

An Overview of

Sustainable Pest Management

and the Roadmap for California



What is Sustainable Pest Management (SPM)?



Sustainable pest management (SPM) is a holistic, whole-system approach to managing pests in agricultural and other managed ecosystems and urban and rural communities that builds on the concept of integrated pest management (IPM) with broader consideration of human health and social equity, environmental protections and economic vitality.

IPM is a strategy that focuses on long-term pest prevention through biological controls, habitat manipulation and other approaches. An IPM approach incorporates pesticide use only after monitoring indicates pesticides are needed according to established guidelines, and precise treatments are made with the goal of removing only the target organism. Pesticides or pest management products are selected and applied in a manner that minimizes risks to human health, beneficial and nontarget organisms, and the environment.

What is the SPM Roadmap?



The Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap was developed by a diverse, cross-sector work group convened by the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR), the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) and the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to recommend a course of action to accelerate a systemwide, statewide transition to sustainable pest management in agricultural and urban environments that supports agriculture and our urban and rural communities. The Roadmap's 20+ year plan includes, among others, specific recommendations to expand pest prevention, to facilitate the development and availability of safe, effective tools and practices to manage pests, and to encourage broad adoption of SPM through education and outreach.

The SPM Roadmap envisions a future where pest management approaches in agricultural and urban contexts promote human health and safety, ecosystem resilience, agricultural sustainability, community wellbeing, and economic vitality. The Roadmap further envisions that the implementation of these approaches will help steward the state's natural and cultural resources, enabling healthy lives for all and an abundant, healthy food supply for future generations.

Who developed the SPM Roadmap?



The Sustainable Pest Management Work Group included diverse representation from conventional and organic growers, pest managers, communities, tribes, researchers, and government. In total, there were 25 members focused on agricultural environments and 8 members on urban pest management.

Why does California need an SPM Roadmap?



Pest management protects public health and the environment and supports a stable, healthy food supply for all Californians. Pest management practices and decisions can, though, have broad impacts on human health, social equity, the environment, and the economy.

As scientists learn more about the risks and impacts of pesticide use on our health and our environment, and as climate change and severe weather conditions increase pest pressures, and the efficacy of current pest management practices declines, we need a path to a safer, sustainable, more holistic approach to pest management.

Sustainable pest management builds on the solid foundation of integrated pest management that has been practiced in California for decades. It evolves IPM to a holistic, systemwide approach that promotes the health and safety of Californians, ecosystem resilience, ag sustainability, community wellbeing and economic vitality when making pest management decisions.

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The SPM Work Group recognized there are no quick and easy solutions to decrease reliance on high-risk pesticides and transition on a systemwide scale to safe, effective sustainable pest management alternatives, while supporting agriculture, community wellbeing and a vibrant economy. Managing pests requires balancing multiple pressures, including agricultural productivity, regional ecology, community health, local economies, global trade systems, supply chain systems, and regulatory frameworks.

The SPM Roadmap calls for state level coordination and agriculture, community and private industry involvement to support the accelerated availability and adoption of effective SPM tools, practices, resources, and technologies.

When will the SPM Roadmap be implemented?



By beginning to act now, the SPM Roadmap envisions replacing prioritized high-risk pesticide uses with safe and effective alternatives, and making sustainable pest management the de facto approach to managing pests in agricultural and urban environments in California by 2050.

To achieve this goal, the SPM Roadmap includes near-term goals to prioritize pest prevention, enhance access to education and technical assistance on sustainable pest management, expand research to develop safe, effective alternatives to higher-risk pesticides, prioritize and expedite the evaluation and registration of these alternatives, streamline review of prioritized high-risk pesticides and more.

What are the next steps for Roadmap implementation?



DPR is working in collaboration with CDFA and CalEPA to conduct broad stakeholder and partner engagement on the SPM Roadmap to develop an implementation plan and identify needed funding to accelerate a statewide transition to SPM.

For information on the SPM Roadmap, visit:

https://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/sustainable_pest_management_roadmap/