



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.

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Editor

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GENERAL SITUATION: Sea breeze driven showers started on Friday afternoon, June 29 and continued for two more days in scattered locations around the Valley. Every field of cotton, grain sorghum and corn received some rain which ranged in amount from a trace to over 6 inches near Brownsville. Most locations received from ½ to 3 inches by Monday afternoon, July 2. Some additional sea breeze showers fell in isolated spots throughout much of this week. Most row crop producers indicated that they would like to have dry conditions until after cotton, grain and corn are completely harvested.



Sea breeze driven shower this week in eastern Willacy County.

COTTON: All weather considerations aside, cotton continued to finish up in many fields around the Valley this week. More open bolls and more cotton defoliation were reported across the area. Open boll counts ranged from less than 5 % to over 90% in dryland fields. Irrigated fields had open boll counts ranging from 0 to near 50%. The changes in crop maturity from last week to this week were not unexpected since so much of the crop was nearly fully matured last week. Only a few more heat units were needed to open a lot of bolls this week.

Along with mature fields, there were numerous fields which did not have any open bolls this week. Those fields will need to be watched closely for *whiteflies*, *plant bugs* and *spidermites*. Conventional cotton needs to be carefully monitored for various worm species like *bollworm* and *fall armyworms* in addition to the pests mentioned previously.

Fall armyworms were reported in some conventional cotton fields this week. Growers were spraying some of the conventional cotton for fall armyworms. Much of the conventional cotton is nearly balled out the tops of plants and will not likely need much more protection from any worms this season.

Whiteflies continued to do their thing to cotton in many fields this week. Most of the heaviest whitefly activity remained in the southern parts of Cameron and southern and central areas of Hidalgo county. Nearly all fields of cotton across the Valley had at least a few whiteflies again this week. Most the concern however, was in the southern and mid-Valley areas.



Whiteflies in cotton.

Many cotton fields were becoming more tolerant to whiteflies as the fields matured. In less mature cotton fields - those with no open bolls or only a few whiteflies could become an economic concern before the crop is ready to defoliate. Check cotton for whiteflies until at least two to three weeks before defoliation.

Verde bugs were also reported in many fields this week. Some fields which had concerns with Verde bugs before last week had nearly all large bolls this week. Verde



Verde bug on cotton.

bugs will not cause any economic injury to large bolls. Some unharvested grain sorghum fields continued to have large numbers of adults and nymphs of Verde bugs present. Verde bugs were moving in large numbers from grain to cotton a few situations. Most fields of cotton were not receiving high numbers of Verde bugs from sorghum this week, but less mature cotton fields need to be checked as nearby sorghum is harvested to determine if Verde bugs are migrating in large enough numbers to warrant spraying.

Tarnished plant bugs were found in isolated spots across the Valley this week. No reports of spraying for tarnished plant bugs were received this week.

GRAIN SORGHUM: Harvesting remained the primary interest of sorghum producers this week. Most of the Willacy county grain sorghum crop was harvested, but both Cameron and Hidalgo counties had considerable acres left to harvest. A few fields of very late planted sorghum were observed this week. The two I saw were blooming and likely had midge at significant levels. If sorghum in your field is just now blooming check it for *sorghum midge*. If it has just completed blooming then check the field for *rice stinkbugs*. Much of the mature sorghum was reported with rice stinkbugs this week. While the stinkbugs are not of concern in mature sorghum, the odds of finding stinkbugs in immature sorghum fields are increased this season. Sorghum midge can severely damage blooming sorghum and rice stinkbug can cause losses to milk and soft dough stage grain sorghum.

Heat Units (H.U.) as shown are calculated from the dates of planting shown in the left column		
Planting Dates	2012 H.U.s	Historical H.U.s
2/15	2768.0	2442.5
3/1	2575.0	2340.6
3/15	2471.5	2225.4
4/1	2199.0	2021.2

LRGV**BOLL WEEVIL TRAPPING INFORMATION**

YTD	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
	.01137	.00555	.00818	.14684	.15314	.20601	.56686	4.11144

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

Traps inspected for current week: 35,990

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