



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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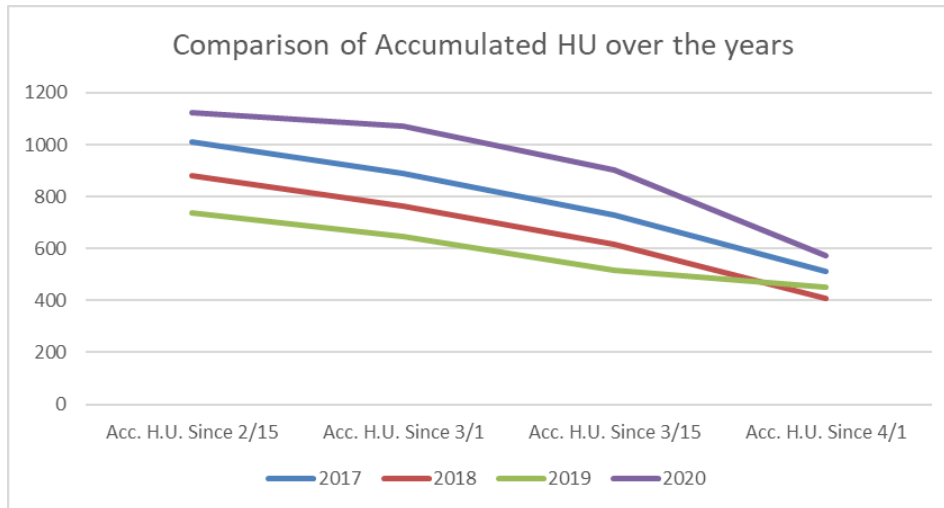


Figure 1: Heat Units chart comparing past years to 2020

Year	Acc. H.U. Since 2/15	Acc. H.U. Since 3/1	Acc. H.U. Since 3/15	Acc. H.U. Since 4/1
2017	1011	889.5	731	514
2018	881.5	762.5	614.5	406.5
2019	735.5	647	518.5	451
2020	1123.5	1071	904	573

General Situation

Still hot and still dry. If you look at the heat unit graph comparing this year 2020, to the last three years (Figure 1) you can see we are significantly warmer than previous years and just this year (purple line) compared to last year 2019 (green line) it is so much hotter. Crops are struggling to grow as we continue to run out of moisture and even those who have access to irrigation are watching their crops get thirsty quicker than ever.

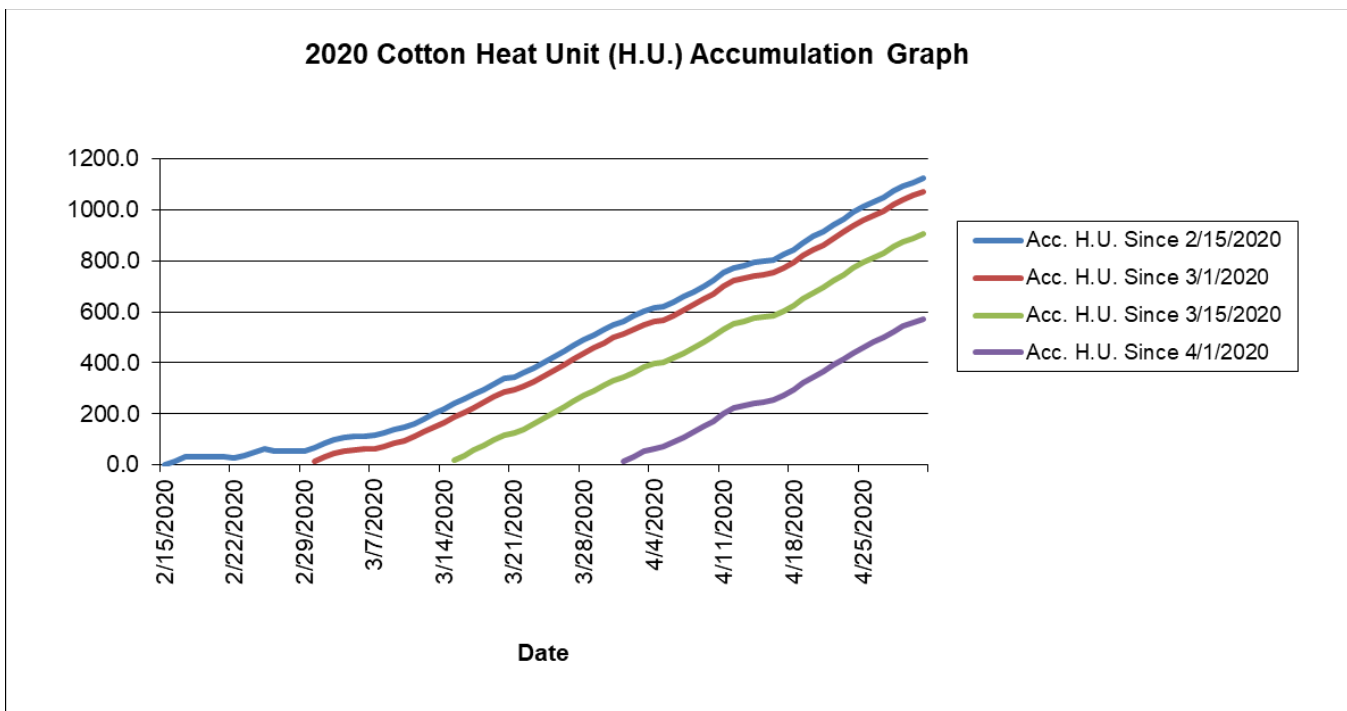


Figure 2: 2020 Heat Units chart



Figure 3: Whitefly nymphs on cotton



Figure 6: Minute pirate bug feeding on whitefly nymph



Figure 7: Whitefly adults in cotton

Cotton

According to the Texas Boll Weevil Eradication program as of today planted cotton acreage is 166,233.3 acres. The TBWEF estimate the amount of current viable cotton acreage to be about 130,000 acres; but that is subject to change with our current drought situation. This week in cotton pest populations were relatively low.

Fleahopper populations are low to none again this week as only a handful of fields had maybe 10-15% infestation but majority of fields are clean from fleahoppers feeding and I have not picked up on any significant feeding damage anywhere. In the Monte Alto and La Villa areas I was picking up on a good amount of whitefly adults and many nymphs as minute pirate bugs (Figure 6) were feeding on the immatures. Still seeing cotton aphids but moderate populations and many are being fed on by predators.

****Those who are going to plant a crop after failed cotton acres, please refer to the attached pdf flyer from the Texas Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation.**



Figure 4: Cotton blooms turning pink



Figure 5: Fleahopper adult

Grain Sorghum

This week I saw some sorghum fields in the Progreso, La Villa, Elsa, and Monte Alto areas that had high sugarcane aphid pressure. I believe though that these sorghum fields (varieties) do not have aphid tolerance as there is a big difference in pressure in the ones that do have aphid tolerance/resistance. The varieties with tolerance/resistance will have a little sugarcane aphid pressure but it does not



Figure 8: Parasitized sugarcane aphids (brown mummies)



Figure 9: Aphelinus parasitic wasp parasitizing sugarcane aphids turning them blue

build up as significantly as those varieties that do not. I have been scouting some sorghum along the river and I know the variety the grower used has SCA tolerance/resistance and I am not seeing sugarcane aphids in high numbers so there is a difference. Therefore, variety selection is so important prior to planting. We are seeing many parasitized aphids; both the blue and tan mummies are present. Many syrphids, lacewings, scymnus, and ladybugs in all stages (adults and larvae). I did see some yellow sugarcane aphids on the bottom leaves in sorghum in the Lyford and in Rio Hondo areas. It is very late in the season to see Yellow sugarcane aphids (Figure 12) when usually we



Figure 11: Corn earworm on sorghum head

see them in V3 sorghum, but a few years back they started populating the higher leaves and causing damage so we will be monitoring for them. We saw a few head worms in sorghum this week in soft dough sorghum but nothing that warrants treatment. My field tech picked up on one



Figure 6: Psuedo larva on left and syrphid larva on the right feeding on sugarcane aphids

midge in flowering sorghum so be on the lookout next week for midge infestations. I also managed to capture bees pollinating on flowering sorghum (Figures 13 and 14).



Figure12: Six Yellow sugarcane aphids with one sugarcane aphid in the top left hand corner



Figure 13: Bee pollinating in sorghum



Figure 14: Bee with pollen saddle bags pollinating in flowering sorghum



Figure 15: Sunflowers in full bloom in McCook, TX

Sunflowers

Sunflowers are at full bloom and didn't pick up on any headmoth larva when I cut a few open.

Sesame

Sesame so far looks free of pests. Did see some whiteflies hanging out in some sesame but that's good in case we see mirids later. Did come across some sesame blooming this week, however in other places sesame is struggling to grow with lack of moisture, was off to a good start but now all crops need a good rain.



Figure 16: Blooming Sesame

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