



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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Editor

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General Situation: More of the same. Hot and dry. However, crops looked pretty good this week. Crop yields may be better than we first guessed.

Cotton: Dry weather aside, dryland fields appeared to have better yield potential this week than anyone would have speculated about a month ago. Boll size and number were both higher this week. Large bolls were in obvious evidence even just driving by most fields. Boll size was larger and higher up on the plants despite a lack of rain for most dryland areas. A few earlier planted fields were showing small numbers of cracked and/or open bolls this week. Rain now still would help the dryland cotton crop.

The nation's first bale of cotton was picked on Tuesday, June 7. The variety was reported to be FiberMax 1740B2RF. It was picked by the Jorge Rodriguez family from a dryland field near Santa Rosa in Cameron County.

Irrigated fields were continuing to mature and make good progress. Squaring and blooming were ongoing with many earlier planted fields showing large speckled bolls near the tops of plants. A few scattered open or cracked bolls were observed this week. If the current weather pattern holds, then early planted fields will have many open bolls showing very soon.

Insect and mite activity were much lower this week than last. The number of fields with low-level whitefly infestations increased again this week, but most fields were not economically damaging infestations.

Spidermites continued to be a problem in some fields. Like whiteflies, mites were much reduced in previously infested fields. Old damage from mites was easily seen in many fields over the last two to three weeks. Dry appearing or browned leaves in the tops of plants were, in most cases, where mites had caused damage.

Cotton fleahoppers remained at high levels in some fields. In fields with higher infestations, 1 to 3 or more fleahoppers per plant were observed this week. Only fields which either have not bloomed or were just starting to bloom are likely to be threatened by fleahoppers at this time.

Verde bugs were present in a few more fields this week. No field checked this week had high numbers. Dr. Scott Armstrong, USDA Research Entomologist at Weslaco, reported that he was finding large numbers using their vacuum machine in fields known to have Verde bug infestations. We continue to urge caution regarding Verde bug infestations. This pest is easily missed in fields. Signs of infestation are damaged large squares with unusual blemishes and small to medium bolls with black spots where Verde bugs have lanced the boll's outer skin. Opening such bolls and looking to see if the marks on the outside of the bolls reach to the fiber and or seed inside can provide you with information about the bugs possible presence and actual damage.

Whiteflies continued to be of some concern in scattered fields, mostly in Hidalgo County. However, a few whiteflies were observed in fields all across the Valley this week. It is getting late in the game for whiteflies to have serious economic impact in most fields, but all fields should be checked routinely for the pests to be certain that whiteflies do not become a problem.

LRGV

BOLL WEEVIL TRAPPING INFORMATION

YTD	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
	.00197	.00722	.16713	.11152	.23883	.38684	1.09145

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
4/24/11	.00133	.01426	.38106	.05425	.23751	.15855	3.48685
5/1/11	.00043	.01528	.09081	.09113	.18227	.08629	1.70269
5/8/11	.00077	.00825	.05548	.08168	.07073	.09976	.73028
5/15/11	.00174	.00291	.02454	.07013	.17113	.09204	.72057
5/22/11	.00234	.00140	.10516	.08410	.06717	.20786	.58319
5/29/11	.00177	.00336	.20724	.06413	.07770	.12939	.84931
6/05/11	.00244	.01018	.13857	.04752	.13497	1.0014	.82565

Traps inspected for current week: 46,666

Grain Sorghum and Corn: Grain sorghum harvesting increased this week. Yields reported from a few dryland fields in Willacy County were near 4,000 pounds per acre. A 4,000 pound yield average for the 2011 crop would put grain sorghum yields above the Willacy county dryland average of 3,500 pounds per acre. Higher than average grain sorghum yields are more evidence that crops did better than expected on such low amounts of seasonal rainfall this year. And they were evidence of how much subsoil moisture helped this year's crop.

Field and seedcorn harvesting will commence soon. Male rows in corn were being removed and all corn fields were drying down this week.

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