

SDC351: response to peer reviews

The peer reviews of the original submission recommended approval of the project (2 marked “approve” and 1 marked “approved with revision”). The 2 peer reviews marked as approved provided strong supporting statements and required or recommended no revision. Reviewer # 2 had a number of excellent points and recommendations, and we incorporated all of this person’s suggestions, save one. I will address all suggestions as they appear on Reviewer #2 form.

1. As the reviewer suggests, transgenic crops may pose a potential roadblock to implementation of biological control tactics. We now acknowledge this potential in the modified paragraph 7.
2. As noted by this reviewer, paragraph 8 inaccurately identified non-target evaluations as the main goal of the project. These evaluations are essential elements of biological control projects, but are not the goals. The text was re-written and a new topic sentence provided.
3. The reviewer appropriately suggests that the word “conservation” be included in the third objective, as it is an essential element in the enhancement of natural enemy efficacy. Objective 3 was modified.
4. This is the only comment with which we disagree with the reviewer. The reviewer suggests that “exotic” and “invasive” are redundant terms. While this synonymy is sometimes used, the terms are not interchangeable in our project. Some target pests in the project are highly invasive in agricultural systems, but native to the US (e.g., the plant bug, *Lygus lineolaris*) . Conversely, exotic species may be pests in the US, but are not considered to be highly invasive (e.g., very low mobility). Indeed, some nursery plants possess these characteristics. The Natural Resources Conservation Services maintains three separate pest lists, one for introduced species, one for invasive plant species, and one for noxious weeds. The lists are maintained separately because there are clear differences, although there is significant overlap.
5. The formatting for objectives 2 and 3 (missing hard return) was corrected.
6. The reviewer is correct that the second output was vague, and appeared as a declarative statement because the target pests were listed for clarity. This output has been modified.
7. The reviewer is absolutely correct in asserting that the mention of project and individual program evaluations was missing. An additional output was added to address this shortcoming.

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