



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

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Cotton/ Harvest Time



This will be the final regular issue of the 2014 summer crops season. Temperatures have been extremely hot with each day over 100° F as cotton harvesting is in full swing. Currently many dry land cotton fields in Willacy and Cameron counties have been the first cotton fields to be harvested and taken to the gins. Yields have varied in many dry land cotton fields depending on how much rainfall that area received but most yields have been between 1 ¼ to 2 ¼ bales per acre. Last year towards the end of harvest I remember reporting only ¾ bale per acre in dry land so we certainly are seeing greater yields this year for dry land which is great! Irrigated cotton fields will begin harvesting next week.

This year we had a late start getting cotton planted from the moisture we received in rain fall early on. We had some pest problems in the beginning like fleahoppers during squaring but other than that it was a



Harvested cotton modules and bales above and bottom picture is cotton ready to be harvested.

pretty light pest season in cotton. This was good because nearly everyone was faced with having to spray for sugarcane aphids in grain sorghum to protect their crops.

Cotton Stalk Destruction

As the September 1st deadline approaches it is important to practice timely good stalk destruction. It has been proven that stalk destruction is key to controlling boll weevil populations in the effort to disrupt their life cycles to avoid overwintering. Cotton stalks should be either completely plowed down or shredded down to 6-8 inches in height. Standing cotton stalks should be sprayed with label approved herbicides at least within 7 days after harvest for good control to avoid any regrowth. Regrowth is a big problem with the warm weather and late summer rains we have in the Valley. Waiting until 60% to 70% of the bolls are open can help reduce the amount of cotton regrowth you will see in your fields. Plus you do not want to apply your harvest aid chemicals too early because it has been shown that premature crop termination can reduce lint yield, seed quality, micronaire, and fiber strength. However everyone is always trying to get their cotton harvested as soon as possible to avoid those late season rains.



Cotton stalks being destroyed above, cotton stalks completely destroyed below.



LRGV BOLL WEEVIL TRAPPING INFORMATION

YTD	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
	.00201	.00364	.02455	.02932	.01801	.13794	.28077	.24436	1.33909	7.73018

Week Ending	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
7/6/14	.00206	.00343	.05315	.05716	.01456	.13756	.30683	.16200	2.17874	7.73737
7/13/14	.00233	.00493	.05972	.10697	.03933	.14793	1.63195	.59710	3.61197	22.70318
7/20/14	.00941	.01020	.07231	.07553	.06099	.06107	1.65666	.33439	4.98724	10.90851
7/27/14	.00448	.02344	.10642	.26791	.10456	.09227	2.03746	.51555	5.89333	25.24939

Traps inspected for current week: 46,025

Kissing Bugs



Kissing bug I found on my porch, *Triatoma gerstaeckeri*

This past Saturday I found a kissing bug late at night on my front porch. It didn't surprise me to find it near the porch light since they are attracted to light and carbon dioxide. However, I was disturbed to find it on the porch where my dogs sleep since kissing bugs are known to transmit the vector-borne protozoan parasite *Trypanosoma cruzi* which causes Chagas disease in humans and dogs. *Trypanosoma cruzi* can reach the heart in mammals including dogs causing severe illness.

Kissing bugs are from the order Heteroptera, family Reduviidae. There are many *Triatoma* species, but the ones most common in Texas are the *Triatoma sanguisuga*, *Triatoma indictiva*, and *Triatoma gerstaeckeri*. The kissing bug I found appears to be a female and is the species *Triatoma gerstaeckeri*.

Kissing bug adults are about $\frac{3}{4}$ inches to 1 inch long and are dark brown, almost black with a flat abdomen and orange markings along the edges. They can be found hiding in crevices of walls, among boxes, fire wood, dog kennels, poultry houses, horse stalls, etc. The diet of the kissing bug is normally bed bugs but they also suck blood from poultry and other animals and humans as a last resort. Kissing bugs are nocturnal and feed on blood during the night. They are called kissing bugs because they like to bite humans around the mouth or eyes. If you are bitten by a kissing bug you will wake up with a quarter sized welt and want to scratch it from the itching sensation it causes. Do not scratch it! Kissing bugs after they feed will defecate on the person around the feeding area and it is their feces that carry the *T. cruzi* parasites that cause Chagas disease. If you scratch it you will infect yourself and have it enter the body in an open bite wound. If you find a kissing bug do not touch it with your bare hands and clean any surfaces it was in contact with by disinfecting with bleach.

Pest Cast /Sorghum Questionnaire

This year was a very busy growing season with the sugarcane aphid as a new invasive pest in sorghum. I hope that this year's Pest Cast brought you valuable information in a timely manner. I would really like to get your feedback and hear your comments or suggestions so that way I can improve on providing better information. If you have time please go to the link below to answer a short survey. It is very much appreciated!

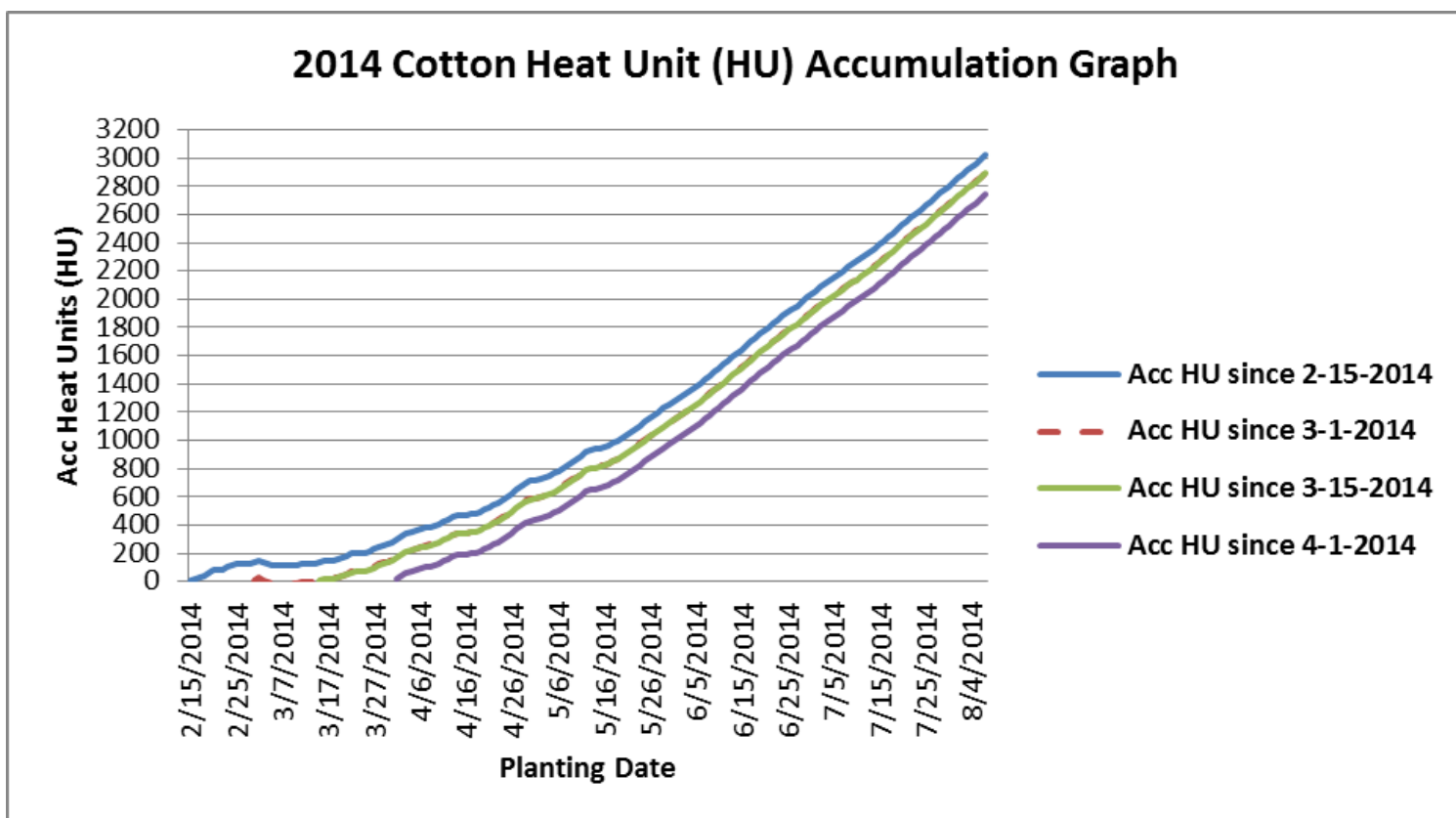
<http://southtexas.tamu.edu/programs-and-services/integrated-pest-management/pest-cast-sorghum-questionnaire/>

Thank You Very Much!

I would like to thank all the Valley Growers for their continued support of the Pest Cast. Thank you! Plus I want to thank the growers who allowed us to monitor their fields so we could learn more and share it with you all...you know who you are and thanks a bunch for working with us! I also want to offer a special thanks to our Sponsors listed on the last page. We could not have been able to get this job done without their support. Thank you!

Of course the Pest Cast wouldn't be complete without the help of many who contributed their knowledge to these newsletters. For that I want to give credit where credit is due and give a special thanks to Jim Trolinger-CPS, Mike Grey-Wilbur Ellis, Bruce King –consultant, John Norman- consultant, and Webb Wallace-consultant and executive director Cotton and Grain Producers Association. Thanks Guys!

I also want to thank my colleagues Dr. Raul Villanueva, Extension entomologist and his post doc Gabriela Esparza- Diaz and Beto Garza, Agricultural Researcher for their efforts and contributions towards the information in the Pest Cast regarding the sugarcane aphid, thank you! And last but not least I want to thank my interns Joe Martinez, Jairo Lozano, and Alex Alaniz for their scouting efforts and work in cotton and in grain sorghum. You did good guys, thanks!



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Thanks to ALL for a great growing season!
Take care.

Danielle Ortiz