



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

Hi everyone, another hot week in the LRGV with daily temperatures in the low 90s – high 80s and nights around 75°F heat units are catching up. Every day has been incredibly windy, with wind gusts up to 30 mph so has made it difficult to get good weed control. Still very dry in LRGV as many irrigate and cultivate their fields this week.

Cotton

Cotton looked pretty clean from pests this week. I was picking up on some moderate cotton aphid populations in the Edinburg, Elsa and Monte Alto areas again this week. There is a little bit of cotton aphids throughout the valley but overall, still very clean and seeing good amount of predator ladybug larvae doing their job and eating those aphids (Figure 4). Fun fact, ladybug larvae can eat about 30-50 aphids in one day 😊. There is also a little bit of red spidermites as well every once in a while that I pick up on, but hopefully we will get some rain to knock them off the leaves soon. We have some high thrips populations along the river this week in cotton. Some cotton is doing good growing out of the thrips pressure, some 2 and 4 true leaf cotton is having a hard time though in the Pharr and Donna areas, just too many thrips per leaf (8-15 thrips/leaf) and will need to be treated to prevent stunting or any damage. So, if you have cotton growing along the river (Military 281 Hwy) from Pharr to Los Indios in the cotyledon stage thru 4 true leaves go check it, especially if its near by an onion field. What I am seeing is the cotton will either have lots of thrips or maybe a couple to No thrips at all, its really a toss-up. The rest of the Valley I really haven't seen any thrips pressure, just along the river plus majority of cotton past 4 true leaves (See Figure 3) . I also noticed along the river in some 6 true leaf cotton a few adult



Figure 1 & 2: Thrips circled in red on underside of leaves in cotton, photo above 7 thrips/leaf & about 11 thrips/leaf below



whiteflies in a few fields, but no nymphs so at least that. Again, this week just picked up on one fleahopper but I don't expect to see them just yet as we got a couple more weeks before majority of cotton will be really squaring.



Figure 4: Ladybug larvae circled in red are eating the green cotton aphids on cotton plant

Table 3. Thrips action threshold

Cotton stage	Action threshold
<i>Emergence to</i>	
1 true leaf	1 thrips per plant
2 true leaves	2 thrips per plant
3 true leaves	3 thrips per plant
4 true leaves	4 thrips per plant
5-7 leaves or squaring initiation	Treatment is rarely justified.

Figure 3: Action thresholds for thrips above and aphids below

Table 6. Aphid action threshold

Cotton stage	Action threshold
Prior to first cracked boll	40-70 aphids per leaf*
After first cracked boll	10 aphids per leaf**

*Higher the yield potential (>1000 lbs lint/acre), lower the threshold
 **Where rainfall is not likely to wash honeydew from the lint

Grain, Corn, Sunflowers, Soybeans, & Sesame

All other crops were looking clean of pests as well this week as I am not seeing any sugarcane aphids nor any armyworms in commercial sorghum. In the soybeans did pick up on a couple of threecornered alfalfa hoppers but other than that very clean. Dryland corn and sorghum starting to look very stressed as we continue to have dry days with no moisture.



Figure 5: Corn on the left & Soybeans on right (both irrigated land)

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Figure 6: Cotton



Figure 7: Dead cotyledon cotton after 14 days sprayed with Huskie at 19 fl oz/acre and NIS at 0.25%, you can't see any cause they're still dead