

Summary of the Plant Disease Clinic

2010 Post-Season Home Landscape/Garden Clients Survey

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Note: Charts/figures are included below the text summary.

The Virginia Tech [Plant Disease Clinic](#) (PDC) is a service laboratory and educational resource to [Virginia Cooperative Extension \(VCE\) offices](#). Plant samples are submitted to the PDC through a client's local Extension agent. Diagnostic reports include a recommendation and are sent electronically to the submitting Extension agent. The Extension agent then forwards the report and/or communicates the information in the report to the client. Clients using the PDC services include a diverse range of grower types (e.g. commercial crop producers, home landscapers/gardeners, professional landscape services, arborists).

Post-season 2010 the home landscape/garden clients who had included an email address on their Plant Disease Diagnostic Form, which is included with all plant samples submitted, were surveyed electronically. The figures (Figures 1-6) that follow summarize survey data from the survey respondents (55 of 210 surveyed).

Just over half of the respondents indicated that they received their diagnostic report electronically, 36% reported receiving a hardcopy report through the postal service and 20% reported receiving the information via a telephone call (note that the respondent

could select more than one choice, so may have received the report/information by more than one means) [Fig. 1]. Seventy-eight percent of respondents reported that they understood the diagnostic report (Fig. 3). Forty-nine percent indicated that their Extension agent discussed the diagnostic results and recommendations with them and 31% reported that supplemental material (other than the diagnostic report) was provided to them (Fig. 3). Supplemental materials would likely include copies from the [VCE Home Grounds and Animals Pest Management Guide](#) or relevant [VCE plant disease factsheets](#), since the PDC recommendations include specific references to relevant Pest Management Guide page numbers and urls for factsheets when appropriate.

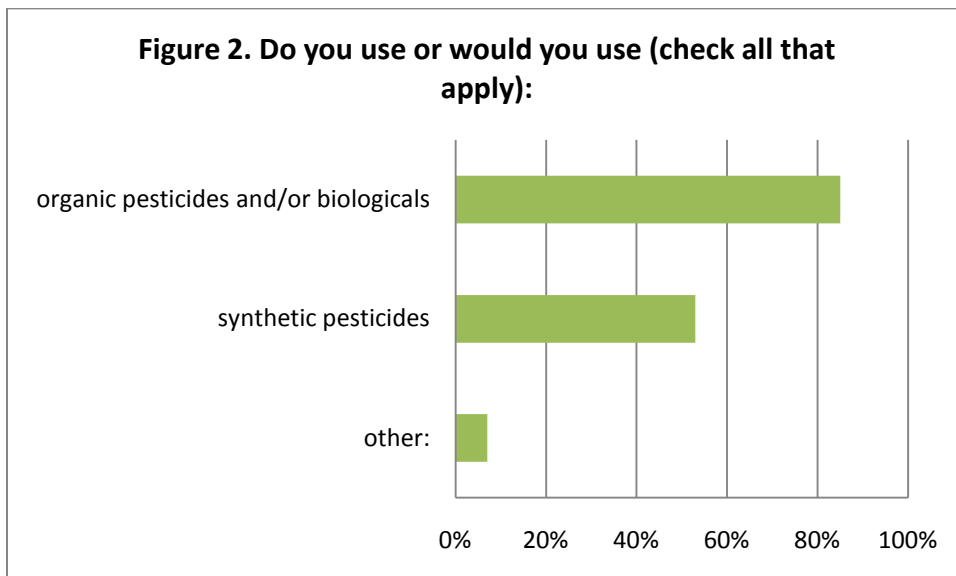
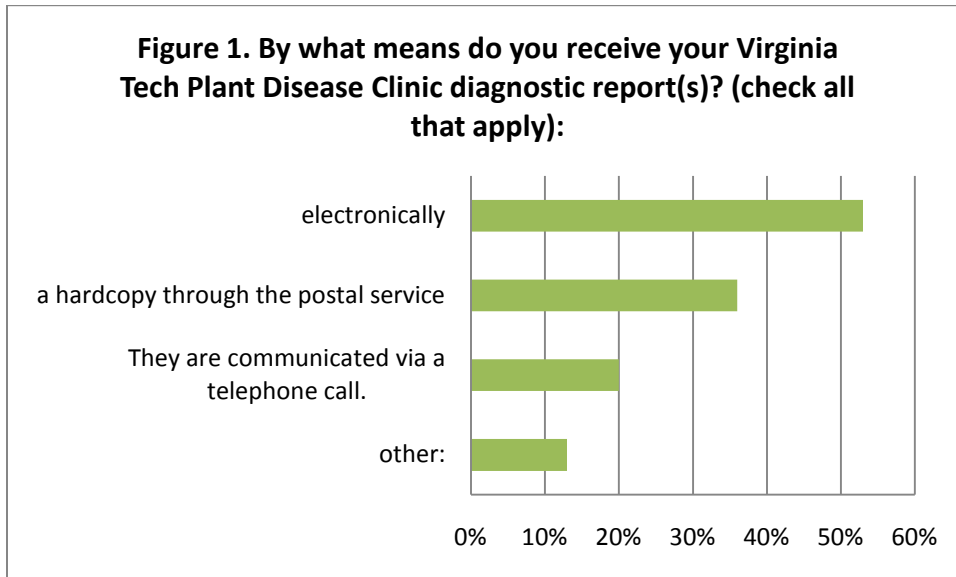
Eighty percent of respondents indicated that the PDC services help them identify plant problems accurately and 55% reported an increased understanding of plant disease and/or abiotic (non-living) problems (Fig. 4). Thirty-five percent of respondents reported an increase in knowledge of alternative control tactics (those other than pesticides) from using the PDC services (Fig. 4).

Most respondents indicated that they do or would use organic pesticides or biologicals and 53% indicated that they

do or would use synthetic pesticides (Fig. 2). Respondents indicated that the PDC services ensured that they would only use appropriate pesticides (38%), only use pesticides when they would be effective (33%) and only use pesticides when there is a serious threat to the health of the plant (22%) [Fig. 5]. Twenty-four percent of respondents indicated that the PDC services help

reduce the amount of pesticide they use (Fig. 5). Thirteen percent of respondents indicated that they never use pesticides (Fig. 5).

The respondents overwhelmingly strongly agreed (78%) or agreed (11%) with the statement: "I value the services provided by the Plant Disease Clinic" (Fig. 6).



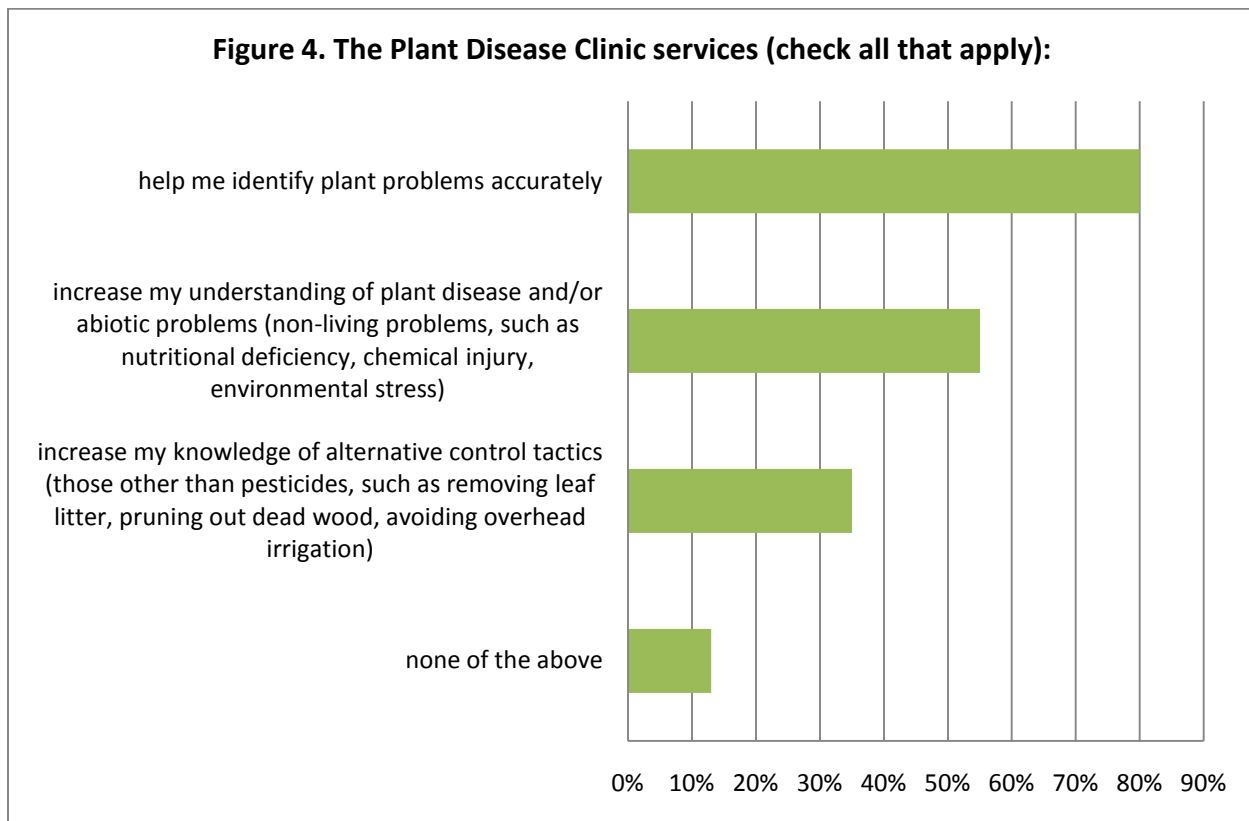
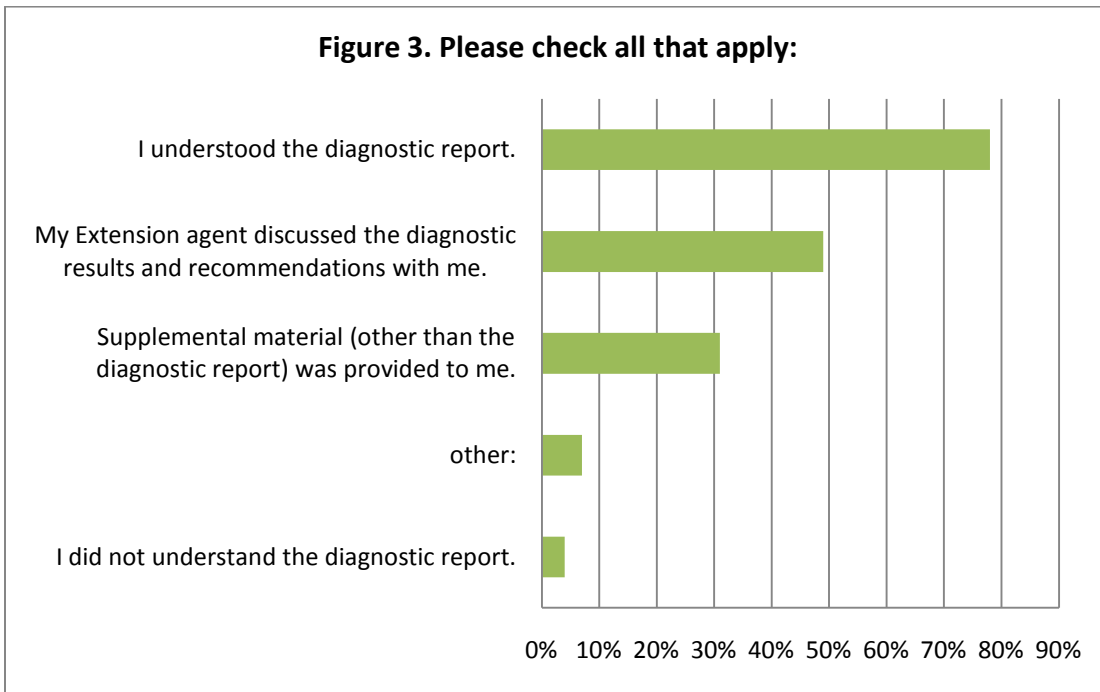


Figure 5. Plant Disease Clinic services (check all that apply):

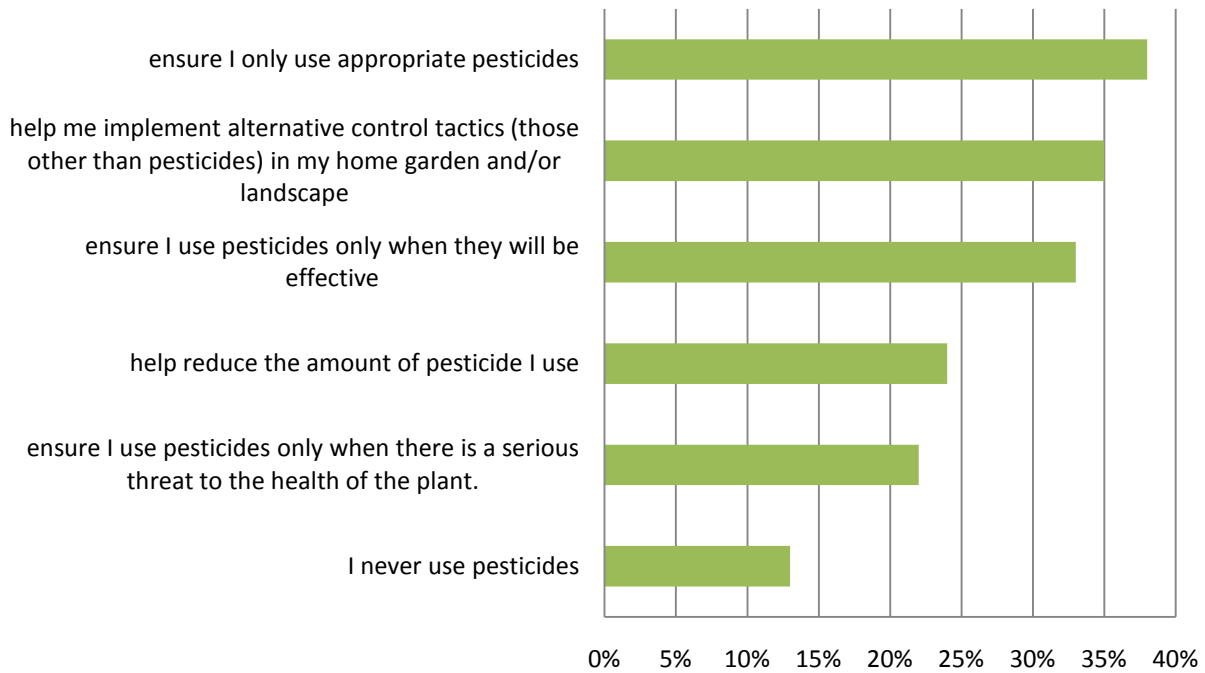


Figure 6. I value the services provided by the Plant Disease Clinic:

