



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

We have had scattered showers this week throughout the Valley seeing puddles for days for the first time in a long while. With all the showers combined it has added up to 0.80 inches to 1 inch in total for most areas throughout the LRGV. This weekend is forecasted for more rain showers as well as possibilities for more rain throughout this coming first week of June.

Cotton

Cotton this week was pretty clean from pests around mid-Valley areas such as Monte Alto, Lyford, Elsa, Raymondville, Combs, and east towards Sebastian, Harlingen areas. Seeing the same culprits this week in cotton such as fleahoppers, whiteflies, and a few aphids. Fleahoppers were very few to not present in the mid Valley but along the river they were in high numbers. Majority of cotton in the Valley is way past the first bloom or in full bloom or near cutout and treatment of fleahoppers is rarely justified after. Whiteflies were still present in the Mid Valley in very low numbers, and along the river they are still a persistent pressure to be controlled. I have picked up on a couple of plant bugs this week in cotton and will be looking for them this coming week as sorghum is being harvested and we might have plantbugs such as tarnished plantbugs moving out of those fields into cotton to feed on young bolls near by. Another pest we have been checking for are bollworms as we have been inspecting bolls after blooming cotton and have not seen any bollworms feeding nor have I picked up on egg laying this year. If you happen to see bollworm pressure in your fields please call my office so we can inspect your field as we are trying to document if we have bollworm pressure in Bt cotton as other parts of the state of Texas have documented Bt failed fields that had significant bollworm pressure, but we have not seen that here in the LRGV in past years and continue to monitor for it this year as well.

Grain Sorghum

Many fields of grain sorghum are ready to be harvested as some were already drying down nicely. I checked some sorghum in McCook that was mainly in soft dough stage but had some flowering heads and found very little to no midge present whereas in the Weslaco and La feria (Mid Valley) areas flowering sorghum is loaded with midge and needs to be controlled. Sugarcane aphid pressure was very low this week as well. I saw a few rice stink bugs as well but nothing that warrants treatment.



Figure 1: Sorghum drying down ready for harvest



Figure 2: species *Antigastra catalaunalis* - Sesame Leafroller Moth also known as sesame webworm, top and bottom photos



Figure 4: Sesame webworm damage and frass

Sesame

In sesame we found species *Antigastra catalaunalis* - Sesame Leafroller Moth also known as sesame webworm. We found this sesame webworm in sesame in the Hargil area feeding on the tops of the sesame plant in very high numbers as just about every other sesame plant had them feeding on top. The caterpillars are green with small black dots and they like to roll up and web together leaves with their silk as they feed. They can also feed on flowers and will at times bore into pods as they are easy to find by the large amounts of frass they excrete. Sesame along FM490 on the northeast part of Edinburg had a few sesame webworm but nothing like in Hargil. Sesame in McCook looked very clean as well as I did not pick up on any webworm there nor did I see any other pests present.



Figure 3: Sesame webworm damage feeding on top/ growing point of sesame plant

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*For more information on pests in Valley crops please check out and follow my new colleague Extension Entomologist Dr. Holly Davis's blog:

<https://rgvbugblog.blogspot.com/>

Thank you.