



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.

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Editor

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General Situation: The weather has changed since last week. Hail and more rain around the Valley came on Friday, April 20th. Many fields of cotton, corn and sorghum were hit with hail and rain from north of a line from just south of Harlingen to the coast. Moisture levels across most of the Valley should be very good at present. If we keep getting rain about every 10 days to weeks, the sky is the limit.

Cotton: Damage from hail was minimal except for a relatively small area just west of San Perlita in Willacy County. A few fields there were completely destroyed down to the bare ground in a couple of cases. Most fields lost some leaves and some plants lost terminals, but not serious enough to prevent the fields from producing a near normal crop.....provided water and fertilizer are not limiting factors later on. A delay in maturity of a week to two weeks in those plants with damaged, but not destroyed terminals will likely be observed toward the end of the season. The fields shown in the pictures were the worst of the damage observed this week. Plants in the two fields shown were 10-12 inches in height before the hail. Most fields had much less damage than the two depicted.



Figure 1. Cotton destroyed by hail southwest of San Perlita 4-20-12.



Figure 2. Another hail destroyed cotton field west of San Perlita 4-20-12

Cotton was squaring rapidly with many fields showing 2 to 4 squares per plant. Plant height was also changing almost daily with many fields having plants near 12 inches tall. Some early planted fields should be blooming or near bloom by early next week.

Pest insect activity increased slightly this week. Cotton fleahoppers were increasing with adults the most common stage found. Flea counts ranged from 0 in most fields to 40 per 100 plants. Many fields had 1 or 2 fleas per 100 plants. There could be an increase in fleas with more nymphs found this next

week. Those few fields with higher counts were sprayed. As fields and surrounding fleahopper host plants begin to dry out, look for increased fleas showing in cotton. Scouting of all fields needs to conduct to determine pest and damage levels.

Silver leaf whiteflies were observed at very light levels in scattered fields in Cameron and Hidalgo counties this week.

Recently, there have a number of fields of various crops in which growing cotton was found. One field of a fall planted corn crop, which has since been harvested, large numbers of cotton plants were found along with large numbers of live boll weevils and punctured squares. According to Larry Smith, Program Director, Boll Weevil Eradication Program, 25% of all of the boll weevils trapped in the Valley as of April 17, were caught in that one field. This one incident points to the critical need to destroy all cotton growing in other crops so that weevil production can be reduced. The more cotton that is allowed to grow the longer it will take to finish eradication efforts here in the Valley.

The Texas Department of Agriculture has regulations dealing with cotton growing in other crops called Non-Commercial cotton. The following paragraph summarizes those regulations:

Non-Commercial Cotton

Noncommercial cotton is defined as cotton plants growing in fields of other crops or in locations that are not a crop field. In boll weevil eradication zones, non-commercial cotton is regulated by the Texas Department of Agriculture. A grower who has fruiting, noncommercial cotton in a field which is not being produced for a cotton crop is notified and has 14 days to destroy the noncommercial cotton. After the 14-day grace period, he will be assessed a fee of \$5 per week for each week cotton plants in the field are not destroyed.

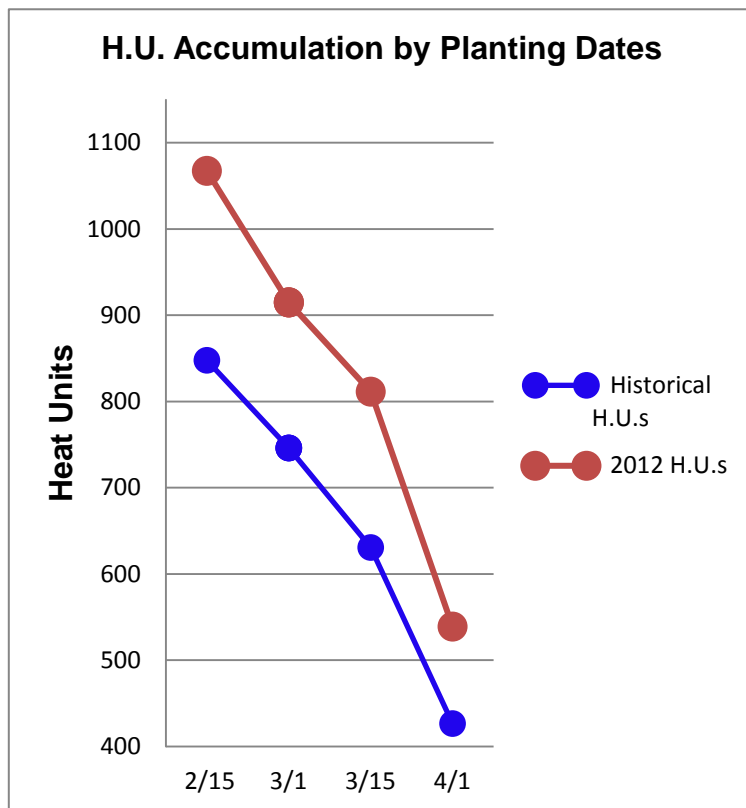
LRGV

BOLL WEEVIL TRAPPING INFORMATION

YTD	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
	.01658	.00248	.00724	.28612	.16836	.36592	.52281	4.01635

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

Traps inspected for current week: 27,143



Grain Sorghum: Many fields of grain sorghum were shredded by the hail noted above. Fortunately, most of the fields seen this week did not appear to have lost their central growing point. As long as the main growing point is intact, corn and sorghum can recover and make a normal yield. Fortunately, as with the hailed cotton, most fields did not receive plant-killing damage from the hail.

No pest damage was reported in sorghum this week.

Corn: Most of the corn, which is grown mostly outside Willacy County, had little if any hail damage noted. Insect activity was not reported in corn this week.

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