

Pest Cast

The Row Crops IPM Newsletter for the LRGV, a cooperative project of Texas AgriLife Extension Service and the Cotton & Grain Producers of the lower Rio Grande Valley

John W. Norman, Jr.
Editor

Volume XXXIII

Issue 4, April 2, 2011

General Situation: Cotton, grain sorghum and corn continued to make good progress this week. Weather conditions were nearly identical to last week; hot, dry and very windy. Amazingly, both dryland cotton and grain still were growing and maturing quite well, thank you. Rain now would definitely be beneficial for all concerned.

Cotton: Cotton throughout the Valley ranged from still not up to nearly ready to bloom. In most of the dryland fields observed this week, plants were very green and most had from 1 to 3 squares per plant. Plants in most fields had some wind and blown sand damage that occurred over the last two weeks. Plant size ranged from 6 to 14 inches in both irrigated and dryland fields. Insect activity increased in much of Cameron and Hidalgo counties, but remained low in Willacy County. Aphids were the main pest of concern in much of the irrigated country this week. Infestations ranged from just a few aphids per leaf to stunted plants completely covered with aphids and heavy layers of honeydew. Beneficial insects, namely lady beetles, big-eyed bugs and pirate bugs were on the increase. Some parasitized aphids were observed, but not at levels which could provide help in the near future in reducing aphid numbers.

Cotton fleahoppers increased in number over last week, but were still relatively low overall. A few nymphs were reported, but most fleahoppers observed this week were adults.

Thrip infestations were seen in most fields with numbers ranging from none to 4 per plant. Generally, thrip should not be an important concern in rapidly growing and squaring cotton - like this year's crop. Cotton near onion fields still should be checked frequently for thrip moving from the onions to the cotton. Cotton fields adjacent to onions can quickly develop large numbers of thrip which can cause severe damage cotton in short order. So, keep checking those fields.

Good news for now on a pest of cotton that none of us wants to see. Dr. Scott Armstrong, USDA research Entomologist at Weslaco, reported that sampling for the verde plant bug was negative this week. They sampled-known host plants at the Laguna Atascosa wildlife refuge in eastern Cameron County for the verde plant bug. Dr. Armstrong used vacuum samplers which generally are very effective in locating plant bugs and none were found. We are most pleased by that report.

LRGV

BOLL WEEVIL TRAPPING INFORMATION

YTD	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
	.00278	1.23035	.24503	.20438	.40011	.77436	6.47392

Week Ending	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
4/3/11	.00476	.00672	.19847	.08503	.64118	.48544	0
4/10/11	.00360	.00592	.11633	.30512	.40392	.37552	0
4/17/11	.00114	.00312	.23686	.17102	.36414	.88875	6.47392

Traps inspected for current week: 43,842

Boll Weevil Eradication special report from Larry Smith

Texas Boll Weevil Eradication Update
(04/20/2011)

The LRGV zone has 192,275 acres mapped as of today. The Foundation continues to find new fields. It is critical that all fields are mapped and trapped...one missed field can cause weevil problems for everyone in an area. If you have a field that hasn't been planted to cotton in recent years, make sure your Foundation supervisor knows about it. Also, please contact the Foundation if you see a field or know of a field not trapped.

There will be about 25,000 acres in the bloom stage next week. The Foundation has treated 111,379 acres year to date. Continued high winds have delayed treatments on many fields. With limited opportunities to make treatments, the Foundation has had to change their protocol away from the two automatic treatments at pinhead. Currently they are concentrating treatments on fields catching weevils in recent weeks and the fields adjacent to them.

Weevil captures in Raymondville have remained low. Most captures in the other districts are located along the river

Grain Sorghum and Corn: Much of the sorghum crop was heading or nearing heading this week. Good head exertion was observed in dryland and irrigated fields despite the dry, windy weather conditions of late. With an inch or so of rain, the dryland grain crop could be very good if it rains very soon. Reports of increased corn leaf aphids and some fields with yellow sugarcane aphids were received this week. Since most of the grain crop is well advanced and heading, the likelihood of damage from either aphid is low. Most of the corn leaf aphid infestations were deep inside the whorls of the sorghum plants and thus very hard to reach with an insecticide if control was required. Corn was well into tasseling this week. No insect pest activity was reported for in corn this week.

We thank the following sponsors of the Pest Cast newsletter for their very generous contributions toward this effort.



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Contact Info

Pest Cast Newsletter
Texas AgriLife Extension Service
South District 12
2401 East Highway 83
Weslaco, TX 78596
(956) 968-5581
E-mail: d12south@ag.tamu.edu