Pest Management Solutions for Specialty Crops and Specialty Uses

IR-4 Project Overview

Specialty crops include many of the fruits and vegetables recommended for a healthy diet, as well as the flowers, trees and shrubs that enhance our environment. Consumers demand high-quality food and plants, which makes managing the insects and diseases that damage these crops essential.

The IR-4 Project was established in 1963 by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to ensure that specialty crop farmers have legal access to safe and effective crop protection products.

IR-4 Project By the Numbers

- **75,000+** registrations of chemical and biopesticides since 1963
- **95,261** jobs supported with a total labor income of **$5.6 billion***
- **$9.4 billion** annual contribution to GDP*

** According to a 2017 report conducted by Michigan State University*

How IR-4 Can Help Specialty Crop Growers

The crop protection industry focuses its product development efforts on large acreage, major row crops such as corn and soybeans. Growers of specialty crops are often left with fewer tools for effectively managing pests. That's where the IR-4 Project can help.

IR-4 works directly with crop growers, registrants of crop protection products, and other members of the specialty crop community to develop data required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for the registration of pest management tools. Without IR-4's work, there would be an increased risk of crop losses from pest damage, resulting in higher costs and decreased availability for consumers.

IR-4 also supports the international harmonization of pesticide residue standards. This enables U.S. specialty crop growers to have access to international markets where American-grown fruits and vegetables are in demand and considered the highest quality.

Where are we located?

IR-4 research takes place at many land grant universities and USDA-Agriculture Research Service facilities across the country. Headquartered at NC State University, IR-4 has regional facilities at the University of Florida, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Michigan State University and the University of California - Davis. There are also liaisons in every state working with local growers to identify safe and effective solutions for pest management.

The IR-4 Project

To learn more about the IR-4 Project, visit www.ir4project.org.

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