



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

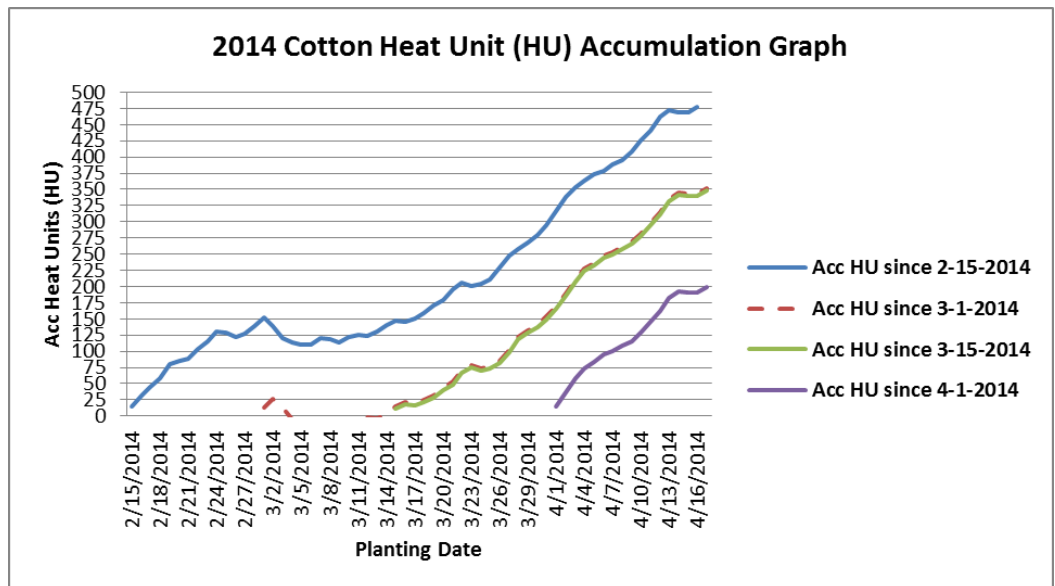
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General Situation

This week brought about some fairly mild warm weather with some strong wind gusts reaching 40-50mph. Comparing this year to last year we are about 140 heat units behind last year at this time. As you drive throughout the Valley you will notice many fields being irrigated this week.



Cotton

Cotton in the Valley is progressing well with majority of cotton in 3-5 true leaf stage. Overall seeing excellent cotton stands throughout the Valley despite a little bit of wind and sand damage to cotton in Willacy County. In older cotton (5 true leaf) there has been reports from various consultants of high fleahopper numbers in Cameron county in the San Benito area and further east. In the Brownsville area some fields are being treated for fleahoppers. Fleahopper adults are 3mm in length, oval shaped and yellowish/green in color. Fleahopper nymphs are quite smaller than the adults and are light green in color with purple antennae. It is important to control fleahoppers during the squaring stage to avoid fleahoppers feeding too much and reducing your square retention resulting in blasted squares. In the southern mid Valley thrip populations are increasing on cotton especially those fields near onions. Various reports from local consultants have also warned of high aphid populations mainly in older cotton or in cotton that has been treated for boll weevils with Malathion sprays. The sprays have seemed to flare aphid populations in various fields so be on the lookout. Also this week red spider mites have increased drastically in cotton. Younger cotton needs to be checked thoroughly to avoid stunted growth from excessive red spider mite feeding. This year with the extra moisture we received we have a lot of various host plants harboring pests. Weeds such as silver leaf nightshade and croton are abundant this year and it is good to be mindful that when spraying herbicides to clean up these weeds it can cause the potential for certain pests to move over into your crops.



Adult cotton fleahopper,
Photo Credit: Winfield
Sterling, Texas A&M
University

Grain Sorghum

Worm pressure in corn and grain sorghum has seemed to taper off becoming less of an issue to none at all. In older grain sorghum that was planted in early February we are seeing low populations of sugarcane aphids on the lower leaves and sporadically finding sugarcane aphids in younger sorghum plants as well. This week, in all commercial fields we sampled, sugarcane aphids were found in low numbers, the previous week only 2 fields had sugarcane aphids. We are also seeing yellow sugarcane aphids in sorghum, which are normal down here but can be easily confused for the invasive sugarcane aphid. The main two differences between the yellow sugarcane aphids and the sugarcane aphids is: yellow sugarcane aphids are bright neon yellow and hairy, the sugarcane aphid is a more mellow yellow and will have two black cornicles that will look like black dots with a 10x hand lens.



Sugarcane Aphid



Yellow sugarcane aphid

Thanks to our friends/growers 30 miles southwest of Rio Bravo, we know that they are already finding and experiencing problems with sugarcane aphids in their fields. Their grain sorghum is in the head exertion stage. Also, we are receiving reports that in San Fernando, Tamaulipas, farmers are also having trouble with the sugarcane aphid and their farmer’s largest association is publishing on the newspapers that there are infested fields in San Fernando.

We are still not sure as to exactly when the sugarcane aphid will become a significant problem or if at all here in the Rio Grande Valley, but all growers should be aware of the potential infestation threat they pose due to the fact that our neighbors south of the border are already experiencing some levels of infestation.

Corn

Nothing to report in corn this week.

False Chinch Bugs

An isolated event of false chinch bugs occurred in a Weslaco cotton field this week. False chinch bugs are not a problem down here, but have been known to cause significant damage killing seedling cotton and soybeans up North and in other states. You’ll find false chinch bugs feeding on different weeds



Above immature false chinch bug, Below adult false chinch bug



Right row of seedling cotton killed by heavy false chinch bug infestation, left row unaffected in (Weslaco cotton field)

such as wild mustards, Virginia pepperweed and evening primrose. When these weeds dry down or are killed with herbicides this is when false chinch bugs will find another source to feed on. False chinch bugs are a “true bug” that feed on plant juices. False chinch bugs are about 1/8 inch long and are brown, greyish in color with immatures tending to have reddish coloration in marking. In big infestations false chinch bugs can be quite destructive to seedling cotton killing it at field edges and in hotspots. False chinch bugs can be easily controlled with any pyrethroid.



Seedling cotton infested with false chinch bugs

LRGV BOLL WEEVIL TRAPPING INFORMATION

YTD	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
	.00180	.00171	.02631	.00335	.00651	.24503	.20438	.40011	.62194	4.64564


Week Ending	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
4/6/14	.00212	.00435	.03353	.00476	.00672	.11633	.30512	.40392	.88875	6.47392
4/13/14	.00164	.00099	.01617	.00360	.00592	.23686	.17102	.36414	.18005	2.96203

Traps inspected for current week: 36,489

Announcements

There will be a **Conservation Farming Financial and Technical Assistance Program** taking place on **Tuesday April 29th from 9am to 1:30pm** at the **Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center in Weslaco**, 2401 E. Business 83. The program is free and will assist in learning about conservation practices. They will have various agencies offering financial and technical assistance to implement practices such as land leveling and poly-pipe installation. Contact Ashley Gregory @ (956) 969-5615 for more info.

Contact Info:

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Sponsorship

Pest Cast sponsorship opportunities will be available again this year. Your support is very much appreciated. Cotton and Grain Producers of the LRGV will be coordinating the sponsorships again. For more information on sponsorship, please contact Webb Wallace at cottonandgrain.lrgv@gmail.com or (956) 491-1793.

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



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