



## 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

Hope this Pest Cast update finds you well. Temperatures have been the usual, hot, hot, and very hot. Currently our days are in the low 90s and our nights in the mid to low 70s. Hopefully May will bring about some May showers but we will see as we are mainly forecasted for more sunshine with a chance of rain the later part of next week. All crops are progressing very well throughout the Valley.

### Cotton

According to the Texas Boll Weevil Eradication program we have a total of 200,143.5 acres of cotton planted and growing in the LRGV. This is Awesome! This is the biggest planting I have seen since I have started my career as you all's IPM agent back in 2013 and I am just very happy and grateful to be a part of it.

I would like everyone to be aware that we did receive approval for a Section 18 for use of Transform in cotton for control of plant bugs; this section 18 expires October 31, 2017. The Section 18 label for Transform in cotton is attached. When using Transform to control plant bugs a rate per application allows for 1.5-2.25 oz/acre, with no more than a total of 8.5 oz/acre per year to be used. Remember to Not apply within 14 days of harvest and do not make applications less than 5 days apart. Also do not make more than two consecutive applications per crop.

Cotton is squaring nicely with reports of an increase in fleahopper infestation levels in the field. Most areas have low to moderate fleahopper activity of about 10 to 20% infestation levels. Mainly fleahopper adults are being seen right now in the cotton and a few nymphs with a handful of fields being sprayed for them (Fig 1). However populations could increase rapidly so monitor your cotton that is squaring right now for fleahoppers to avoid having blasted squares. There have also been reports of cotton fields being sprayed for red spidermites that had significant populations. Spidermites have been numerous in some fields but overall have remained in low numbers in most cotton fields across the Valley. Cotton aphid populations have crashed significantly with most fields just having a few aphids and plenty of beneficials taking care of the aphid problem now. We have been and still are finding adult white flies in the mid valley, but have not seen any nymphs yet. We are starting to pick up on a few tarnished plant bugs in the cotton so we will want to keep an eye on their populations especially once a few grain sorghum fields start being harvested so we will be prepared to protect the small immature bolls. Let's keep an eye out for stinkbugs as well as Verde bugs since a couple have already been spotted in some isolated areas.



**Figure 1: Fleahopper adult (top), nymph (bottom)**

### **Grain Sorghum**

Good news...we have seen a significant drop in sugarcane aphid numbers and populations have been below threshold. A few headworms are being seen in sorghum along the coast but mainly large moth populations are being seen as of now. There have also been high rice stinkbug populations in sorghum in Willacy County. Most sorghum fields are in the soft dough stage or are already putting on color and seed hardening.



**Mark your calendar and save the date!**

There will be a **Grain Sorghum and Corn Field Day at Rio Farms on Tuesday, May 23**. We will be checking out how the hybrids from all the seed companies look in the field trials. There will also be a feed grains market update, insect update and other pertinent topics. Come join us!!

TDA continuing education credits will be offered.

The program agenda will be out at a later date.

### **Thank you Research Grant Sponsors**

**Cotton Inc.**

**Texas Grain Sorghum Board**

**USDA NIFA iPIPE CAP grant**

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