



## Pest Cast

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

John W. Norman, Jr.  
Editor

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Dryland cotton in Willacy County. While not all dryland fields look this good, it is surprising to see so many that have very good looking crops this season.

**GENERAL SITUATION:** Spotty showers with hot and dry conditions most of the time. Such is summer in the Valley. Pre-harvest and harvest activities were the name of the game for most farms around the Valley this week. Harvest activities will continue for the next 3 to 4 weeks. Insect activity continued in those fields which were still green and attractive to whiteflies.



Picking Cotton

**COTTON:** Cotton was reaching final maturity in most fields this week. Overall, more cotton fields in the Valley were defoliated and/or harvested than not. But, there were many fields which needed another 2 to 3 weeks before they could be defoliated.



Stripping cotton

*Whiteflies* were unrelenting in their migration this week. Fields which had been sprayed for whiteflies as late as July 13, were, in some situations, covered with adults and immatures this week. However, there were a few late maturing fields in which there were few whiteflies even at this late date. Plans for managing immature fields well into August must include whitefly



Round and rectangular modules are beginning to stack up at gin yards in the Valley.

management.

Whiteflies finally did make it to what must be considered the rough-year status, especially along the river and other primarily irrigated areas. Growers in those areas will be quick to point to how much they had to spend to keep whiteflies at lower levels as proof of how bad they were. But, fortunately, most area irrigated fields (and very few dryland fields) did not have large numbers of whiteflies until after most of the crop was set into large numbers of bolls. Unlike years like 1991 when the Valley first experienced whiteflies at damaging levels by mid-May in a Whitefly triangle from San Benito in Cameron county to west of Mission in Hidalgo county and all the way north to Raymondville in Willacy county, the Valley's experience this year was limited in both area and time of severely damaging whitefly numbers. But, just like any other year in the Valley, late maturing fields will take the brunt of large numbers of pests such as whiteflies which can be devastating to the late fields. Early planting and early maturity still reign king among pest management tactics, regardless of the pest.

No other pests at harmful numbers were reported from fields this week. A few *aphids*, *leaf footed bugs* and a *Verde bug* or two were observed this week, but not at damaging levels.



Clearing the stalks

reports from irrigated fields had yields ranging from near 2 bales to 3.25 bales per acre. Given the hot temperatures and lack of rain, the initial yield-reports were good news. Let's just hope it continues.

Preliminary cotton yields in dryland fields were reported from just under a bale to nearly 2 bales per acre. There were still large numbers of dryland fields to be picked, but early yields looked pretty good. Predictably, the harvest in irrigated fields lags behind dryland fields. But a few preliminary



More stalk cleaning which the birds really like

### **Stalk Destruction**

A topic of considerable concern at this time of each season is cotton stalk destruction. Boll weevil eradication efforts are ongoing and making progress. But, in order for the progress to continue and the program to be successful, cotton stalks from regrowth from old stalks or volunteer seedlings must be cleared from all fields by the end of this cotton season. A problem which has been repeated in the past in the Valley and other areas of Texas is seedling cotton coming up in old cotton fields with other crops planted in those fields. Now termed non-commercial cotton, cotton plants in fallow land or other crops have proven to be a serious trouble spot for boll weevil eradication efforts. This year, according to the eradication program in the Valley, one third of the weevils caught in 2012 came from non-commercial fields. Part of the problem comes from non-commercial fields with volunteer seedlings not being

sprayed because insecticides labeled for use on the primary crop are not available. The lack of approved labels for some of these crops and the difficulty in locating the cotton growing in the non-commercial crop have hampered control measures. The Foundation continues to seek additional labels for weevil control in non-commercial crops. Many herbicide labels for volunteer cotton control in grain crops may be obtained from the AgriLife Extension Service or by visiting the Texas Boll Weevil Website at [txbollweevil.org](http://txbollweevil.org) and clicking on the link on the right side of the web page.

### ***Final Regular Edition of Pest Cast for 2012***

This will be the final regular issue of the 2012 summer crops season. While there are fields left which will need monitoring for pests into August, the bulk of the fields of corn, sorghum and cotton were near or at the final stage. We hope this year's Pest Cast has provided useful information and in a timely manner. If you have comments or suggestions for improving Pest Cast, please provide those to either the email, mail or phone contacts listed at the end of this newsletter. This may be my final Pest Cast since the IPM Agent position has been refunded and candidates are being sought for the position. It was my pleasure to bring this newsletter to you on behalf of Texas AgriLife Extension and the Cotton & Grain Producers' Association of the Lower Rio Grande Valley during the past two seasons. I trust that it was of benefit. We may bring special editions of Pest Cast to you if some new information becomes available between now and final stalk destruction. Finally, I want to offer a special thanks to our sponsors listed on the next page. We could not have been able to get this job done without their support. A word is also due to the contributors (***Jim Trolinger-CPS, Mike Grey-Wilbur Ellis, Web Wallace-consultant and executive director Cotton and Grain Producers Association, Bruce King-consultant and Frank Krupala- South Texas Ag Research-RGV, Inc.***) who provided timely and critical reports which made this newsletter much more complete and hopefully, of much more benefit to you.

<b>Heat Units (H.U.) as shown are calculated from the dates of planting shown in the left column</b>		
<b>Planting Dates</b>	<b>2012 H.U.s</b>	<b>Historical H.U.s</b>
<b>2/15</b>	<b>3336.0</b>	<b>2962.7</b>
<b>3/1</b>	<b>3121.5</b>	<b>2860.8</b>
<b>3/15</b>	<b>3018.0</b>	<b>2745.6</b>
<b>4/1</b>	<b>2745.5</b>	<b>2541.4</b>

## LRGV

### BOLL WEEVIL TRAPPING INFORMATION

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

Week Ending	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
4/1/12	.03353	.00476	.00672	.19847	.08503	.64118	.48544	0
4/8/12	.01617	.00360	.00592	.11633	.30512	.40392	.37552	0
4/15/12	.01572	.00114	.00312	.23686	.17102	.36414	.88875	6.47392
4/22/12	.00339	.00133	.01426	.38106	.05425	.23751	.15855	3.48685
4/29/12	.00474	.00043	.01528	.09081	.09113	.18227	.08629	1.70269
5/6/12	.00136	.00077	.00825	.05548	.08168	.07073	.09976	.73028
5/13/12	.00055	.00174	.00291	.02454	.07013	.17113	.09204	.72057
5/20/12	.00485	.00234	.00140	.10516	.08410	.06717	.20786	.58319
5/27/12	.00426	.00177	.00336	.20724	.06413	.17113	.09204	.72057
6/3/12	.00339	.00244	.01018	.13857	.04752	.13497	1.00114	.82565
6/10/12	.00281	.00720	.00794	.17487	.11127	.03975	.46624	1.77066
6/17/12	.01212	.00556	.00766	.06249	.13535	.17113	.09204	.72057
6/24/12	.00935	.00570	.01430	.03580	.49846	.12318	.32430	6.85560
7/1/12	.05315	.05716	.01456	.13756	.30683	.16200	2.17874	7.73737
7/8/12	.05972	.10697	.03933	.14793	1.63195	.59710	3.61197	22.70318
7/15/12	.07231	.07553	.06099	.06107	1.65666	.33439	4.98724	10.90851
7/22/12	.10642	.26791	.10456	.09227	2.03746	.51555	5.89333	25.24939

**Traps inspected for current week: 35,612**

*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](mailto:d12south@ag.tamu.edu)  
<http://southtexas.tamu.edu>