



Tribal Pesticide Program Council

Winter 2022-23

## TPPC Member Spotlight: Africa Dorame-Avalos Inter Tribal Council of Arizona



Over most of Africa Dorame-Avalos' thirteen-year tenure working with the Pesticide Program under Environmental Quality Programs for the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona (ITCA), she has been able to embrace an effective work-life balance that has led to a noticeable increase in productivity, a strong appreciation for collaboration, and growth within her organization.

Environmental Quality is one of numerous ITCA programs that address issues and concerns related to protecting the environment and safeguarding human health, with the overarching goal of promoting the self-reliance of 21 Arizona Tribes. As the Pesticide Program Manager, Africa provides technical assistance and information on Worker Protection Standards (WPS) for many Tribal pesticide programs in addition to conducting safety trainings in both English and Spanish

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## TPPC Member Spotlight *(continued)*

for agricultural establishments. This training is a requirement of WPS every spring for all workers and handlers of pesticides. She also leads outreach and education on pesticide safety, integrated pest management (IPM) and pesticide rules/regulations in addition to being a certified FIFRA inspector on behalf of EPA Region 9.

Building relationships with co-workers and colleagues and having a strong commitment to working with multiple Tribal governments, Africa has seen the growth of collaboration across various organizations, agencies and tribes. She understands and appreciates the value of trust, respect, and communication and how this benefits her ability to succeed in her everyday work. Important goals include incorporating cultural values into the trainings that she conducts as well as the on-going goal of building on ITCA's potential to increase resources and funding for more tribal communities to establish pesticide programs.

More than 20 years ago, Africa started out with the Fort Mohave Indian Tribe Environmental Department, then in 2006 accepted a position as the Tribal Public Health Preparedness Coordinator with Arizona Department of Health Services, in which she provided oversight of Tribal public health emergency plans. Working as a contractor with ITCA in 2008 for the Emergency Preparedness and Response Program led her to join ITCA as a Pesticide Specialist and eventually to her current position as the Pesticide Program Manager.

In her home life, Africa enjoys cooking and creating delicious meals for family and small events as well as playing classical piano and enjoying the outdoors with a new travel trailer. Being a wife and mother of five keeps her very busy and often provides many opportunities to engage with her children's extra-curricular activities such as dance and piano.

## **Getting Started: A New Tribal Pesticide Program and Enforcement Cooperative Agreement**

Did you know that approximately 20% of Tribal communities in the United States have or are served by an established Pesticide Program and/or Enforcement cooperative agreement funded by the EPA? That means that 80% do not, and while pesticide issues may affect some Tribal lands more than others, many farming communities are at risk of exposure to agricultural pesticides.

The goal of the National Pesticide Program is to assure that pesticides are made available for use and are properly sold, distributed, and used in a way to protect human health and the environment. In support of this goal, the EPA enters into cooperative agreements with Tribes to fund pesticide compliance and enforcement. The EPA takes into consideration unique Tribal lifestyles and exposure patterns when working with Tribal governments to implement pesticide programs under FIFRA.

Regional offices utilize a 'Tribal Needs and Readiness' checklist to determine the need for a pesticide field and enforcement program. A Tribe can then work with their region to apply for grant funds for a cooperative agreement and learn how funds are distributed to eligible Tribes as well as the performance expectations for those that receive funding. Having an outlined Tribal Pesticide Code is recommended and a template is available on the TPPC website. For an

example of a completed pesticide code, Gila River Indian Community recently revised their pesticide code in late 2022 and it is available on their website: <https://www.gricdeq.org/view/download.php/gr-004-22>

### Funding

While there is no limit to the number of Tribal Enforcement cooperative agreements that may be funded, Congress allocates a finite amount of annual funding for these programs that is then divided among all of the Tribal Pesticide Programs.

EPA regions and Tribes should first look to Indian Environmental General Assistance Program (GAP) funding to develop basic Tribal pesticide program capability. These GAP funds are



provided to Tribes to administer various environmental programs - including pesticides. Priority is given to individual Tribes in order to build tribal capacity for developing and administering environmental protection programs. Inter-tribal consortia are considered after individual tribal proposals are funded. Application deadlines vary by region and can be found on the EPA website (<https://www.epa.gov/tribal/indian-environmental-general-assistance-program-gap>).

Pesticide Field Programs and Enforcement are also funded through EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs (OPP) and Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assistance (OECA), and are usually integrated for a combined program that funds STAG (State and Tribal Assistance Grants) under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA):

1. OPP funds Tribal Pesticide Field Program agreements that include education and outreach for worker safety, water quality, IPM, endangered species protection and applicator training.
2. OECA funds tribal pesticide compliance and enforcement programs and historically has provided the amount of funding requested after the grantee and the regions calculate the funding necessary to conduct the commitments.

Requests for funding can be made any time of the year; if approved by March 1, a program will receive funding for that same fiscal year.

### Amount of Available Funding

According to the 2011 EPA OPP/OECA Guidance, up to \$100,000 may be available to support the start-up costs of a New Tribal Pesticide Program cooperative agreement, with \$50,000 a year in continued support for subsequent years. \$30-60,000 is available to support one ½-time inspector for new enforcement grants.

## Getting Started (*continued*)

As a recent example of the total amount awarded in a year, about \$900,000 was provided by OPP for pesticide programs and OECA provided approximately \$1.3 million for enforcement in Fiscal Year 2020.

### **Types of Tribal Pesticide Cooperative Agreements**

- ◆ **Single Tribe:** This cooperative agreement provides funding for staff to serve one Tribe and may fund a field program, an enforcement program, or both.
- ◆ **Tribal Circuit Rider:** If a Tribe would like to establish an EPA pesticide enforcement cooperative agreement but may not have enough producing establishments or certified applicators, the EPA recommends affiliating with a Circuit Rider - a host Tribe or organization who is funded to conduct pesticide program activities on behalf of the EPA within its tribal boundaries, as well as nearby cooperating Tribes (the 'circuit').

EPA's goal is a comprehensive program (both field and enforcement), and whenever possible, EPA encourages regions to work with Tribes to develop programs that can serve multiple Tribes (circuit rider) because it provides more pesticide program assistance to a broader area and will help Tribes that don't qualify for a single Tribe program (both field and enforcement).

After a region has identified a specific Tribe that is interested in a pesticide cooperative agreement, the regional office would contact OPP and submit a 1-2 page description of the nominated Tribal program.

Once a decision is made by the EPA to fund a new Tribal pesticide program/enforcement grant, the Tribe must submit a proposal describing the program including a projected budget, staffing needs, work plan, and a timeline with identified goals and milestones.

### **Circuit Rider Example: Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT)**

Since 2007, the CSKT and the Blackfoot Tribe have held a Memo of Agreement with USEPA Region 8 to increase compliance monitoring efforts of pesticide imports. In 2009, the Northern Cheyenne Tribe joined the circuit rider and the Crow Nation in 2010. This evolving cooperative agreement allows CSKT inspectors to provide technical and compliance assistance on behalf of EPA in Indian country.

For more information visit: <http://www.csktnrd.org/ep/pesticides-program>

### Conferences & Meetings

#### AAPCO Spring Meeting

The Association of American Pest Control Officials will hold their Spring meeting **March 6-8** in Alexandria, VA. For more information see <https://aapco.org/2015/07/31/aapco-2/>

#### TPPC Spring Meeting

The Tribal Pesticide Program Council will hold our Spring meeting **March 8-10** in Arlington, VA. For more information visit <https://tppcwebsite.org>

### Trainings & Courses

#### USFWS Pesticides and Fish and Wildlife Resources Training

The US Fish and Wildlife Service will hold a training on pesticides and fish & wildlife resources **April 10-14** in Missoula, MT. For more information see <https://fws.gov/course/pesticides-and-fish-and-wildlife-resources>

#### New Pesticide Managers PREP

The Pesticide Regulatory Education Program is offering a training for new pesticide managers on **April 17-20** in Fort Collins, CO. For more information see <https://agsci.colostate.edu/agbio/prep/new-pesticide-managers-course/>

#### Enforcement PIRT

The State of Massachusetts will host an Enforcement Pesticide Inspector Residential Training (PIRT) on **May 8-12, 2023** at a location to be determined. For more information visit <https://www.epa.gov/compliance/pesticide-inspector-residential-training-pirt>

#### Federal Certification Training for Private Applicators of RUPs within Indian Country

The EPA will be holding its quarterly training for private applicators of restricted use pesticides (RUPs) virtually on **May 10-11**. For more information visit <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-applicator-certification-indian-country/training-private-applicators-under-epa-plan>

#### Comprehensive Worker Protection Standard PREP

The Pesticide Regulatory Education Program is offering a comprehensive worker protection standard training on **June 26-29** in Davis, CA. For more information see <https://agsci.colostate.edu/agbio/prep/comprehensive-wps-course/>

### Tribal Consultation and Public Comment Opportunities

#### Tribal Consultation Opportunity: National Enforcement and Compliance Initiatives (**ends March 13, 2023**)

EPA is currently undergoing tribal consultation on how to focus the Agency's fiscal year (FY) 2024-2027 national enforcement and compliance resources, and specifically looking for input on some current and proposed new national initiatives. Two tribal informational webinars and listening sessions will be held on February 13 and 22, and the consultation period is open through March 13. For more information see <https://tcots.epa.gov/ords/tcotspub/f?p=106:5::1667::::> or contact Jonathan Binder at [binder.jonathan@epa.gov](mailto:binder.jonathan@epa.gov).

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The TPPC is a member-based organization with more than 76 members and 43 Tribes and tribal organizations as of January 2023, whose activities are funded by a cooperative agreement with the EPA. The Council serves as a tribal technical resource, and provides a forum for dialogue between Tribes and the EPA on program and policy development relating to pesticides issues and concerns. Assistance provided to Tribes includes support in building tribal pesticide programs and conducting pesticide education and training, and the preparation of resources for Tribes interested in specialized issues such as Integrated Pest Management and pollinators. Through its interaction with the EPA, the TPPC keeps Tribes informed of developments in the regulation of pesticides and pesticide use, and provides feedback to the EPA on such matters from a tribal perspective (though it is important to note that communication between the EPA and the TPPC does not substitute for direct government-to-government consultation).

For information about how to join the TPPC, contact Mark Daniels at [mark.daniels@nau.edu](mailto:mark.daniels@nau.edu) or (928) 523-8897.

