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Dr. Héctor A. Cárcamo speaking on Biological Control of cereal leaf beetle, pea leaf weevil and lygus bug.

Training program on biological control

By Dr. Gadi V.P. Reddy, Professor of Entomology/Insect Ecology, Montana State University, Western Triangle Agricultural Research Center

USDA-NIFA-Western Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education awarded a Professional Development Project titled "Conservation and Augmentative Biological Control in the Northern Plains – Providing Tools for Agriculture Professionals" to Dr. Gadi V.P. Reddy to educate the Montana agricultural professionals over the past 2 years.

The project included a 2 day workshop presented by 12 of the leading researchers and educators involved in monitoring and biological control of major crop pests in Montana. MSU Extension agents, researchers, agricultural consultants were involved and attend the workshop. Topics included Entomopathogens (Insect Pathogens), Increasing the Efficacy of Biocontrol Agents, Biological Control based Research on Wireworms, Biological Control of Alfalfa Weevil, Biological Control of Wheat Midge, Biological Control of Cereal Leaf Beetle, Pea Leaf Weevil, Lygus Bug, Insect Monitoring Tools and Techniques, Biological Control of Wheat Stem Sawfly, Biological Control of Invasive Weeds, and Insect Predatory Nematodes. Everyone received a workshop notebook with all the presentations and associated educational handouts for use in educational programs back in their home county.

The attendees found the workshop very valuable as much of the information presented was new to them. Presentations on monitoring and trapping, wheat stem

sawfly, wheat midge, insect pathogens, and specific recommendations for management of pests, among others, were highlighted by attendees.

The post project evaluation indicated that the agricultural professionals have used the informational workshop handouts to educate producers particularly about parasitoids of the wheat stem sawfly and the wheat midge. In addition, they have distributed Western Triangle Agricultural Research Center's handouts on pests such as the cabbage seed pod weevil, wireworm, wheat head army worm, canola flea beetle, lygus bug, and wheat midge.

The agricultural professionals do have plans to utilize the biological control information provided by the workshop. The notebook provided by the workshop is a great reference for biological control. As research advances and continues at Western Triangle Agricultural Research Center, they are hopeful that insect fungal pathogens and beneficial predatory nematodes will become a practical and affordable practice for producers in an integrated pest management programs.

Biological control is an area of pest management in which the Northern Plains agricultural producers and others continue to need training to keep up with rapidly developing technology. For more information concerning ongoing biological control research, please visit the website—<http://agresearch.montana.edu/wtarc/>



Mr. Jim W. Freeburn, Western SARE-PDP Co-coordinator speaking on the overview of Western SARE-Professional Development Program.