



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

Muddy this week in the Valley in some areas as we were dodging rain to scout. Grain sorghum harvest has been stalled in some areas due to random down pours this week. Mainly we had scattered showers totaling only tenths of an inch around the Valley but in Lyford yesterday on Thursday they received 2 inches of rain. Then today in Hargill it started pouring on us suddenly while scouting sesame. So, it has been an interesting week scouting and doing field counts. It has been a fun one though as this week we have been having our student workers really go to work in the fields and learning new pests. Thanks to you all and your support to our IPM program for the LRGV we are able to teach these young interns about agriculture. Thank you very much! (Heat Units under Pest Cast Sponsors at the end)



Figure 1: Student workers scouting for Verde Bugs in Vasquez Bros Farms

Cotton

First bale of cotton in the country, nation, and world was harvested yesterday, June 18, 2020, by England Farms, owned and operated by Mike and Elizabeth England of Mercedes, Texas. They took the first two bales of the 2020 season to Ross Gin Co. Congrats to this hard-working family and all involved! Harvest season 2020 has officially begun.

Seeing the same culprits/pests this week in cotton. We were still picking up on Verde plantbugs in the Harlingen,



Figure 2: Mike England of England Farms harvesting the first 2 bales of cotton for the 2020 season in the LRGV in Mercedes, Texas (Photo by Brooke Prather)

Rio Honda, and Bayview areas. Numbers have decreased as growers have been spraying controlling populations but be checking for Verde bugs these next two weeks especially since we still have a lot of late planted cotton and grain sorghum harvest is still not done yet so we will be having more Verdes migrate out once it is. Still seeing whitefly pressure, this week in the Delta lakes area between Monte Alto and Hargil and into the Lyford area. Of course, whitefly pressure along the river has been constant as

growers in the Mission area have been spraying for heavy whitefly pressure in some areas. We did receive some reports of tobacco thrips in cotton in the Los Indios area that had to be sprayed due to high infestations. Fleahopper numbers were down this week as well.

Sesame

This week again we saw some light sesame leaf roller activity in young and blooming sesame. What I have noticed is if your field is inundated with pigweed, you will have sesame leaf roller present. Apparently pigweed is another host plant for sesame leaf roller besides the sesame plant. They like to eat both pigweed and sesame. So please control your pigweeds in sesame if you want to have your fields clean from sesame leaf roller. We did pick up on a few more mirid plant bugs in sesame in northern Hidalgo so will have to be keeping an eye on them that they stay low in populations because in young sesame if their populations get bad they can stunt sesame plant growth.



Figure 3: England Farm’s whole crew with Buddy and Sally Ross of Ross Gin Co. in Mercedes, Texas (Photo by Brooke Prather)



Figure 4: (from left to right) Sally Ross, Elizabeth England, Mike England, and Buddy Ross all at Ross Gin Co. baling the first 2 bales of the 2020 Cotton season in the world in Mercedes, Texas (Photo by Brooke Prather)

For great info on sesame leaf roller feeding and damage please click on this link below where my colleague extension Entomologist Holly Davis goes into detail explaining this pest in sesame:



Figure 5: SRS Farms blooming sesame field with the Sugar mill just south west of it in the background

<https://rgvbugblog.blogspot.com/2020/06/sesame-leafroller-sesame-webworm.html>

***Texas AgriScience LLC will be hosting their first virtual field day this year with information provided by several industries. Company representatives will be discussing corn, sorghum, and cotton varieties. CEUs will also be offered by Texas AgriLife extension. We will be sending out a date for this soon!



Figure 6: Dryland cutout cotton with first open bolls of the 2020 season



Figure 7: Student workers for the IPM program for 2020 season scouting cotton in Vasquez Bros. Farms cotton field in Rio Hondo, TX

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Heat Units				
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
2020	2181	2128.5	1961.5	1630.5

*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.