



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

Danielle Sekula Ortiz
IPM Extension Agent

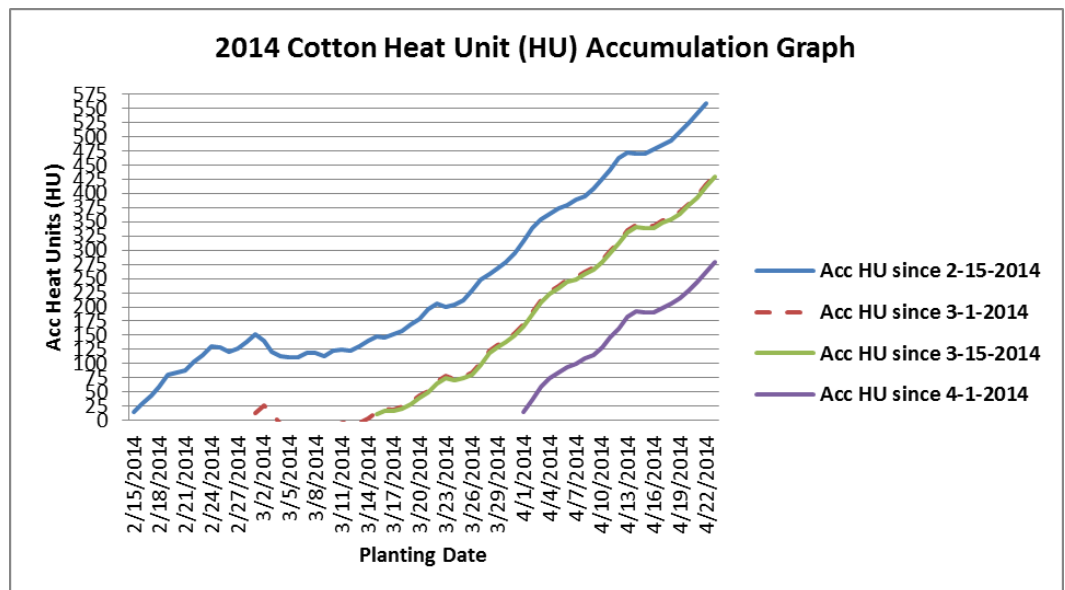
Volume XXXVII

Issue 5, April 25, 2014

General Situation

Temperatures heated up to the mid 80's reaching the lower 90's by the end of this week with slightly warmer nights in the mid 60's.

*The information below is provided by your local crop consultants as well as our own IPM program at AgriLife extension, to better serve the Valley and our growers' needs.



Cotton

Cotton is growing about 2 new true leaves per week with the current weather. Majority of cotton throughout the Valley is anywhere from 4 true leaves to 7 true leaves with the oldest fields barely starting to square. This week we saw increased pest activity with the same pests we reported last week. In the Brownsville area populations of cotton fleahopper immatures increased 50% to 75%. Throughout the Valley we are seeing some fleahopper adult activity and we will need to scout fields carefully as we head into heavy squaring. Fleahoppers will begin to move into cotton from wild host plants as the cotton begins to square. In cotton pin head sized squares and smaller squares are the most susceptible to damage since the adult and immature fleahoppers will suck sap juices from them and cause the squares to dry up, turn black and fall from the plants. When scouting for fleahoppers, each time you sample (weekly is good) you will want to check 25 terminals at at least 4 locations of a field starting when the first squares are appearing, which is currently where we are at now in terms of growth stage. If you notice anywhere from 15 to 25 fleahoppers per 100 terminals with squares being lost (rule of thumb: 10% the first week of squaring, 15% the second week of squaring, and 25% the third week of squaring, with treatment rarely needed after first bloom) treatment is justified. Some of the insecticides used to treat fleahoppers are Assail, Centric, Intruder, Tranform, Carbine and other insecticides.

An increase in spidermites was seen this week throughout the Valley and foreseeable spray applications within the next week or so may be applied if the populations continue to rise on young plants to avoid plant loss. Note that when scouting for spidermites they will infest the bottom of the leaves and feed by sucking plant juices, initially causing leaves to appear whitish-green in color and may change later on to a tan

or reddish color. Spidermites will occur in field margins or in spots in a field. You may be able to spot treat fields. You will want to treat for spidermites when you have notice leaf damage. Uncontrolled spider mite populations can cause leaf loss and small boll shedding. It is best to control infestations early before they spread and cause plant stress, leaf loss or small boll loss.

In the Brownsville area and in the parts of Willacy county there were reports of increases in aphid numbers, no sprays have been reported for aphids. Usually aphids will feed on cotton from emergence to open boll sucking plant juices from terminals, stems, and undersides of leaves. Aphid infestations can cause leaves to curl and turn yellow. Most aphid infestations do not cause economic damage until after first bloom and can be controlled by many natural predators. However if infestation levels reach 50 aphids per leaf, control is warranted.

Thrips were a problem in fields of cotton that were located near onion fields and some fields were treated for damaging thrips populations. Thrips feed on cotton by inserting their mouth parts into the plant and sucking its juices, causing silver colored leaf scarring and leaving the leaves with a stunted, crinkled appearance. Thrips are tiny slender insects no bigger than about 2mm long and can be yellow, brown, or black with adults having two pairs of narrow wings with fringed hairs. With onions being harvested, late planted cotton with 1 to 4 true leaves is susceptible to significant damage. The treatment threshold is 1 thrips per true leaf or higher. Cotton with 5-7 true leaf cotton can handle more thrips and will grow out of thrips damage. Be careful if you are thinking about treating for thrips that you are not treating after damage has already been done or on cotton that has grown enough that is no longer susceptible to damage.



Thrip damage on cotton leaves



Thrips (above & bottom)



Grain Sorghum

This week there were reports in Willacy County that corn leaf aphids were in high populations which were affecting the growing point of the sorghum. Though corn leaf aphids rarely cause economic damage to grain sorghum, some of these fields were being treated because of the damage to the growing point of the plant and because predator numbers were low. In the Lyford area, however, there were a lot of corn leaf aphids in grain sorghum but there were also many lady beetle larvae along with other predators controlling them. This is a more normal corn leaf aphid situation in grain sorghum. No treatment is needed and no damage is expected.

Sugarcane aphids have been reported in fields in the Mission and Rio Hondo area that are at 1-2 % infestation level in sorghum planted in mid-February. Older sorghum planted the first of February was already seeing a 4% infestation level in some fields in the Rio Hondo area. Most fields that we are surveying are seeing some sugarcane aphid activity but none warrant a spray treatment yet. This is a new pest of sorghum, there are not established thresholds yet, so you should monitor your fields checking weekly to look for the honey dew secretions they produce while feeding. Small plot tests and field trials have indicated that the insecticide Dimethoate 4EC can provide control at 1 pint per



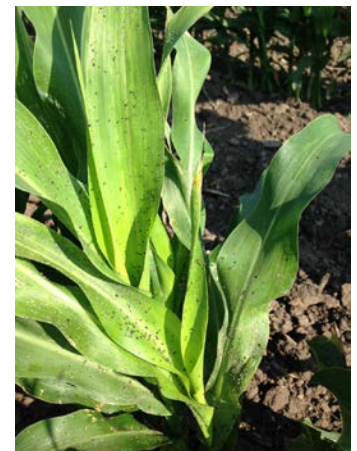
Corn Leaf Aphid



Sugarcane Aphid



Yellow sugarcane aphid



Corn leaf aphid infestation, photo courtesy of Rick Hernandez

acre. Transform WG has also been observed to be effective in experimental tests in Weslaco, Beaumont and Louisiana.

EPA has authorized a Section 18 to TDA for the use of Transform WG (sulfoxaflor) on sorghum to control sugarcane aphid (*Melanaphis sacchari*) as of April 24th, 2014. Foliar applications may be made by ground or air at a rate of 0.75- 1.5 oz of product per acre. **A maximum of 2 applications per acre per year may be made**, resulting in a seasonal maximum application rate of 3 ounces of product per acre per year. There is a minimal application retreatment interval of 14 days and a restricted entry interval (REI) of 24 hours. A 7 day pre-harvest interval (PHI) for forage and a 14 day PHI for grain or stover must be observed. The exemption to use this product expires October 31, 2014. Remember to follow all label restrictions. The Section 18 Transform WG label and EPA authorization letter is posted on the TDA website available for growers to make a copy:

<http://texasagriculture.gov/RegulatoryPrograms/Pesticides/Section18Exemptions/Section18ExemptionsNoticesandLabels.aspx>

Corn

There were observations of low level fall armyworm populations in commercial corn this week, but no significant populations were seen or reported. Corn is starting to tassel in some areas and we will probably be seeing some ear silking in a week or two.

LRGV BOLL WEEVIL TRAPPING INFORMATION

YTD	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
	.00169	.00134	.02194	.00278	.00597	.24503	.20438	.40011	.62194	4.65464

Week Ending	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
4/6/14	.00212	.00435	.03353	.00476	.00672	.11633	.30512	.40392	.88875	6.47392
4/13/14	.00164	.00099	.01617	.00360	.00592	.23686	.17102	.36414	.18005	2.96203
4/20/14	.00149	.00076	.01572	.00114	.00312	.23686	.17102	.36414	.18005	2.96203

Traps inspected for current week: 38,862

Announcements

There will be a **Conservation Farming Financial and Technical Assistance Program** taking place this coming **Tuesday April 29th from 9am to 1:30pm** at the **Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center in Weslaco**, 2401 E. Business 83. The program is free and will assist in learning about conservation practices. They will have various agencies offering financial and technical assistance to implement practices such as land leveling and pipe-line installation. Contact Ashley Gregory @ (956) 969-5615 for more info.

Contact Info:

Pest Cast Newsletter: Attn Danielle Sekula Ortiz Texas AgriLife Extension Service South District 12 2401 East Highway 83 Weslaco, TX 78596	E-mail: danielle.sekula@ag.tamu.edu Website: http://southtexas.tamu.edu Office Number: (956) 969-5608
--	---

Phone Number: (956) 968-5581
d12south@ag.tamu.edu



Sponsorship

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.

We thank the following Sponsors of the Pest Cast newsletter for their very generous contributions toward this effort.



2014 Pest Cast Sponsors

Platinum	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Bayer Crop Science SRS Farms	Hidalgo County Farm Bureau Jimmy Sanders, Inc. Miller Chemical Co. Valley Co-Op Oil Mill Wilbur- Ellis	Adams Farms Crop Production Services Gulf Compress Nichino America Rio Grande Aviation RGV Gin Willamar Operating LP	7L Farm Bennack Flying Service CropGuard Group Inc. DeltaPine / Monsanto Dow AgroSciences Hargill Growers Gin La Feria Co-op Lyford Gin Association Ross Gin Texas Ag Finance Valley Ag Crop Insurance