



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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General Situation

Temperatures this week were in the upper 80s lower 90s. We are forecasted for better chances of rain next week so here's hoping. Overall the crops are progressing well. This week was a slow week pest wise for cotton and the main concern is the increased sugarcane aphid activity in grain sorghum.

Cotton

This week cotton plants are anywhere from 7 to 11 true leaves. Cotton stands look good and continue to square very well. It was a slow week in cotton with very little insect activity this week. Many cotton fields were sprayed the latter part of last week and early this week. Cotton fields look pretty clean and insecticide sprays seem to be effective. In the Brownsville area however it was being observed that some fleahoppers are re-entering the fields again. Throughout the Valley in a few fields some red spidermites were observed in low numbers but nothing that warrants spray.

Grain Sorghum

In grain sorghum we observed this week more pressure from the sugarcane aphid. Many fields were sprayed this week for heavy sugarcane aphid infestations. In several fields it was observed that there were a significantly larger number of alates (winged females) compared to the last two weeks. In general at least 70 to 100% of plants are being infested which leads us to believe that the sugarcane aphid is colonizing, and distributing itself amongst other sorghum fields in the area and populating them. Other observations were that the sugarcane aphids were starting to populate the flag leaves (See figure 2) in grain sorghum. Many alates were noticed in the flag leaves and leads us to infer the sugarcane aphid can be migrating to the sorghum head. This week, I also noticed a sorghum field with a heavy sugarcane aphid infestation, there the sugarcane aphids were on the sorghum head (See figure 3, 4, and 5). There are also many predators such as lacewing eggs, syrphid larvae, well-known ladybug larvae, and other not very common such as scymnus (whitish ladybug larvae) and stethorus (tiny black larvae) being observed in the sorghum but the populations of sugarcane aphids grows so rapidly that they cannot keep up with the task of controlling them (Fig 6). Usually upon finding these predators feeding on the sugarcane aphids it can be an indicator that there is a bad infestation and that a spray is necessary.



Figure 1: Alates (winged females) on the bottom of the flag leaf



Figure 2: Infestation of sugarcane aphids on the flag leaf

If you have a sorghum field completely headed out, and you have not sprayed for sugarcane aphids, or where not aware of this pest, please have your consultant or yourself check your field, you probably have heavy sugarcane aphid infestations and will need to spray. The sugarcane aphids are being observed on grain sorghum that is just about to head to sorghum that is already heading. **Please inspect sorghum fields as the sugarcane aphids can populate rapidly.** You can look for sugarcane aphids by looking at the field edge at the bottom stalks for signs of infestation. You may notice honeydew or sooty mold (See Figure 7) on your stalks starting at the lower leaves; this is an indication of high sugarcane

aphid populations. You will also notice a slight glistening on the leaves, this is the honeydew deposited by the sugarcane aphids feeding that then falls onto the lower leaf, so you will want to inspect the one above under that leaf. Sugarcane aphids populate in much greater numbers than that of the yellow sugarcane aphid and are a lighter yellow in color.

Those who are spraying by air; we have noticed that they are getting adequate control. In two different locations when the spray was conducted by ground using drops on your boom it provided great control. Air and ground sprays should be conducted using the highest rates of water to provide good coverage. Again there is no threshold for sugarcane aphids since it is a new pest in sorghum here in Texas and the nation; however we are recommending that you do not let infestation levels exceed 30% to 50% for they are very hard to control. When spraying use drops on your booms and hollow cone nozzles so that the chemical can get up under the bottom leaves where the aphids are feeding. A surfactant is best to ensure that the chemical gets a thorough coverage. A high rate of water, such as 15-20 gallons per acre is recommended for good coverage. The main thing is to keep infestations of the sugarcane aphid from infesting the sorghum head.

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 24, 2014. Foliar applications may be made by



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6: Predators feeding



Figure 7: Notice Sooty mold starting on the bottom leaves from heavy sugarcane aphid infestation.

ground or air at a rate of 0.75- 1.5 oz of product per acre. It is recommended that you use the higher rate or at least 1 oz 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

No insect activity has been reported or observed this week in corn.

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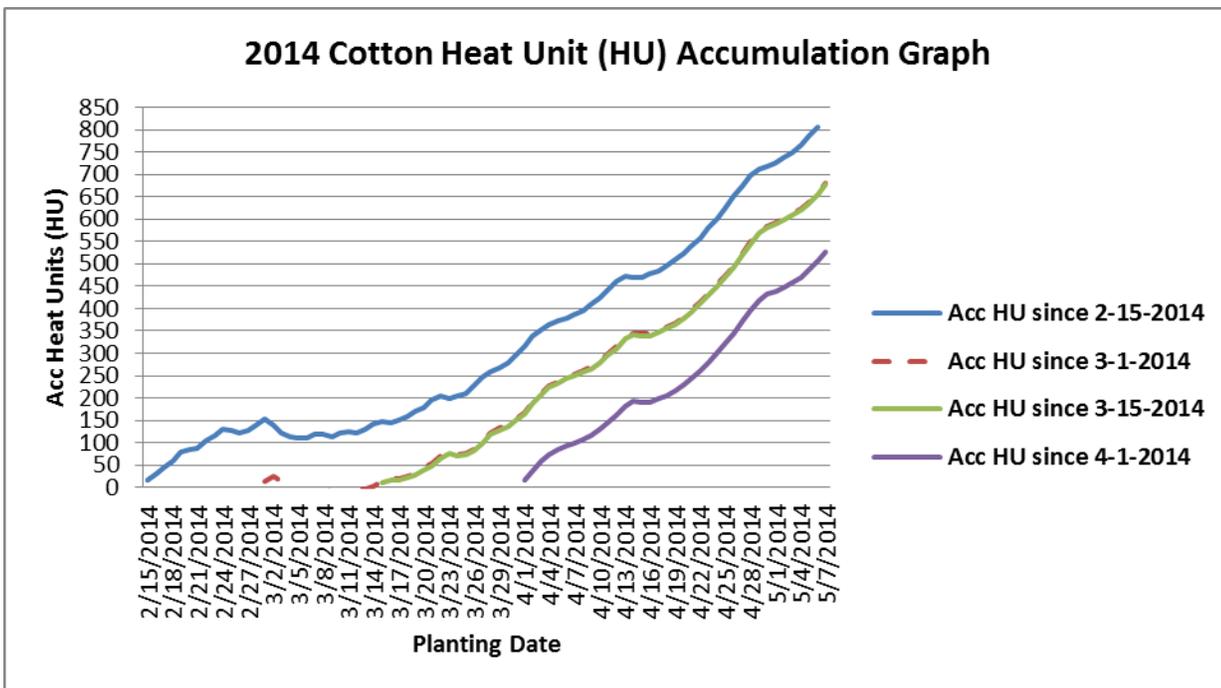
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LRGV BOLL WEEVIL TRAPPING INFORMATION

YTD	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
	.00167	.00099	.01351	.00212	.00986	.24020	.15333	.33301	.44477	3.06271

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
4/27/14	.00086	.00060	.00339	.00133	.01426	.38106	.05425	.23751	.15855	3.48685
5/4/14	.00243	.00058	.00474	.00043	.01528	.09081	.09113	.18227	.08629	1.70269

Traps inspected for current week: 39,856