

## **PROJECT REPORT:**

**Project Title:** Vertebrate Pest Control – Education and Certification Using the Internet and Touch Screen Devices.

**Research Agency:** University of California Cooperative Extension

**Principal Investigator:** Terrell Salmon

**Budget:** \$78,999.00

### **Background:**

This project builds upon a previously funded proposal by VPCRAC for computerized ‘touch screen’ kiosks. These are currently being used in California County Agriculture offices.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently issued a proposed risk mitigation decision (2008) for rodenticide bait products containing the following nine active ingredients: brodifacoum, bromadiolone, difethialone, chlorophacinone, diphacinone, warfarin, zinc phosphide, bromethalin, and cholecalciferol. This decision was based on an evaluation of the ecological risks associated with the use of rodenticide bait products containing the nine active ingredients. EPA is proposing labeling changes to mitigate the potential risks associated with bait products containing any of the nine rodenticides. The proposed changes would classify diphacinone and chlorophacinone for agricultural uses as Restricted Use Pesticides. This classification would limit their use to Department of Pesticide Regulation certified applicators, including private applicators with sufficient training to know when to use the products and how to use them in order to limit risks. To obtain the private applicators certificate, individuals will need to complete a test administered by the local Agricultural Commissioner.

When the EPA’s risk mitigation proposals become effective the result will be that all current rodenticide materials used by agriculture consumers (growers) in California will be restricted use materials. To apply these materials, a Department of Pesticide Regulation issued license or certificate, or a private applicators certificate will be required. Although the effect of the proposal on agriculture users is not fully known, some form of training and or licensing/certification will be required for agricultural uses of anticoagulant baits. It is anticipated that each ‘user’ will be required to certify or train before any form of Restricted Use materials can be sold or issued through County Agricultural Commissioner offices.

The concept of this project is to build upon the existing California ground squirrel control computer kiosks currently in place at four County Agriculture Commissioner offices. This project seeks to take the program further and develop a fully functional and interactive website capable of educating, and meeting State and Federal certification requirements so that agricultural users can be easily and efficiently trained and

certificated for using Restricted Use rodenticides. Additionally, the program could be incorporated into office and user training sessions on an as-needed basis. Presently, Fresno County Agriculture Commissioner's office use the 'kiosk' program in this way and requires office staff to use and take the kiosk quiz as part of the general safety education training.

This project will result in a better understanding of the relationship between anticoagulant use, secondary hazards and the appropriate vertebrate pest control method for a particular situation in agricultural production. This will result in intrinsic benefits to California agriculture.

In recent decades, California's population has been growing and residential development has consequently expanded greatly, which has led to greater number of human-wildlife interactions.

Outreach service in the field of continuing education for growers and urban users will mitigate potential safety risks, educate in vertebrate pest control methods. An emphasis on humane handling of animals will bring California up to par with other states that have enacted standards and continuing education programs addressing safety and humane treatment of animals. Successful continuing education programs such as this on the internet will also likely improve the success of the appropriate use of a variety of vertebrate pest control methods, reducing damage done to crops and property by vertebrate pests

**Objectives:**

1. Develop a web-based program that meets the private applicator certification requirements for local, state and federal pesticide regulators.
2. Work in cooperation with agricultural commissioners and CDFA to allow use of the certification process for Restricted Use rodenticides.

**Progress To Date:****Last Updated:**

01/26/2011