



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

Growers have been harvesting grain sorghum again this week working around the rain showers and I have heard reports of good yields in both dryland and irrigated sorghum (3200-6500 lbs/acre). Other growers are still battling pigweeds and many other weeds trying to get them under control. Many cotton fields and some corn fields coming up needed rain badly and received it this week with the showers.

Cotton

This week in cotton was a very clean week. Most of the fields we scouted were clean of any pests. We saw maybe a handful of whitefly adults with many fields having none present. Saw a few fleahoppers present in some fields, however majority of fields across Valley have been treated for lygus pests so just very clean fields this week. We have many cotton fields in full bloom right now across the Valley and have been seeing many western flower thrips present in and around the blooms. Please note these are not chille thrips. Western flower thrips do not harm the cotton. We have been monitoring for Chille thrips and have not found them nor their damage ...some thrips samples were collected along the river and confirmed to be western flower thrips. We will continue to monitor for chille thrips

presence and their damage and will inform you when found and confirmed. If you feel like you have any present in your fields, please feel free to call and we can go inspect. What cotton is not in full bloom has just entered cut out stage and walking through some fields the boll loads look good. The cotton around the Valley is starting to look a lot better in color and seems to be coming along fine after all the rains. Some cotton was looking thirsty prior to this week's rain showers and benefited from them. We have been monitoring for Verde and tarnished plantbugs since our cotton has a lot of immature bolls and we are just not seeing them present which is good. We are not finding any plantbugs present in mature sorghum as well which is also good. I did see a few tarnished plantbugs present in one cotton field in the Lyford area but this field had not yet been treated. We are also seeing many green adult lacewings and their larvae present in cotton as well as in sorghum. Lacewings are predators and feed on many cotton pests such as aphids and whiteflies so please do not mistake them for plantbugs. Lacewing adults (Figure 1) will also feed on pollen and with all the blooming cotton and blooming sorghum it's no wonder so many are present.



A green lacewing, *Chrysoperia* sp. (Neuroptera: Chrysopidae), adult.
Photo by Drees.

Figure 1: Lacewing adult

Grain Sorghum

This week I did see some low SCA populations in pockets on the undersides of leaves in mature

grain sorghum in a few fields, but all fields were still very below threshold with harvest just in a few days. When I would find some SCA I was seeing many predators present like lacewing larvae, scymus larvae, and syrphid larvae feeding on them. There was even parasitism on some leaves with SCA which is great to see this natural control from parasitoids present. Majority of fields I was in were clean from SCA but just be aware that I am starting to see light populations present at this time, so let's be mindful of this and evaluate fields prior to harvest as we continue work around the rains. Remember when scouting for SCA that if the field average of SCA is 50-125 aphids or more per leaf, then it is recommended that you apply an insecticide within 4 days of finding this infestation level, much sooner if you are averaging 100 SCA per leaf or more. We are still finding midge in the Hargill and Lyford areas in flowering sorghum. It was also reported that there was heavy midge pressure in the Sebastian area. We found heavy rice stink bug pressure in the Lyford, and I received reports of heavy rice stinkbug pressure in the Sebastian area as well in flowering and soft dough sorghum.

<https://extensionentomology.tamu.edu/files/2019/02/Managing-Insect-and-Mite-Pests-of-Texas-Sorghum-ENTO-085-2018.pdf>

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