



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
IPM Extension Agent

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General Situation

Hi everyone. Its growing season now for Spring 2020 and we have had very dry conditions. Really have not had any rain. It's raining this evening as I write this Pest Cast and it's been a wonderful sound to hear, I had to stop and go outside to see it. Hopefully tomorrow will bring more but for now the forecast seems slim next week as it looks like lots of sunny days ahead. But you never know the weatherman has been wrong before. It has been our normal heat and our heat units for 2020 are right in line with previous years 2018, and 2017 (Refer to Figure1). Whereas last year 2019 was an odd one that was considerably colder, and our heat units were quite behind. The winds haven't stopped. It seems like every day since the new year we have had 30 mph winds and up to 45 mph wind gusts at times and with the dry conditions it's made planting interesting.

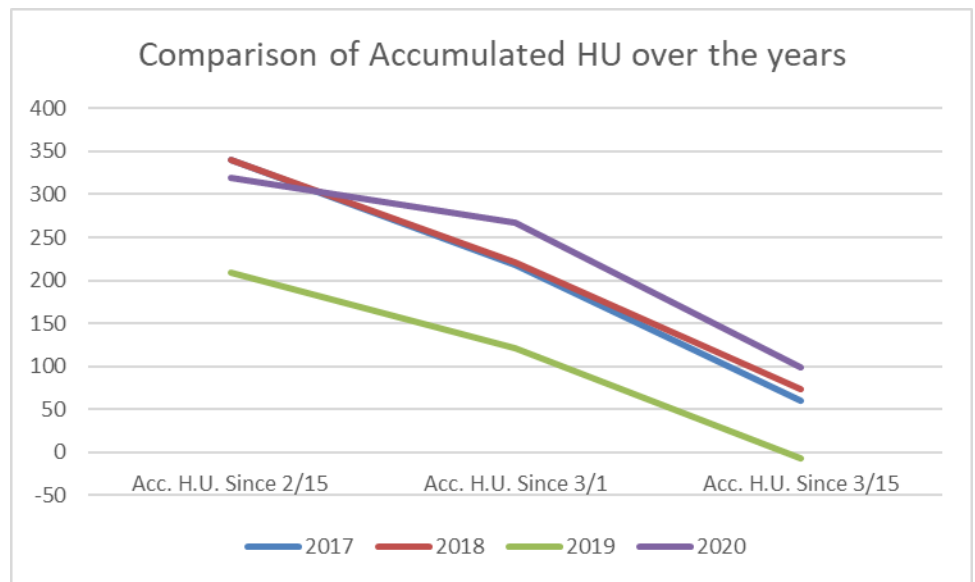


Figure 1: Heat Units Chart, 2020 vs Previous years

Year	Acc. H.U. Since 2/15	Acc. H.U. Since 3/1	Acc. H.U. Since 3/15
2017	340	218.5	60
2018	340	221	73
2019	209.5	121	-7.5
2020	319	266.5	99.5

Cotton

Many started planting cotton about 2 weeks ago and according to the Texas Boll Weevil Eradication program as of Wednesday March 18th they were showing 75,464.5 acres of cotton planted in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. As we continue to plant cotton we want to encourage producers to leave access around entire perimeter of field to be able to monitor trapping along with applying ground applications in case of weevil detection. Producers are also asked to please contact Boll Weevil office in their area to report acreage planted in cotton to insure there are no fields that are missed causing potential of weevil infestation. Reminder: any acreage planted in



Figure 2: two true leaf cotton

cotton will be monitored the entire year regardless if it is carried to harvest or destroyed early. Acreage planted in cotton this season will also be monitored next year as a carry-over field regardless of what crop is planted the following year. Thanks to all our LRGV cotton growers for their continued support working together with the Texas Boll Weevil Eradication program. You are the reason the entire U.S. can plant cotton. Thank you.

Cotton across the Valley is pretty clean right now. I was scouting this week and we have a lot of cotton just coming up in cotyledon stage up to 2 true leaves. In the Weslaco and Monte



Figure 3: Cotton

Alto areas I was picking up on a couple of adult winged cotton aphids out there and a handful of nymphs but other than that was very clean. Then in the Sebastian, Combs, La Feria, Donna, and Pharr areas it was pretty clean as well. In Progreso though I was picking up on some adult thrips, and a couple of nymphs, just barely starting to enter the fields on that cotyledon cotton. I did notice that onion fields were but a couple hundred yards away so for everyone along the river and near onion fields be mindful to get out next week and



Figure 5: Ladybug eggs in cotton



Figure 4: adult thrip in cotton

check for thrips as onions are being harvested and the thrips will be looking for new food, hence new emerging cotton. I did see some ladybug eggs so that's always good to see our predators are gearing up.

Grain Sorghum

I scouted many fields of grain sorghum coming up in all 3 counties, stages V1 to V5, mainly V3 out there and it too is looking pretty clean. Very limited fall armyworms and a tad bit of corn leaf aphid in the whorls. Not picking up on sugarcane aphids yet, still early in season.

For everyone's information:

EPA Re-evaluated Sulfoxaflor products recently and now sorghum, citrus, cotton and other crops have been added to the current label of Sulfoxaflor containing products.

So the Section 18 for cotton (tarnished plant bug) and sorghum (sugarcane aphid) are no longer needed when using Sulfoxaflor so please see new label attached in this email.

Corn

Saw a lot of corn out there as well. Didn't see anything really going on in corn. All different stages out there, mainly V3 through V5. Corn did look pretty thirsty in some areas and saw irrigated corn being watered this week.



Figure 6: Thirsty corn

Sunflowers

Sunflower stands out in McCook are looking pretty good and no pests of concern out there either.



Figure 7: Sunflowers in McCook

Sponsorship

Past sponsors and new sponsors thank you so much for supporting our local IPM program. Blessed to be your IPM-agent and look forward to this growing season as every year brings new challenges and new lessons to be learned. We have several projects we are working on and hope to generate some good data this growing season to share with our growers. If anyone would still like to sponsor, there is still time and your support is greatly appreciated. If you would like more information on the sponsorship levels or have any questions, feel free to email or call me. Thank you.

Danielle Sekula

Extension Agent- IPM

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension/ District 12
2401 East Highway 83/ Weslaco, TX 78596

Tel. 956. 968.5581 ext. 5608

Danielle.Sekula@ag.tamu.edu



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Have a great weekend everyone and stay safe and well. Take care.