



## 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

This was the first week in a long while that it wasn't so windy. Crops are doing good as we have currently been in the high 80s to low 90s in day time and high 60s low 70s at night. Many continued to cultivate and apply herbicide applications this week with some adding an insecticide as a preventative for cotton aphids.

### Cotton

We have cotton in all stages across the Valley. Cotton just emerging and in the cotyledon stage to 2 true leaf cotton need to be mindful of thrips as they are migrating from onion fields being harvested onto nearby cotton as we started to pick up on a little bit of thrip damage in nearby fields. When you are seeing one or more thrips present per plant at cotyledon to first true leaf this warrants spray treatment. Aphids are the main pest we have been consistently seeing throughout the Valley as their populations moderately continue to grow and I predict we will see them really peak in population next week with this continued heat forecasted. Some



Figure 1: Fleahopper nymph circled in red



Figure 2: Adult Fleahopper

of the higher populations of cotton aphids I have noticed in the Santa Rosa, La Villa and Monte Alto areas (Mid Valley). Those who have cotton aphids feeding not just on underside of leaves but down the whole growing point/terminal should treat accordingly. We have seen many predators building in numbers in the fields as they control cotton aphid populations as well as witnessing some parasitism (aphid mummies). Cotton just barely starting to square we are finding some adult fleahoppers around 5% to 10% and in cotton already squaring pretty good (4 to 6 true leaf cotton) about 15% to 20% finding both adults as well as a few nymph fleahoppers present. Most cotton is still in early stages but do expect fleahopper numbers to rise within next couple of weeks as majority of cotton will begin to enter the early stages of squaring. Cotton fleahopper adults are a pale grey/green ghostly color about

1/8 inch long and move pretty quickly when you walk up on them while checking. Fleahopper nymphs are a bright lime green color and you will find them at the growing point on your pinhead squares as they sometimes too are hard to spot but you will notice their erratic fast behavior. Fleahopper adults and nymphs like to feed on the squares by sucking the juices causing cotton squares to just dry up, turn brown and fall off so will be important to monitor populations the next few weeks diligently.

We have been approved for Section 18 label for Sulfoxaflor (Transform) in cotton for control of tarnished plantbugs. This Section 18 Emergency Exemption is effective March 1, 2019 and expires October 31, 2019. You can find the label as well as the Pest Cast and other info at:

<https://southtexas.tamu.edu/programs-and-services/ipm/>

### Grain Sorghum

We have been finding some light sugarcane aphid populations in the Monte Alto, Edinburg, Edcouch Elsa, Weslaco areas and along the river. I have noticed for the

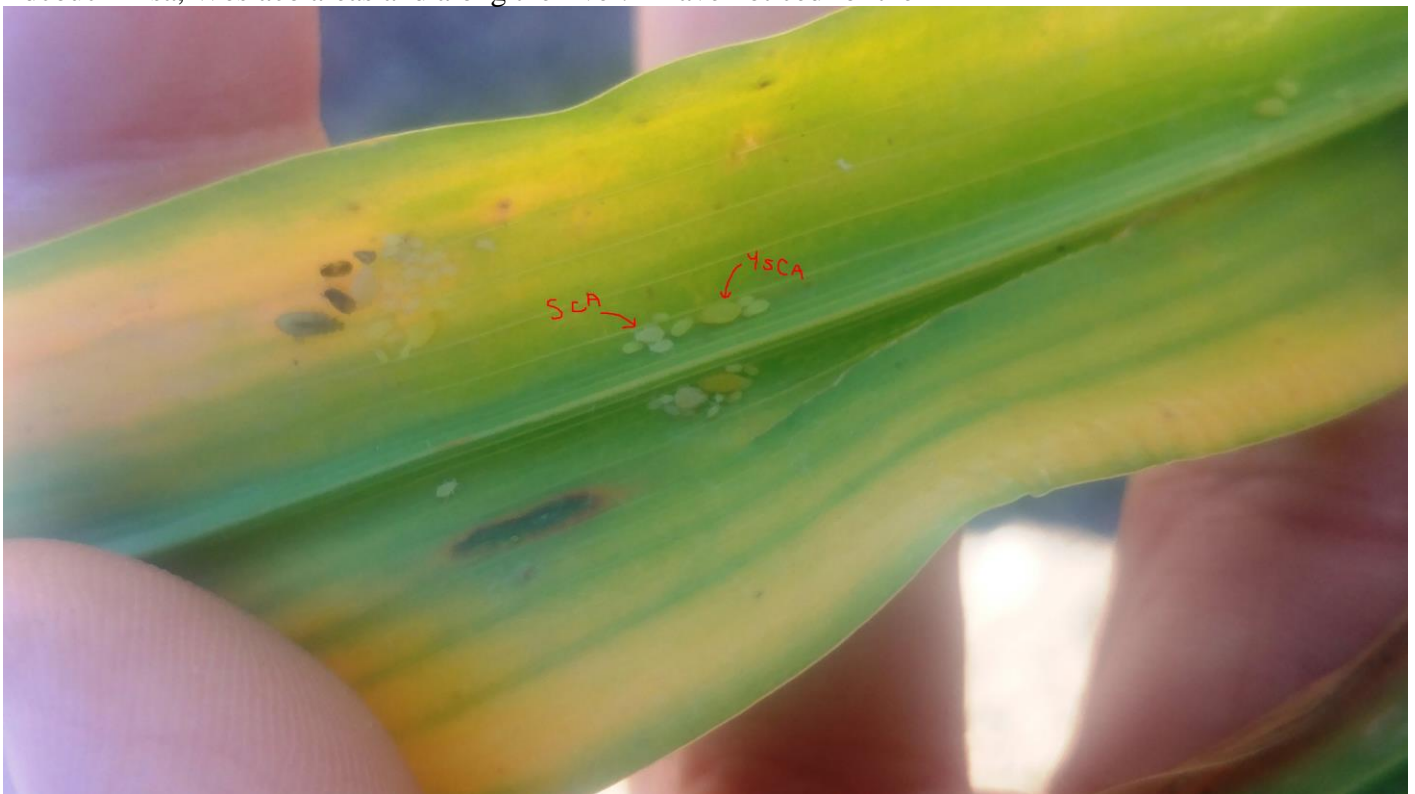


Figure 3: Sugarcane aphid (SCA) and yellow sugarcane aphids (YSCA) feeding

past couple of weeks that sugarcane aphids have been on the very bottom two leaves of the plant feeding alongside yellow sugarcane aphids (not in great abundance but certainly there along with some predators present feeding on both species). My concern is for sorghum that is either being irrigated now or within the next couple of weeks. If you are already irrigating plan to check your sorghum fields as soon as they dry to check for sugarcane aphids as their population can change very rapidly given the right conditions. If your sorghum is right at boot or if you are planning to irrigate please take the time to walk through your sorghum fields to see if you have sugarcane aphid populations and if you notice any stickiness from their feeding you might want to consider spraying prior to irrigation. It looks like we will be receiving our usual

high heat in the next couple weeks, that paired with added moisture and humidity are prime conditions for sugarcane aphid infestation to occur. I say all this because I'm not sure how much of a problem they will be this year. They are definitely present in all 3 counties, but it has taken scouting a handful of fields to come across one with a few sugarcane aphids on one leaf. For those with dryland sorghum in the Willacy and Cameron counties they have looked incredibly clean. Honestly majority of sorghum throughout the Valley is looking awesome and clean even along the river but it is still a good idea to be vigilant with monitoring for sugarcane aphids knowing what we have learned from previous years battling them.

We have been approved for Section 18 label for Sulfoxaflor (Transform) for Control of Sugarcane Aphid (*Melanaphis sacchari*) in Sorghum. This Section 18 Emergency Exemption is effective April 1, 2019 and expires November 30, 2019. You can find the label as well as the Pest Cast and other info at:

<https://southtexas.tamu.edu/programs-and-services/ipm/>



Figure 4: Sorghum flowering

### **Corn and Sesame**

Many started irrigating their corn this week. Dryland corn and sorghum is looking a little thirsty with its leaves twisting. Many fields of corn continue to tassel as now we have many fields where the corn stands about 4 to 5 ft tall. Saw more sesame coming up again this week in Raymondville and down by the river in Donna as we continue to see good stands and monitor for pests.

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