

12-1-2008

How to Make a Multidisciplinary IPM Guide for Growers Using Adobe PageMaker® Templates

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Recommended Citation

Thomas, D., & Gillett, J. (2008). How to Make a Multidisciplinary IPM Guide for Growers Using Adobe PageMaker® Templates. *The Journal of Extension*, 46(6), Article 28. <https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/joe/vol46/iss6/28>

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How to Make a Multidisciplinary IPM Guide for Growers Using Adobe PageMaker® Templates

Abstract

Constructing a multidisciplinary IPM guide can be overwhelming. This article provides the backbone for developing a guide using a publication produced at the University of Florida as a model. A crucial step in creating these guides is to build a network of qualified professionals who can contribute to the writing. By providing authors with instructions and templates for their section, the guide can be more consistent. Examples of these instructions and Adobe PageMaker® templates are available for free on the UF/IFAS IPM Florida Web site. Disseminating of the final product is critical, and we found that Web delivery was very efficient.

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Introduction

Vegetable growers in Florida have requested comprehensive Integrated Pest Management (IPM) guides from extension. Growers are at various points along what Benbrook *et al.* (1996) described as the IPM continuum. This ranges from "low IPM," such as scouting for key pests to determine timing of pesticide applications, to "high" or "biologically intensive IPM" that involves scouting for both pests and beneficial organisms plus the use of additional non-chemical practices.

Growers are increasingly adopting reduced-risk practices, so there is a great need for an integration of IPM educational programs to accelerate their acceptance of biologically intensive IPM. Since growers in the state of Florida are at various levels of adopting IPM, we needed a guide that provides relevant information for growers at any stage along Benbrook's IPM continuum.

A Model for Constructing an IPM Guide

The University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) IPM Florida program assembled an IPM decision-making resource for Florida's tomato and pepper growers. Several excellent documents had already been produced about IPM, pest and disease control, weed management, and soil and nutrient management for tomato and pepper in Florida. We compiled this information into an interdisciplinary, comprehensive resource that directs the user through the process of developing an individual IPM plan based on his or her locality, economic resources, and cropping and pest history. This guide describes the use of IPM tactics as a means of reducing the risk of disease epidemics, conserving chemistries against resistance, and reducing overall production costs.

The *Grower's IPM Guide for Florida Tomato and Pepper Production* (see Gillett *et al.*, 2006) was assembled in a three-ring notebook format so that updated information, including labels, articles, and records, could be added over time. Although hard copies of the book have been published and distributed, the entire document is available for free at the IPM Florida Web site

<<http://ipm.ifas.ufl.edu>> and through the UF/IFAS Electronic Data Information Source (EDIS) <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>>.

Pest and disease information is detailed on one-page (front & back) management sheets that include color photos, the organism's life cycle, scouting thresholds, and recommended biological, cultural/physical, and chemical controls. Chapters present growers with the advantages and disadvantages of available management strategies as well as chemical rotation tables, cultivar evaluations, BMP information, and IPM success stories.

Building a Network to Make Multidisciplinary Guides

To keep this project multidisciplinary, we invited specialists from different fields to work as chapter editors. These chapter editors contacted and worked with authors to build their chapters. Some chapter editors worked with a large team of authors, while others condensed EDIS articles and other IFAS reports with the permission of the previous authors. Both methods provided up-to-date IFAS approved material.

Using these approaches, we invited chapter editors and page authors to condense research from their areas of expertise to fit a standard template and select appropriate photos to include in this publication. To keep everyone on track, a timeline with deadlines was set up, and friendly reminders were sent on a regular basis. We found that a month was a sufficient time frame to get information back from page authors. More time may be needed if a chapter editor provides all or most of the information for a chapter.

In some rare cases, we also condensed published information into this format, gave authors credit, and included their contact information for growers with questions. This service was offered to specialists who did not have time to provide data in the template format.

Because we requested information from several experts, our staff entered all the data into a standard format to provide consistency throughout the document. Any changes we made were sent to authors for review prior to publication. We also chose eight reviewers for this project: two county extension faculty, two extension specialists and four industry professionals.

The Best Way to Manage Chapters

We found it helpful to provide author instructions, a references guide, and "fill in the blank" templates to editors to avoid cumbersome formatting of material received from various sources.

- Author's instructions and references guide provide a framework for the authors in order to remain consistent in their writing.
- The author's template was specific for each chapter and contained:
 - the headings for each pest or disease
 - the number of characters with spaces or number of bullets recommended for the section so that all the text would fit on the overall page.

On the IPM Florida Web site, author templates, Adobe PageMaker® templates, and hints for using Adobe PageMaker® have been posted to aid others in the endeavor to create IPM guides <http://ipm.ifas.ufl.edu/resources/extension_resources/how_to/make_IPM_Guide.shtml>.

Results

We found that Web delivery of the final product was an efficient method of delivery. In 2007, we recorded over 32,000 viewings of pages and chapters from the Web version of the guide. Because this guide was produced for specific commodities, 500 CD-ROMs with PDFs of the guide were made available for growers at grower meetings and from Extension faculty throughout Florida. We also made the material in the guide available on EDIS. We hope this will increase the materials' availability and visibility.

Conclusions

Constructing a multidisciplinary extension guide can be a difficult and lengthy endeavor without proper organization. We have found the most efficient way to create these guides and manage chapters is to build a network of qualified professionals. In addition, dispersal of information once it is collected is a critical aspect of a successful extension program. As with all extension publications, the process of developing relevant information into a format clientele can utilize is just as important as delivering the final product.

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