



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

Very hot and dry. We've had a few days here this week at 104°F to 106°F with heat index of about 110°F. Everyone is either irrigating or going to for the most part. Lots of growers have been harvesting their grain sorghum as I saw many fields harvested in all 3 counties. Some of the first corn fields were harvested this week as well.

Cotton

Lots of cotton with open bolls this week compared to last week (Fig 1). Cotton has been maturing so quickly, its June and already we have had the first bale harvested and have so much white cotton in the fields as you drive everywhere. The main pest I am seeing this week are whiteflies (Fig 2). Whiteflies late in the season can cause damage by sucking plant juices from the leaves and causing premature defoliation which I am seeing in some areas, they can also feed so much that they excrete large honey dew deposits in which sooty mold will grow on and make leaves turn black (Fig 4) as well as staining and making the cotton sticky. They have been affecting cotton in many different areas along the coast, midland, and along the river off Military highway. I saw a couple of fields with such high whitefly numbers it really affected the cotton leaves causing them to turn brown on top (dried up) and you could see the sooty mold damage from afar (Fig 3). We are still picking up on fleahoppers, a few tarnished plantbugs and couple of Verde bugs but most all cotton has mature bolls now that we are past the point of damage. For the most part, many fields were clean and pest activity has dropped significantly other fields we drove up on seemed to be being sprayed this week either for weeds or maybe for whiteflies I'm guessing since that seems to be the only pest I am really seeing out there to cause great concern. Products that you can use to control whitefly are Oberon, Sivanto, Intruder, Courier, Knack, etc. Check labels for rates.



Figure 1: Open boll cotton, lots



Figure 2: Many adult whiteflies underside of cotton leaf



Figure 3: Cotton severely affected by high whitefly adult and nymph populations feeding on it, notice the leaves change in color to brown on top and if you were to walk in the cotton field you would see the black sooty mold on lower parts of the canopy.



Figure 4: Whiteflies on cotton leaf, and nymphs, as well as one pirate bug on the left side and on the lower right side you can notice cotton leaf by my fingers is covered in black sooty mold.

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