



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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Volume XXXIX

Issue 1, April 5, 2016

New Year/Season

Hi everyone! It's a new growing season and no telling what's going to happen. Currently here in the Valley we have been pretty dry. A lot of growers have been irrigating their fields or at least starting to. We are not forecasted for any rain any time soon and current temperatures have been high 80s during the day and high 60s at night.

Cotton

As I drove around the Valley scouting this week and last I noticed a lot more cotton coming up. Majority of the Valley's cotton is at cotyledon stage but there were several fields planted early that are already producing pinhead to ¼ grown squares and up to 9 true leaves. Much acreage has already been planted but there are still some growers planting cotton. According to the Texas Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation (TBWEF) there will be anywhere from about 120,000 to 150,000 acres of cotton for the 2016 year. That's more than double what was planted last year which is great to see us back to our normal cotton acreage! Tamaulipas Mexico also seems to be having a normal year with cotton acreage planted this year at 3100 hectares (7660 acres). The past couple of weeks we had some really strong wind gusts at 30 mph that caused some cotton seedlings that were just coming up to have to be replanted from all the sand blasting. Pest activity is very minimal right now in cotton as we are seeing a few thrips and a couple of cotton aphids here and there in the cotton.



Figure 1: Valley Cotton

Grain sorghum

We are currently scouting 12 commercial sorghum fields throughout all three counties. We have been looking for sugarcane aphids and they have been hard to find. We found a few (<10 sca/leaf) in some Johnson grass in Cameron, Hidalgo and Willacy counties but none so far in the commercial sorghum. I did however come across some volunteer sorghum this week in the Donna area and saw for the first time this growing season high sugarcane aphid numbers (> 1000 sca/leaf). However I just want to point out that you all (growers) have really made sure your



Figure 2: Valley Grain Sorghum

fields are very clean this year, there has been very little Johnson grass and I only saw two fields with volunteer sorghum. It is important to keep host plants that can cause high sca populations out of your fields which is currently what I have been seeing this year. So far our neighbors south of us in San Fernando, Reynosa, Rio Bravo and Matamoros Vallermoso are not experiencing any trouble with the sugarcane aphid. In San Fernando, since they are the furthest south their sorghum is already flowering and they have not had any sugarcane aphid pressure. Hopefully our situation will mimic our neighbors as we get later into the season. We have a lot of sorghum at V5 stage, seedling sorghum just coming up, and some older sorghum that has just started to get into flag leaf stage. We have picked up on a bit of yellow sugarcane aphids but nothing more than that. We have received no word yet on the status of sufloxafor (Transform) section 18; but I will keep you informed as soon as I receive word. Another product available and labeled for use in sorghum that shows good control of the sugarcane aphid is flupyradifurone (Sivanto). We will be hosting “Sugarcane Aphid Informative Meeting” on Tuesday April 12th here in Weslaco at the AgriLife Hoblitzelle Auditorium from 8am to 5pm. Please see attached pdf for program information. Hope you can join us that morning.

Corn

Lots and lots of corn as we drive through the Valley. We are currently scouting the corn as well but have not seen anything at all of any concern. Good stands, some corn is currently being irrigated as well this week.

Sponsorships

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.

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