



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 this week was like last week's...hot and dry. Overall, the crops appear to be progressing well. Cotton irrigation was increasing. Pest insect activity was generally lower this week.



Cotton blooming near the top of a dryland field

COTTON: Most LRGV cotton fields were in bloom stage this week. In general, fields planted by the middle of March had lots of small to large bolls and many blooms this week. Most early maturing fields had blooms nearing the tops of plants. Based on observations of this week's cotton crop maturity, the Valley is headed for an earlier than expected finish.

Pest insect activity was very low in most areas of the Valley this week. *Fleahoppers and whiteflies* infestations were lower in most fields. However, whitefly infestations fields in the river area were still growing and some fields were sprayed for

whiteflies this week.

Spidermite infestations were also lower this week in most fields. Only a few fields were sprayed for mites this week.

Verde bugs (Creontiades) were reported from the Bayview area this week. No spraying for the bugs was reported.

More beneficial insects were observed this week. This was probably one of the reasons why pest populations were lower. *Syrphid fly* numbers were much higher this week. An average of more than 1 adult syrphid fly per foot of row was present in many fields this week. Some areas of fields had as many as 20 in a 3 foot square area. With that many adults, immature stages of syrphid flies should be more abundant and certainly, more immatures were seen in cotton and grain fields this week. *Lady beetles* too, were in fairly large numbers along with increased numbers of *assassin bugs*. Given the small number of pests, the beneficials were likely doing a little more feeding on each other than the few pests that could be found this week.



Boll numbers building on maturing cotton.



Matured sorghum field, Lower Rio Grande Valley, May 28, 2012.

GRAIN SORGHUM: Grain harvesting is not far away. Some matured fields will be prepped for harvest starting late this week into next week and then will be harvested within 10 days of treatment. The middle of June looks to have routine harvest of grain sorghum well under way.

Insect pests were reported again this week.

Sorghum midge infestations were hit or miss depending on what area of the Valley you were inspecting. Some fields of blooming sorghum only had 8 or so midge per 100 heads while other areas had 2-4 midge per head. Midge can build fast in a blooming field. Check your blooming sorghum fields frequently.

Another pest that is causing more anxiety than actual crop damage is *false chinch bugs*. Typically, false chinch bugs move from their wild hosts, which often are very near another crop, to surrounding fields. They tend to move in mass and can cover over an area the size of a few feet to a few yards along an infested field margin. The amount of acres infested and possibly damaged is more important than the fact that the bugs were found. Usually, the infested area in a field is so small that it cannot be cost effective to spray.



False chinch bugs on grain kernels. Photo from: B-1120-*Managing Insect and Mite Pests in Texas Sorghum*.



LRGV**BOLL WEEVIL TRAPPING INFORMATION**

YTD	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
	.00802	.00192	.00674	.17000	.11866	.27630	.35697	1.52198

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

Traps inspected for current week: 36,147

Heat Units (H.U.) as shown are calculated from the dates of planting Shown in the left column

Dates	2012 H.U.s	Historical H.U.s
2/15	1844.5	1589.9
3/1	1692.5	1488.0
3/15	1589.0	1372.8
4/1	1316.5	1168.6

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