



Alaska's Integrated Pest Management Program

Forest Service and UAF Cooperative Extension Service team up to help Alaskan residents manage pests from beetles to slugs.



The IPM Program, a cooperative venture between the Forest Service and the UAF Cooperative Extension Service, provides classes on forest pests and beneficial organisms to children and adults.



The western tent caterpillar, Malacosoma californicum, has been imported to Alaska several times in recent years.

Since it began in 1981, the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program has become one of the most recognized educational programs of the Cooperative Extension Service (CES). This collaborative agreement between CES and the Forest Service, Alaska Region, State and Private Forestry is now a long standing, successful partnership. The IPM Program addresses the public need for pest management education in

Alaska. Offering non-biased, research based information; this resource is widely used by residents across the entire state. The pests range from key forest insects, such as spruce beetles in southcentral Alaska to common garden nuisances, such as slugs in the southeast part of the state.

The IPM program is also an effective way to transfer technology. Each summer, individuals with practical knowledge in horticulture, forestry, entomology, plant pathology, and related subjects are hired and trained as "IPM Technicians." These individuals deliver timely, reliable, and useful pest management information to the

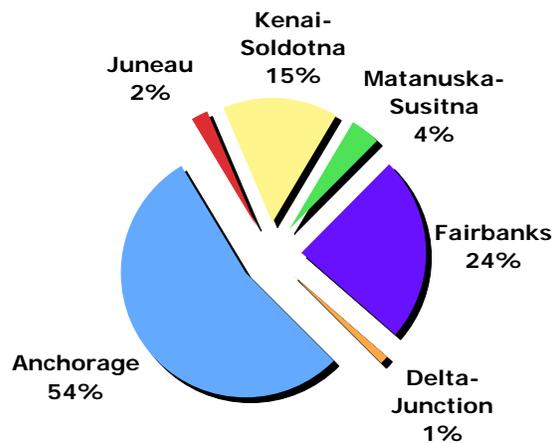
public. Additionally, three full time staff members are devoted to work in community forestry, invasive plants and IPM. In 2004, IPM Technicians were located in Anchorage, Palmer, Soldotna, Fairbanks, Delta Junction, and Juneau.

Customer service and expert advice are essential components of the IPM Technician's duties. In a typical contact, clients are provided with information to help them identify organisms, understand pest biology and choose from a variety of control options that are best suited to their situation. In some cases, beneficial organisms are identified or cultural conditions are recognized, and clients learn that control is not needed.

Early Detection and Prevention

A hallmark of the IPM Program is the use of scouting, early detection, identification, and education to help prevent imported pests from becoming established in Alaska. A key success occurred in May 2003. At that time, IPM staff in Anchorage identified the western tent caterpillar, *Malacosoma californicum*, on ornamental tree stock recently shipped to Alaska.

2004 IPM Client Contacts by Extension District



IPM Technicians assist thousands of Alaskan residents by phone, in their offices, during site visits, or through workshops.



The IPM Program offers training in recognizing and controlling horticultural and forest related pests.

Subsequently the pest was successfully eradicated. This insect has the potential of becoming an extremely serious pest to both native forests and ornamental trees due to the voracious feeding habits on a wide variety of deciduous host species, including aspen, willow, birch, cottonwood and many others. If established, this pest can quickly build up enormous populations, leading to extensive tree damage and increased pesticide use.

Thousands of Public Contacts

Annually, well over 10,000 clients are served. Approximately half of the contacts occur at educational outreach events, including classes, workshops, conferences, state and local fairs. More than 5,000 people are helped over the phone or through walk-in visits to the extension offices. Technicians make nearly 400 statewide site visits, mostly to diagnose problems in the community

forest environment. Over half the assistance occurs in the Anchorage area, where more than 40% of the state's population resides. IPM staff make dozens of media appearances, providing information through newspapers, newsletters, television and radio.

Making a Difference

The IPM Program has been recognized nationally and internationally as a model collaborative program for creative and innovative public outreach. A survey of program users showed that 90% of the respondents have adopted an integrated pest management practice or philosophy for their garden or woodlot. There is no other program like this in the nation and it continues to be a successful example of partnerships at work. This unique program was originally designed to meet the public demand for IPM information, and continues to develop accordingly in response to public

needs and the changing pest trends in Alaska.

For more information about the Alaska statewide Integrated Pest Management program on the web, go to: <http://www.uaf.edu/coop-ext/programs/lrpro.html> and click on the IPM Program link.

Partners in this Project:

- Forest Service, Alaska Region, State and Private Forestry
- University of Alaska Fairbanks, Cooperative Extension Service

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