

Appendix C: Priority Setting Process

Arizona Pest Management Summit 2006 Priority-Setting Activity INSTRUCTIONS FOR FOCUS SESSION FACILITATORS

Introduction

1. Welcome the participants and let them know that this will be an active exercise.
2. Remind them of the purpose: there are many potential activities related to pest management and limited resources. The goal is to identify what is most important, based on the IPM criteria discussed in the orientation.
3. Remind the group what your particular session will focus on. Define the parameters of the priorities you will develop (e.g., pest management needs related to agriculture). Needs might be related to research, education, regulation, economics, barriers to IPM adoption and implementation or “other.”
4. If there are logical sub-groupings within your focus area, designate small groups based on these. (For example, within agricultural IPM, we may have small groups focused on cotton, vegetables, melons, and cross-commodity issues) This may be a question to pose to the group, but it should be decided quickly.
5. Instruct people to break into small groups of 4 to 7 people. Each group will sit at a table with different color sticky notes and pens provided.
6. It is very important throughout the process that facilitators create an open, supportive environment to encourage participation—no idea is too far out for consideration. It is also important to keep to the time schedule and keep things moving along.

The Priority-Setting Process

1. **Begin with silent generation of ideas (3 minutes).** Instruct people to first work independently to generate their own list of pest management needs. Tell them to write as many ideas as they can on individual sticky notes. No interaction between individuals at this point. The idea is to generate as many ideas as possible.
2. **Share ideas (5 minutes).** Each individual briefly shares one idea (not already mentioned) with the small group in round-robin fashion until all ideas are shared.
3. **Discuss and clarify (10 minutes).** Within the small group, discuss and clarify all ideas, allowing participants to explain further the idea they shared. Remove duplications and cluster related ideas under a new heading. This can be done by laying out the sticky notes onto large pieces of paper and drawing circles and arrows to distinguish or show relationships among the groups. These worksheets should be retained for the summary afterwards. Each small group selects three or four ideas that all members of the small group can support as priorities.
4. **Present ideas to larger group, from the large paper, posted on the wall (10 to 20 minutes, depending on the number of groups).** Ideas from small groups are presented to the larger group. As each idea is presented, the facilitator or designee

writes these unranked ideas as “bullets” on a large pad using bold markers (don’t number the ideas yet!). As each large sheet of paper is filled, it is taped on the wall in plain view. Be sure to leave some space on the left margin of the paper. This space will later be used to classify and ultimately rank each potential priority.

5. **Ideas are discussed and clarified within the larger group (20 minutes).**
 - a. All the ideas that have been presented from the groups should be taped to the wall.
 - b. Through an interactive discussion with all participants, the facilitator will go through these items, relating them to the IPM criteria. (For reference, the IPM criteria will be provided as a handout in each participant’s packet). Identify and remove (cross out) any duplicated ideas. Put an “X” next to any ideas that do not fit the IPM criteria, but do not cross them out. (These will be placed on a list of “other priorities” to appear in the meeting proceedings.) Related ideas can be clustered under a new heading and treated as a single item (they may need to be rewritten). What remains is a list of potential priorities derived from the collective wisdom of the group.
 - c. ***This list should be rewritten as a single legible, numbered list.*** (Explain to participants that the numbers are not the priority rankings, but will be used to refer to each need during the voting process.) The next step is to rank (prioritize) the ideas through a voting process, using the IPM criteria as a guide.
6. **Voting (10 minutes).** Each participant considers the final list of numbered needs and must select and rank their top three in a “closed ballot.” Each person uses one sticky note and writes the numbers of the 3 designated needs they feel are most important. Next to each of these numbers they draw one, two, or three stars to rank the importance of the items. One star indicates the least important of the three, two stars indicate medium importance, and three stars indicate the most important need. They are asked to vote for and rank no more than 3 potential priorities. Votes are tallied by counting the total number of stars for each listed need and writing the total votes in the margin next to the bullet item. Facilitators should collect and save all the large papers from their session. (These will be helpful in generating meeting proceedings later.)
7. **Focus session results and discussion of creative solutions (15 minutes).** The top 5 to 10 needs are rewritten as a fresh ranked numbered list on a large paper. The facilitator states, “These are our top pest management priorities,” and asks, “What can we come up as creative solutions to address these needs?” Call on the expertise in the room to quickly brainstorm some ideas on methods for addressing the needs, one by one. Write down these creative solutions on separate list. These may be “general solutions” or might be tied to a specific need.
8. **The final list or priorities and creative solutions will be presented in the final plenary** on Powerpoint slides. The facilitator’s assistant should transfer the information from the large paper sheets into a Powerpoint template on a laptop that will be provided. The facilitator may present these in the final plenary, or may designate a member from the group to do so.