massachusetts, last January and discuss what's ahead for the 2025 gathering. Firstly, I want to extend my gratitude to everyone who participated in the "Connecting Across Difference: Building Skills for Communicating with the Public" Symposium held on Tuesday, Jan 7. This event featured a keynote address by Patricia Raun, Director of Virginia Tech's Center for Communicating Science. Through several entertaining group activities and discussions, Patricia shared insights and provided us with some food for thought on how to easily establish connections

between people who may not necessarily share the same level of knowledge on some of our very specialized topics.

Looking ahead, I'd like to provide you with some important updates. Firstly, I look forward to seeing many of you at the 2024 summer collegiate weeds contest on July 30, hosted by North Carolina State University on its campus in Raleigh. Big thanks to Wesley Everman for taking the lead on organizing this this important event for our society and for our Undergraduate and Graduate student membership!

Secondly, I look forward to our 2025 NEWSS meeting that will run from January 6 to January 9 in Annapolis, Maryland. The chosen hotel is situated downtown, guaranteeing that everyone will have access to a variety of prepared food options within walking distance or easily accessible via transportation. Monday afternoon will kick off with committee meetings followed by a reception. From Tuesday through Thursday. Over the next few months, I'll be collaborating closely with the Program Committee to finalize the specific format and events for the 2024 meeting. Stay tuned for more on all of these items!

Lastly, many of you are aware that EPA is now starting to fully comply with the Endangered Species Act. That means every new active ingredient will go through an ESA consultation with the Services and all current pesticide registrations will begin going through the consultation process, as well. As we all have many questions regarding how the EPA Herbicide Strategy Plan will be implemented and enforced, several of us (Lynn Sosnoskie and Vipin Kumar for NY, Thierry Besançon for NJ, Mark VanGessel for DE) have recently met to discuss the opportunity to propose a webinar led by Bill Chism, Chair of the WSSA's ESA committee. The objectives of this webinar would be for weed scientist and growers of the Northeast Region to become familiar with the EPA's updated workplan and the changes they likely will need to make to assure compliance through the incorporation of mitigation strategies required by EPA. We plan also for people who will attend this webinar to gain knowledge on how to access important application instructions online through EPA's Bulletins Live! Two. So, stay tuned for further information regarding the date and time of this webinar by checking the NEWSS website or our social media!

**Respectfully,
Thierry Besançon**



Kate Venner

Vice President Report

Kate Venner

It's only been a few short weeks since our time in Boston, and I can't help but reflect on how the NEWSS annual meeting is one of my favorite ways to get into the swing of things after the holidays! I really enjoy being around the members of our society, catching up with old friends, meeting new people, and learning all about what's going on in the world of weed science. We truly are a great group of people that do incredible work.

I'm excited to be back on the Board at NEWSS, and humbled that our membership supports and trusts me to help lead the society. I've got quite the list of things to do this year, and the top of my list is to figure out what kind of symposium to have at the 2025 meeting. We've covered a broad range of topics the last several years, and although I have a few ideas, I'm more than open to hear what people would like to learn about. Please feel free to send ideas my way! Eli and I will be in touch to work on the graduate student luncheon as well. The next NEWSSletter will have more information on both fronts.

Since we're talking about the 2025 meeting, just a quick reminder that it'll be held in Annapolis, MD – more details will be provided as it gets closer.

For those that were Section Chairs for this past meeting, be on the lookout for an e-mail from me looking for confirmation on incoming Chairs, and new Chair-Elects. Thank you so much for making sure our sessions ran, and will run, smoothly!

I hope to see y'all at the Weed Contest this summer. It'll be here before we know it!



Wes Everman

Past President's Report Wes Everman

What a start to the year! It was a great feeling to **FINALLY** meet with all of you in person, in our own meeting, rekindling the spirit that makes the NEWSS family so amazing. Thank you to all who participated and contributed. The program committee did an excellent job putting together a great meeting, with phenomenal speakers, symposium, and graduate student events. It was refreshing to see everyone interacting, enjoying time together, and sharing stories and memories. We can now look forward to the upcoming activities – the Weed Contest, to be held in Raleigh, NC July 30th, and the next annual meeting in Arlington, MD next January.

As I move into this new role, I will be reviewing and updating the MOPs. Jacob did many significant revisions in the past year with our major changes to the Board structure. I will be helping to clarify and modify small details that will help the transition along in the next year. As we run into hiccups or experience new challenges with the changes, please reach out to Erin or me to address these and improve the MOPs.

Another appointment with becoming Past President is leading the Endowment Committee. I look forward to working with them to increase our contributions and identifying ways we can further support our students. If you have suggestions or ideas, please let me know! In addition, I will be stewarding the society awards for the 2025 meeting. I will be making a strong effort to make sure we have nominees for all positions, but in the meantime, please keep your colleagues in mind and plan to nominate someone. We have a lot of amazing society members who are worthy of an award. The last piece, I think, of the Past President role is beginning the judging commitment for the next five meetings. I strive to make students cry, and plan to be

has judgmental as I possibly can, please prepare your students accordingly.

I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for the opportunity to lead in the past year. I can honestly say I did not feel worthy, and am grateful for the support and guidance I have had in the society. You all make every act of service worthwhile and so rewarding. I hope everyone has a great year professionally and personally in 2024 and I look forward to seeing you all this summer!



NEWSS Graduate Student Report

Eli Russell

The annual meeting in Boston this year was an awesome opportunity for our NEWSS graduate students to meet other students and professionals alike. With the pandemic and the joint meeting with WSSA last year, this was the first stand alone NEWSS meeting that many of the graduate students have ever attended. The overall theme from the graduate students was excitement as students were able to catch up with old friends and make new friends in the process.

We had an outstanding level of participation in our graduate student luncheon this year where Patty Raun delivered an engaging and interesting talk for our graduate students. With 30 people in attendance, the turnout was almost all of the students that registered for the conference. The student contests also had a good turnout with 19 submissions in the presentation contest and 20 submissions in the poster contest. Entries into the photo contest and the graduate student writing competition were low, but we hope to drum up more interest this coming year. So, be on the lookout as the year progresses for emails regarding these two contests and we hope you will participate!



Navdeep Godara

Additionally, we will be having an in-person weed contest this year hosted by North Carolina State University! Details about the location and date will be sent out as soon as preparations for the contest are underway. So, keep an eye out for emails or updates in future newsletters!

Finally, we had great interest by the graduate students this year for the graduate student representative elect! The excitement and willingness to be involved felt like a breath of fresh air for our graduate students. In all the excitement the graduate students elected Navdeep Godara as our new graduate student representative elect!

Membership Report Matt Elmore

A total of 113 people registered for the 2024 NEWSS meeting. Current membership for 2024 is 72 Regular Members, 36 Student Members, 9 Sustaining Members, and 9 Fellow Members **for a total of 126 members**. This is more than the 118 members from 2023. Student members in 2024 were similar to 2023 but there was an increase in Regular Members in 2024. There are 207 members-at-large who were members in 2022, 2023 or 2024. Those on the membership-at-large list will get most email communications from NEWSS but are not considered members. If you paid registration for the 2024 NEWSS meeting either as an individual or Sustaining Member you are considered a member for 2024. If you aren't sure of your membership status send me an email at matthew.elmore@rutgers.edu. If you would like to become a member, visit <https://www.newss.org/membership/sign-up-or-renew-membership/>.

Sustaining Membership Report

Caio Brunharo

As always, we are grateful for Sustaining Membership support for the 2024 NEWSS meeting and would like to take the opportunity to recognize their contributions. Our Platinum Sustaining members include BASF, Bayer, Corteva, and Syngenta. Our Silver Sustaining members include AMVAC, PBI-Gordon Corp, FMC, TeeJet and Valent. And our Bronze Sustaining Members include GDM Solutions, LABS and NuFarm. Sustaining Memberships support NEWSS operating costs, website maintenance, the Director of Science policy, CAST membership and the Collegiate Weed Science contest. If you would like to contribute in the future, please reach out to me. Thank you all and be well.

Research and Education Update

Carolyn Lowry

It was great seeing everyone in person at the annual meeting! If you missed the board meeting, we discussed whether it is worthwhile for NEWSS to continue providing pesticide recertification credits at the annual meeting. Because some states make it very difficult to obtain recertification credits, it is a service we can only provide to some of our members. For the 2024 meeting, we provided credits for 7 (DE, MD, NC, PA, SC, VT, WV) states for 5 of the sessions. In total, we had 18 individuals sign up for pesticide recertification credits, some for multiple sessions. Should this remain a service that NEWSS continues to provide? If you have a strong opinion on this, we want to hear from you! You can email me: Carolyn.Lowry@psu.edu.



Larissa Smith

Treasurer's Report Larissa Smith

If you would like to be a NEWSS Member, annual membership dues can be processed at: <https://www.newss.org/membership/sign-up-or-renew-membership/>

Treasurer Contact: larissa.smith@syngenta.com

Mailing Address:

NEWSS Treasurer
P.O. Box 303
King Ferry, NY 13081

NEWSS Account Balances as of February 1, 2024

Checking	\$95,729.81
Savings	\$31,879.76
12 Month CD	\$51,575.22
Endowment Fund	\$64,555.67
Total Net Assets	\$243,740.46

CAST Update - February 2024

Anthony Witcher, CAST Representative

CAST Launches Webinar Series on FIFRA and ESA: The Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST) proudly announces the commencement of an insightful series of six webinars focusing on the pivotal roles of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in balancing agricultural practices with environmental preservation. This initiative is part of CAST's commitment to enhance knowledge and foster informed discussions on key agricultural issues. More details at: <https://www.cast-science.org/cast-launches-webinar-series-on-fifra-and-esa-register-now-for-the-first-session/>.

Past Webinars can be viewed here:

[The second session in CAST's six-part FIFRA/ESA webinar series - "A Legal Discussion of the FIFRA/ESA Consultation Process Over Time"](#)

[The third session in CAST's six-part FIFRA/ESA webinar series - "Improving the Science Behind the Process: Implementing Better Data and Tools to Streamline the FIFRA/ESA Process"](#)

[The fourth session in CAST's six-part FIFRA/ESA webinar series - "Developing and Adopting Economically Effective Pesticide Mitigation Strategies: Critical to the Survival of Agriculture and Endangered Species"](#)

Plant Agriculture and Environmental Issues Work Group (PWG) Update. The PWG meets monthly to discuss the status of current writing projects and to consider new proposals. There are approximately 15 active proposals (in varying stages of completion) under consideration by the PWG. Four of the proposals rank as high priority and include: Precision Irrigation Management, Harmful Algal Blooms (HAB), RNAi Technology, and Intensification of Agriculture.

Recent CAST Publications include:

- [Developing and Adopting Economically Effective Pesticide Mitigation Strategies: Critical to the Survival of Agriculture and Endangered Species](#)
- [RNA Interference in Agriculture: Methods, Applications, and Governance](#)
- [Improving the FIFRA/ESA Process by Addressing Key Obstacles and Incorporating Better Data and Tools](#)
- [A Legal Discussion of the FIFRA/ESA Consultation Process Over Time](#)
- [FIFRA and the Endangered Species Act: Finding a Balance between Agricultural Efficiency, Environmental Sustainability, and Regulatory Stability](#)
- [Food Traceability: Current Status and Future Opportunities](#)
- [Zoonotic Diseases in Animal Agriculture and Beyond: A One Health Perspective](#)
- [Goals, Strengths and Limitations Governing the Use of Life Cycle Assessment \(LCA\) in Food and Agriculture](#)
- [Gains Foregone by Going GMO Free: Potential Impacts on Consumers, the Environment, and Agricultural Producers](#)
- [Celebrating 50 Years as the Trusted Source for Agricultural Science and Technology](#)
- [The Role of Agricultural Science and Technology in Climate 21 Project Implementation](#)

Upcoming Papers

February 27 (webinar release only)

Preventing the Next Plant Invasion: Opportunities and Challenges

March 20 (in-person rollout in St. Louis, MO)

Applications, Benefits, and Barriers of Genome Edited Crops

CAST Impact Reports on Publications. Impact data for each CAST publication is tracked and reported on at 6, 12, 18, and 24 months after the paper releases. At two years, the impact report is considered “final” and we no longer continue tracking unless there is a special request. Categories that are currently being tracked are: release/rollout, press release, comments received, follow-on activities, direct and indirect paper distribution, articles and web mentions, paper citations, and social media. Recent impact reports can be found at

<https://www.cast-science.org/impact-reports/>.

Annual Report. The CAST 2022 Annual Report was released and can be found at: <https://www.cast-science.org/about/annual-reports/>.

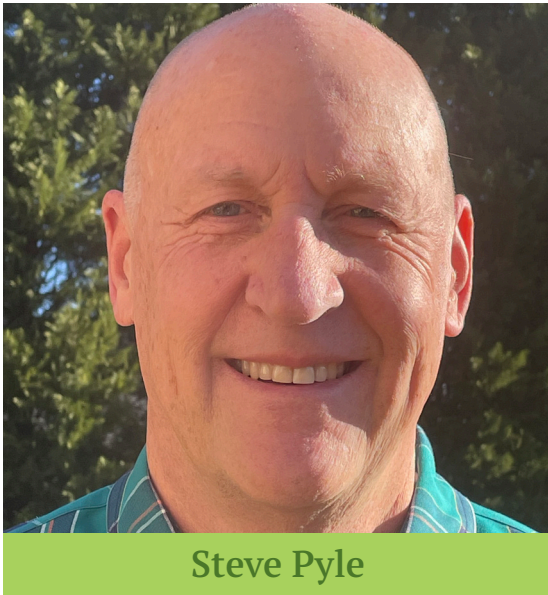
What is CAST? Some of you may not be familiar with CAST, the Council for Agricultural Science and Technology. CAST was established in 1972 and is a nonprofit group composed of scientific societies and many scientific/professional societies, universities, nonprofit organizations, companies, and individuals. Its primary purpose is to assemble, interpret, and communicate credible, balanced, science-based information to policy-makers, the media, the private sector, and the public. There are three different work groups and we participate in the Plant Agriculture and Environmental Issues Work Group (PWG). NEWSS pays an annual membership to CAST, which enables us to have a representative on the Board of Directors.

Become a Member. Students can join for FREE. For others, \$100 gets you an individual membership and helps to support the great work that CAST does on behalf of agriculture.

What's in it for me? 1) You'll receive Friday Notes—CAST's weekly signature newsletters. 2) With every publication release, you may request one free printed copy of new Issue Papers, Special Publications, and Task Force Reports. You will also have online access to all CAST publications and archived issues of Friday Notes. 3) Recognition of your support is listed in the CAST Annual Report. 4) Since CAST is 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, your membership contribution may qualify as a charitable contribution under IRS guidelines. Don't forget, students can join for FREE!

Submit an Idea. If you have a topic/issue of national interest that CAST should address, please forward to me (awitcher@tnstate.edu). I will propose the topic to the PWG and if selected it may become a future CAST paper.

Thank you for the opportunity to represent NEWSS at CAST.



WSSA Report Steve Pyle, WSSA Representative

The 2024 WSSA Annual Meeting was held jointly with the Southern Weed Science Society (SWSS) at the Hyatt Regency in San Antonio, TX January 22–25, 2024. The 2024 WSSA Board of Directors (BOD) is as follows:

2024 WSSA Board of Directors

Past President - Carroll Moseley - carroll.moseley@syngenta.com

President - Gregory Dahl - gkdahl19@gmail.com

President Elect - Hilary Sandler - hsandler@umass.edu

Treasurer - Lauren Lazaro - lauren.lazaro@bluerivertech.com

Secretary - Kelly Backscheider - kelly.a.barnett@corteva.com

Vice President - Ian Burke - icburke@wsu.edu

Co-Director of Publications - Chris Willenborg - chris.willenborg@usask.ca

Co-Director of Publications - Sarah Ward - sarahward1@earthlink.net

Constitution and Operating Procedures - John Lindquist - jlindquist1@unl.edu

Executive Director of Science Policy - Lee Van Wychen - lee.vanwychen@wssa.net

EPA Liaison - Mark VanGessel - mjv@udel.edu

USDA-NIFA Fellow - James Kells - kells@msu.edu

APMS Rep - Andrew Howell - awhowell@ncsu.edu

CWSS Rep - Darren Robinson - drobinso@uoguelph.ca

NCWSS Rep - Erin Burns - burnser5@msu.edu

NEWSS Rep - Steven Pyle - steve.pyle@syngenta.com

SWSS Rep - Peter Dotray - peter.dotray@ttu.edu

WSWS Rep - Alan Helm - ahelm@gowanco.com

Student Liaison - Isabel Werle - Isabels6@illinois.edu
Member at-Large - Michael Flessner - flessner@vt.edu
Member at-Large - Christy Sprague - Sprague1@msu.edu
CAST – Rep - Jill Schroeder - jischroe1@gmail.com

Sarah Ward sarahward1@earthlink.net reported that *Weed Technology* has completed the transition to a Gold Open Access publishing model. All articles accepted from December 4, 2023, onwards will be published open access, and starting with the 2024 volume year, *Weed Technology* is also switching to continuous publication. After final formatting and copyediting, accepted articles will immediately be assigned page numbers and published online in the current volume as the version of record, without waiting to be gathered into a journal issue. This will significantly reduce the time from article acceptance to final publication. The number of manuscripts submitted to *Weed Science* and *IPSM* increased in 2023 compared to 2022, which is encouraging as we prepare to transition both these journals to Gold Open Access at the end of 2024.

The 2025 WSSA Annual Meeting will be held February 24-27, 2025, jointly with the Canadian Weed Science Society (CWSS) at the Sheraton Wall Centre in Vancouver, BC, which was the original venue for the 2022 joint conference. The joint meeting with the CWSS was changed to a virtual format because of COVID and international travel restrictions to Canada.

Respectfully Submitted,
Steve Pyle, WSSA Representative

FY 2024 Appropriations Status

A third Continuing Resolution (CR) was passed by Congress and signed by the president on January 19 that will continue to fund the federal government at FY 2023 levels into March. All 12 appropriations bills must still be passed by both Houses and signed by the President. The third CR has two deadlines: March 1, 2024, for the following four appropriations bills: **Agriculture, Energy & Water**, Military Construction-VA and **Transportation-HUD**; and March 8 for the other eight appropriation bills.

On January 8, the House and Senate agreed to an overall spending cap of \$773 billion for non-defense discretionary (NDD) programs, which is nearly flat compared to FY 2023. Deciding on the NDD spending cap was a critical first step, but after that, discussions broke down. However, late on Friday, January 26, lawmakers reached a deal on totals for the 12 funding bills, but neither the House or the Senate has released the numbers. Either way, now that each of the 12 bills topline have been set, that task becomes significantly easier.

The process is still far from over, however. Now appropriators need to use the topline to hash out finer policy debates and craft 12 new appropriations bills that can pass both the House and Senate and ultimately be signed into law by the president.

April 30 is another critical deadline. If lawmakers fail to finalize spending legislation by then, a 1 percent across-the-board cut may be triggered, as stipulated in the debt legislation enacted last year.

2023 Farm Bill Status

The second continuing resolution that extended funding for the federal government at FY 2023 levels, also extended Farm Bill programs to September 30, 2024, providing added time to work on this. House and Senate Ag Committee leaders expressed hope that it can be completed by the end of the first quarter this year or

shortly after. However, no draft Farm Bill language has been released, and it does not appear the Speaker of the House has entered into negotiations with the Senate. This means it is likely to be an extended process and with 2024 being an election year, there is a 50-50 chance that a new Farm Bill might not be passed until 2025.

EPA Releases Final Report on the Use of 11 Controversial Atrazine Cosm Studies

The Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP) provides independent scientific advice to the EPA on health and safety issues related to pesticides. The FIFRA SAP conducted on August 22-24, 2023 was titled: **“Examination of Microcosm/Mesocosm Studies for Evaluating the Effects of Atrazine on Aquatic Plant Communities”**. Many thanks to Aaron Hager, Jay Ferrell, John Madsen and Kurt Getsinger for their service and data review for this SAP.

To protect aquatic plant communities from the effects of atrazine, EPA developed an aquatic plant community-based concentration-equivalent level of concern (CE-LOC). The CE-LOC is determined using a combination of single-species aquatic plant toxicity studies and microcosm/mesocosm (cosm) studies. The cosm studies included in the CE-LOC calculation can be defined as complex experiments used to examine aquatic plant communities under semi-controlled conditions that simulate natural environments. Endpoints for these cosm studies were defined as single determinations of the response of one or more components of the aquatic plant community (e.g., phytoplankton, periphyton, macrophytes) for a defined individual atrazine test concentration as it relates to the controls in the study.

From 2002 to 2016, EPA considered over 70 cosm studies. However, a FIFRA SAP conducted in 2012 identified 11 of those studies as warranting further review because of concerns about study design or performance flaws, as well as EPA’s interpretation of the results.

EPA received additional public comments about the 11 controversial atrazine cosm studies in its 2022 Proposed Revisions to the Atrazine Interim Registration Review Decision where they used a CE-LOC of 3.4 ppb. The CE-LOC for atrazine was previously 15 ppb. When the atrazine CE-LOC is exceeded, it triggers additional monitoring and/or mitigation to protect aquatic plant communities.

After EPA issued the 3.4 ppb CE-LOC last year, many stakeholder groups, including WSSA, asked the EPA to

conduct this independent FIFRA SAP on the use of the 11 controversial atrazine cosm studies in calculating the CE-LOC.

To EPA's credit, they published an excellent [white paper](#) earlier this year that presents EPA's reevaluation of the 11 controversial atrazine cosm studies. The [white paper](#) also provides an overview of atrazine, its history as it relates to the cosm studies, and the "Charge Questions" (pg 16) for the 2023 FIFRA SAP that met in August.

On November 16, the [FIFRA SAP final report on the use of the 11 atrazine cosm studies](#) was released. Based on the SAP's discussions, most of the 11 atrazine cosm studies in question did suffer from various flaws and should not be used to calculate a CE-LOC for atrazine. There are nearly 50 other cosm studies that meet EPA's criteria for inclusion in its cosm database. If EPA follows the 2023 FIFRA SAP's recommendations, they would be using the best available science to calculate the CE-LOC for atrazine, which would likely mean a higher atrazine CE-LOC.

EPA Publishes Update on its Vulnerable Species Pilot (VSP)

On November 21, 2023, EPA published an update on its VSP project based on the 10,000 plus comments (200 unique comments) they received during the 45-day comment period. The following summarizes EPA's current thinking on revisions to the VSP framework:

- Narrow the areas within the endangered species range map to only include locations that are important to conserving a species.
- Clarify the scope of the VSP for non-agricultural uses;
- Clarify potential exemptions to the proposed mitigation and whether additional exemptions are needed;
- Revise some of the proposed mitigations and include additional mitigation options specific to non-agricultural uses and specialty crops;
- Revisit how EPA selected the pilot vulnerable species; and
- Develop a consistent approach to reduce pesticide exposure to listed species from spray drift and run-off.

EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs said in an update to state regulators (SFIREG) on Dec. 4, 2023 that its

“current thinking for agricultural uses is that the proposed VSP mitigation would not need to include avoidance, but rather would focus on minimization.” The full update, along with additional details regarding the VSP project and mitigation proposals, are available in the public docket [EPA-HQ-OPP-2023-0327](#). By fall 2024, EPA intends to provide additional updates on its **VSP project**.

EPA Pesticide Label Reform is Finally Happening

On November 15, EPA released a white paper titled “[Benefits of the Adoption of Structured Content and Digital Pesticide Labels](#)” and is requesting feedback on its plan to adopt digital pesticide labels that will make labeling information clearer, more consistent, and more accessible to users.

EPA’s plan for digital labels covers the creation of both a structured label—which would provide a framework for consistently placing and ordering label information—and a digital label, which would organize the label information as electronic data. Currently, the pesticide product label registration process is mostly manual, with EPA staff reading through long, detailed label submissions to pull out specific information, like application rate, to enter into the EPA’s [Pesticide Product and Label System](#). This has led to time-consuming reviews and high cost to registrants and regulators. Further, the increasing complexity of pesticide labels and lack of standardized label format and language can create challenges for pesticide users and the public seeking information about which products to use and how to use them.

Moving from traditional labels to digital labels and providing a database of accepted label language would make submitting label content simpler and more consistent for all pesticide registrants and would improve the Agency’s ability to review and access submissions efficiently.

EPA is requesting public comment on all aspects of structured digital labels, including:

- anticipated benefits
- risks and challenges
- key information fields (such as pesticide use site, formulation, and maximum application rate), and
- potential phases of adoption.

The [whitepaper](#) will be open for comment until **March 14, 2024** on docket [EPA-HQ-OPP-2023-0562](#).

IR-4 Works With Weed Scientists to Expand Glufosinate Label

As a result of research conducted by the IR-4 Project, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has approved significant label expansions for glufosinate-ammonium. Final rules adding to this herbicide label were published to the federal register on [June 20, 2023](#) and September 21, 2022. As a result of these label expansions, a wide variety of specialty crops can now benefit from the effective weed control provided by this herbicide, including: avocados, figs, melons, hops, squashes, tomatoes, tropical fruits, grasses grown for seed in the Pacific Northwest.

APMS Congressional Visits in November



Left to Right: Cynthia Cias, Annu Kumari, Rob Richardson, Troy Goldsby and Jay Ferrell

In November, I organized and conducted 14 Congressional meetings on aquatic plant management issues. These meetings included House and Senate staff from FL, TN, AL and NC and majority and minority committee staff for Energy and Water Appropriations in both the House and Senate. Many thanks to Jay Ferrell, APMS President, Troy Goldsby APMS Director and Rob Richardson, APMS Science Policy Committee representative. My Science Policy Fellows, Cynthia Sias and Annu Kumari also attended meetings during the week. In addition to the Congressional visits, we also attended an EPA Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee (PPDC) meeting at EPA headquarters and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Charles Valentine Riley Memorial Lecture that featured Dr. Joe Cornelius, Chief Executive Officer at the Bill & Melinda Gates Agricultural Innovations (Gates Ag One).

Main issues we discussed on Capitol Hill included seeking appropriations for the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) Aquatic Plant Control line item in the ACOE Construction account that funds both the aquatic plant control research program and the watercraft inspection and decontamination program. We also discussed the importance of continuing funding for the hydrilla research and demonstration work in the Connecticut River basin and supporting funding of invasive species provisions in the 2020 and 2022 Water Resources Development Acts (WRDA). Most Congressional staff don't realize that aquatic plant managers have a limited set of aquatic plant management tools including only 17 aquatic herbicides!

The House proposed \$16.5 million for the APC program in FY 2024, which is less than half of the \$33.5 million received in FY 2023. In addition, the House has proposed zeroing out funding for the Connecticut river basin hydrilla research and control in FY 2024. On the other side of the Hill, the Senate has proposed \$27 million for the APC in FY 2024, which includes \$6.3 million for CT river hydrilla. We obviously supported the Senate budget vs. the House budget and made good progress on these funding issues during our Congressional visits. We hope to see FY 2024 funding levels for the APC in line with FY 2023.

BLM Receives Approval for Use of Seven Herbicides in 2024

The National and Regional Weed Science Societies have been working with the Department of the Interior (DOI) Bureau of Land Management (BLM) over the past several years to get approval on final programmatic environmental impact statements (PEIS) for the use of the following seven herbicides on BLM land:

1. aminocyclopyrachlor
2. clethodim
3. fluazifop-p-butyl
4. flumioxazin
5. imazamox
6. indaziflam
7. oryzalin

These herbicides have already been approved by EPA (some for a long time!), in adjoining nonfederal land. In order for them to be considered as a management option on BLM lands, they had to be in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976.

These additional herbicide active ingredients will diversify BLM's weed management plan and help meet the purposes that were first identified in BLM's 2007 and 2016 PEISs related to vegetation treatments. [A final record of decision](#) is expected in February 2024.

NISAW is February 26 – March 3, 2024.

The 25th anniversary of [National Invasive Species Awareness Week](#) (NISAW) will occur from Feb. 26 – Mar. 3, 2024. The 2024 NISAW webinar series is listed below. Get more information and [NISAW events page](#).

- February 26, 2024 – [Annual USGS Invasive Species Research Forum](#)
- February 27, 2024 – [The Invasive Species Language Workshop in partnership with the National Sea Grant Law Center](#)
- February 28, 2024 – [The Federal Interagency Committee on the Management of Noxious and Exotic Weeds \(FICMNEW\)](#)
- February 29, 2024 – [Opportunities and Challenges for Preventing the Next Plant Invasion](#)

(NOTE: this is a Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST) white paper that was developed by the following representatives from WSSA and NIASMA: Jacob Barney, David Coyle, Erik Lehnhoff, Daniel Tekiela, and Paul Tseng.)

- March 1, 2024 – [Protecting North American Biodiversity from Invasive Species](#)

Lee Van Wychen, Ph.D.
Executive Director of Science Policy
Weed Science Society of America

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National and Regional Weed Science Society Meetings

Feb. 26–Mar. 3, 2024, 25th National Invasive Species Awareness Week, Washington DC www.nisaw.org
Mar 4 - 7, 2024 Western Society of Weed Science (WSWS), Denver, CO www.wsweedscience.org
Jul. 14 - 18, 2024 Aquatic Plant Management Society (APMS), St. Petersburg, FL www.apms.org
Dec. 9 - 12, 2024 North Central Weed Science Society (NCWSS), Kansas City, MO www.ncwss.org
Jan. 8 - 11, 2025 Northeastern Weed Science Society (NEWSS), Annapolis, MD www.newss.org
Jan. 20 - 23, 2025 Southern Weed Science Society (SWSS), Charleston, SC www.swss.ws
Feb. 24 - 27, 2025 Weed Science Society of America (WSSA), Vancouver, BC www.wssa.net



John Kaminski

Public Relations Report

John Kaminski

The Northeastern Weed Science Society (NEWSS) once again demonstrated the vibrant spirit and the depth of expertise within our community during the recent annual meeting held in Boston. It was an event marked by insightful discussions, groundbreaking research presentations, and, importantly, the celebration of our members' outstanding contributions and achievements.

Awards and Recognitions

The meeting was a significant occasion to acknowledge the exceptional talents and dedication within our society through various awards. Our career award winners were celebrated for their significant contributions to weed science, reflecting years of dedicated research, teaching, and extension activities that have advanced our field. Their achievements serve as a beacon of excellence and a source of inspiration for both seasoned professionals and those just beginning their journey in weed science.

In addition to honoring established experts, the NEWSS takes great pride in nurturing the next generation of scientists. This year's student competition was a testament to the innovative thinking and research prowess of our students. Competitors presented their work with a level of sophistication and insight that bodes well for the future of weed science. The winners, selected for their outstanding presentations and research findings, underscore the bright future of our discipline.

The creativity of our members was also on display in the photo contest, where stunning visuals of weed science in action captivated the attendees. The winning entries not only highlighted the aesthetic aspect of our field but also emphasized the intricate relationship between science and art in our daily work.

Community and Celebration

Among the academic accolades and professional networking, the highlight for many was the ice cream social. This beloved event fostered a sense of community and offered a delightful respite from the rigors of scientific discussion. It was a moment that allowed members to connect on a personal level, sharing stories and laughter over scoops of ice cream—a reminder of the camaraderie that underpins our professional interactions.

Looking Forward

The annual meeting in Boston was not just a celebration of achievements but also a rallying call for the future. As we reflect on the success of this gathering, we are reminded of the strength that lies in our collective efforts and the shared vision that propels the NEWSS forward. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all the award recipients and contest winners, whose excellence and creativity continue to drive the advancement of weed science.

Let us carry forward the momentum from this meeting into our research, our classrooms, and our communities, inspired by the knowledge, connections, and memories we've shared. Here's to another year of growth, discovery, and contribution to the science and practice of weed management.

M. Garry Schnappinger Service Recognition Award

Sudeep Mathew

Awards of the Northeastern Weed Science Society



Robert D. Sweet Outstanding Graduate Student – Ph.D.

Uriel Menalled

Awards of the Northeastern Weed Science Society



NEWSS Award of Merit

Hilary Sandler

Awards of the Northeastern Weed Science Society



NEWSS Outstanding Research Award

Vijay Singh

Awards of the Northeastern Weed Science Society



NEWSS Fellow Award

Randy Prostak

Awards of the Northeastern Weed Science Society



Poster Winners

First Place - Navdeep Godara

PERSISTENCE AND RELOCATION OF DISLODGABLE HERBICIDE RESIDUE FROM SIMULATED RAINFALL FOLLOWING GLYPHOSATE TREATMENT TO DORMANT ZOYSIAGRASS TURF. Navdeep Godara*, Clebson G. Goncalves, Jordan M. Craft, Shawn Askew; Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA (27)



Poster Winners

Second Place - Daewon Koo

USING UV-FLUORESCENT DYE TO MEASURE MULTIPASS DEPOSITION PATTERNS OF AERIAL AND GROUND APPLICATION EQUIPMENT. Daewon Koo*, Navdeep Godara, Juan Romero, Shawn Askew; Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA (37)



Oral Competition Winners

First Place - Aleah Butler-Jones

Confirmation of glyphosate resistant Palmer amaranth (*Amaranthus palmeri*) biotypes in New York and responses to alternative chemistries.



Oral Competition Winners

Second Place - Eli Russell

Seed impact mills' weed seed kill rate and horsepower draw as influenced by chaff flow rate and moisture.



Oral Competition Winners

Second Place - Navdeep Godara

Pollinators alter their foraging behavior depending on herbicide mode of action and placement on white clover.



Graduate Student Writing Contest

First Place - Laurel Wellman, Penn State

“Making the Most of Winter Cover Crops for Weed Suppression”



Graduate Student Writing Contest

Second Place - Navdeep Godara, Virginia Tech

“Codependency of Weeds and Pollinators in Urban Landscapes”



Graduate Student Writing Contest

Second Place - Noelle Connors, Penn State

“Does Shorter Corn Mean More Weed Problems?”



Photo Contest



First Place

Navdeep Godara

Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*)

Flower Treated with an Optical Brightener to Alter Pollinator Foraging

Photo Contest



Second Place
Juan Romero Cubas
Hibiscus trionum

Photo Contest

Third Place
Sohaib Chatta
Bulbostylis capillaris



Committee List

Name	Title	Email	Term Expires
Officers (Executive Committee)			
Erin Hitchner	President	erin.hitchner@syngenta.com	2025
Thierry Besancon	President Elect	thierry.besancon@rutgers.edu	2025
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Larissa Smith	Treasurer	larissa.smith@syngenta.com	2025
Wes Everman	Past President	wesley_everman@ncsu.edu	2025
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Eli Russell	Graduate Student Rep.	ecrussell@vt.edu	2025

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Committee List Continued

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Matt Cutulle	Appointed by President		2025

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Art Gover	4th Past President	aeg2@psu.edu

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TBD	Volunteer	
TBD	Volunteer	
TBD	Volunteer	
TBD	Volunteer	

