

KEEPING UP WITH CONSUMERS:  
UNDERSTANDING THE POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF A CHANGING LANDSCAPE  
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ÉVOLUER AU MÊME RYTHME QUE LES CONSOMMATEURS :  
COMPRENDRE LES EFFETS D'UN ENVIRONNEMENT EN ÉVOLUTION SUR LES POLITIQUES

**Information and Encouragement from Independent Crop Advisors  
Increased Adoption of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Practices  
by Québec Fruit and Vegetable Producers**

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Because of growing public concerns about food safety and the environment, governments have increased the promotion of efficient and sustainable agriculture production techniques, such as Integrated Pest Management (IPM). The objective of this exploratory study is to understand the dynamics behind the adoption of IPM in Quebec. Specifically, it attempts to identify factors which are decisive in the producers' decision to intensify their use of IPM.

In 2014, a mailed questionnaire regarding IPM was distributed to a sample of 1,973 Quebec fruit and vegetable growers; 509 replied (25% response rate). We constructed an ordered logistic regression model whose dependent variable was the number of adopted IPM practices, specific to each culture, which have the greatest potential to reduce use of pesticides.

Results show that lack of IPM knowledge ( $p < 0.0001$ ), low environmental concern ( $p = 0.03$ ), selling produce directly to consumers ( $p = 0.01$ ) and vegetable production, as opposed to fruit production, each significantly reduced IPM adoption. However, quantity of IPM information received ( $p < 0.0001$ ) and being encouraged to adopt IPM by an independent crop advisor ( $p = 0.001$ ) were positively associated with IPM adoption.

This study found that many producers are still poorly informed about IPM practices and principles, which is a barrier to adoption. Growers' desire to provide fruits and vegetables which conform to consumer demands for lower pesticides and improved environmental outputs is not easily reconciled with their need for profits. To accelerate adoption of IPM practices, government policies should focus on providing support to independent organizations which are encouraging producers adopt IPM practices by improving their understanding of those practices.

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