

IPM Awards Given At NYS Vegetable Conference

LIVERPOOL, N.Y. — Three awards for outstanding work in integrated pest management were presented at the 1998 NYS Vegetable Conference.

The winners — growers Tim and Colleen Stanton, private consultant Richard Wildman, and vegetable IPM coordinator Curtis Petzoldt — have been establishing innovative IPM practices for the Northeast since the 1980s.

Half a dozen NYS IPM awards are presented each year to individuals or groups showing leadership in minimizing economic, health, and environmental risks. According to IPM Program director James Tette, the purpose of the award is to "honor people for developing new IPM methods or for sharing IPM with others."

The Stantons practice IPM on a family farm in Feura Bush, N.Y., that they have owned together for 11 years. They devote nearly 400 acres to production of hay and other field crops, small fruits, vegetables, and greenhouse plants.

Tim Stanton, who is in charge of most of the daily farm operations, uses rotation, resistant varieties, pest traps, conservation tillage, and a host of other IPM methods. He is willing to try new ideas and cooperates regularly with extension faculty and staff affiliated with Cornell University. In recent years he has helped to

develop the use of rye mulch for pumpkin production, tested powdery mildew-resistant pumpkins, participated in pumpkin variety trials, and hosted informational twilight meetings for growers. He has also conducted trials for reducing bird damage on sweet corn and has evaluated biological controls to combat sweet corn insects.

Colleen Stanton and her sister operate a seasonal farm stand, "Our Family's Harvest," in New Scotland, N.Y. This retail store is supplied with produce that is wholesaled from Stanton's Feura Farm, and Colleen speaks regularly with customers about how the food is grown. "I don't know how anybody couldn't get in to IPM these days," said Colleen. "If you're not using IPM, you're probably throwing money away." Colleen regularly monitors with sticky cards in their two greenhouses.

Richard Wildman, president of Agricultural Consulting Services, Inc., might be considered a modern pioneer in the field of IPM. His business, begun in 1983, was one of the earliest private crop-consulting firms in the state. Today, Wildman's full-time staff of 10 swells during the growing season, when they offer production advice on some 70,000 acres of vegetables and field crops.

Agricultural Consulting Services, Inc. serves growers in New York, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts. According to Curt Petzoldt, assistant director of the NYS IPM Program, Wildman's firm has helped growers of processing sweet-corn reduce numbers of pesticide applications by up to 50 percent in New York. Wildman's work with tomato processors has also resulted in substantial savings in pesticide use, both economically and environmentally.

Wildman originated the concept of fully integrated crop production, which embraces nutrient management planning and soil resources in a "whole farm" ap-

proach. He has also developed on-farm crop management software that helps growers with record keeping and other tasks. Wildman says one of his greatest contributions has been "bringing IPM into a format that's readily and intensively adopted by growers."

To improve scouting techniques on snap beans, cabbage, and other vegetables, Wildman shares his knowledge with Extension faculty and staff at Cornell University. He also serves on the IPM Commodity Working Group for Vegetables, where he evaluates IPM research and implementation proposals.

Wildman studied horticultural science at Colorado State University, graduating with a bachelor's degree in 1979. He is on the executive boards of the National Alliance of Independent Crop Con-

sultants and the Professional Agricultural Consultants of New York State.

Curtis Petzoldt, assistant director of the NYS IPM Program and vegetable IPM coordinator for the state, is rarely content with the status quo. With one foot in a cabbage field and the other in the future, he encourages practices that change the ways farmers and consumers do business.

In 1996, Petzoldt and area IPM educator Timothy Weigle founded the Northeast Weather Association — a nonprofit membership organization that provides growers with timely weather data and pest forecasts. The specific information helps producers determine when diseases and insects need to be controlled, and whether sprays can be delayed or eliminated. Said Petzoldt, "Membership

in the Northeast Weather Association grew 56 percent between the first and second year. In the coming year, we will offer weather-based pest and crop models for producers of ornamentals and field crops."

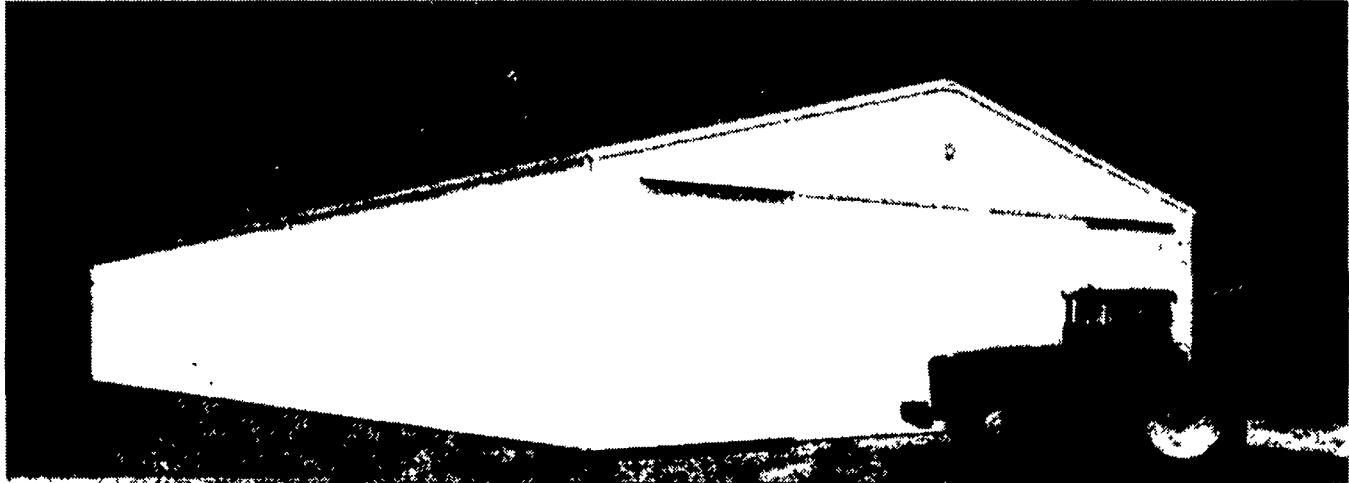
In 1997, Petzoldt and his colleagues sought to manage European corn borer on fresh-market sweet corn by releasing microscopic beneficial wasps and applying Bt (a biological insecticide). With these practices, they averted up to three applications of chemical pesticides and achieved marketable quality corn. This research is part of a multi-year interdisciplinary project comparing four vegetable growing systems (conventional, IPM present, IPM future, and organic) to assess which practices can be incorporated into present and future cropping systems. Anthony Shelton, associate director of the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station, says "Petzoldt has doggedly pursued the development of IPM for vegetables and other crops. He is widely re-

spected by those who work with him, not only in New York, but also nationally."

In 1998, Petzoldt will take part in national meetings that focus not only on IPM labeling of foods, but how labeling could cross state-lines. The New York State IPM Program, with Petzoldt at the helm, has responded to private sector demands for IPM-grown products for several years. Wegmans Food Markets, for example, now carries nearly 14 kinds of vegetables with the NYS IPM label. Petzoldt has worked for more than a decade with growers, private consultants, and private industry to develop IPM guidelines, enabling crops to be grown in ways that are economically and environmentally sound.

Prior to joining the IPM Program in 1985, Petzoldt was a representative for Lilly Research Laboratories and Elanco Products. He holds a master's degree and a doctorate in plant pathology from the University of California (Davis) and a bachelor's degree in biology from Bates College.

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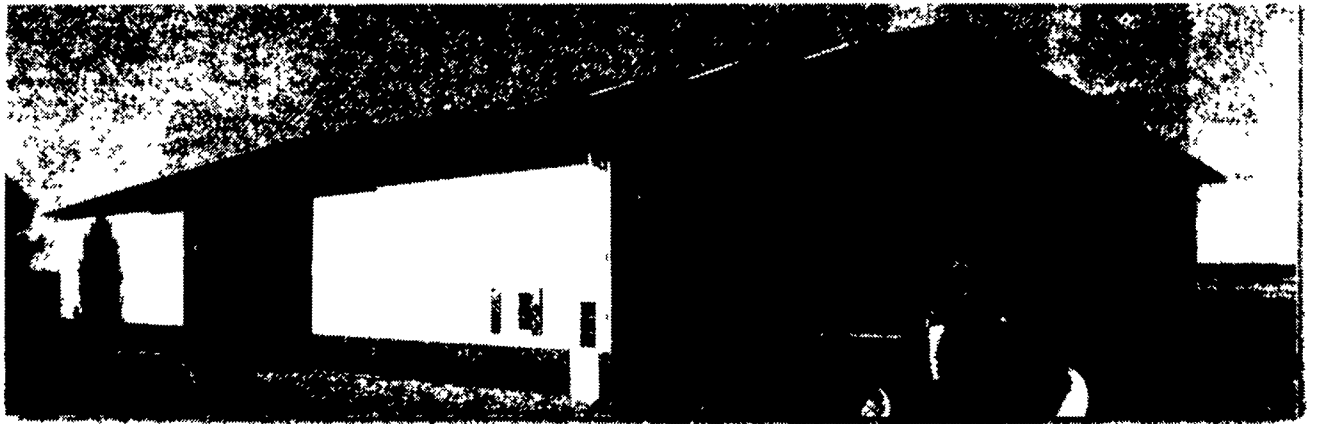


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