



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

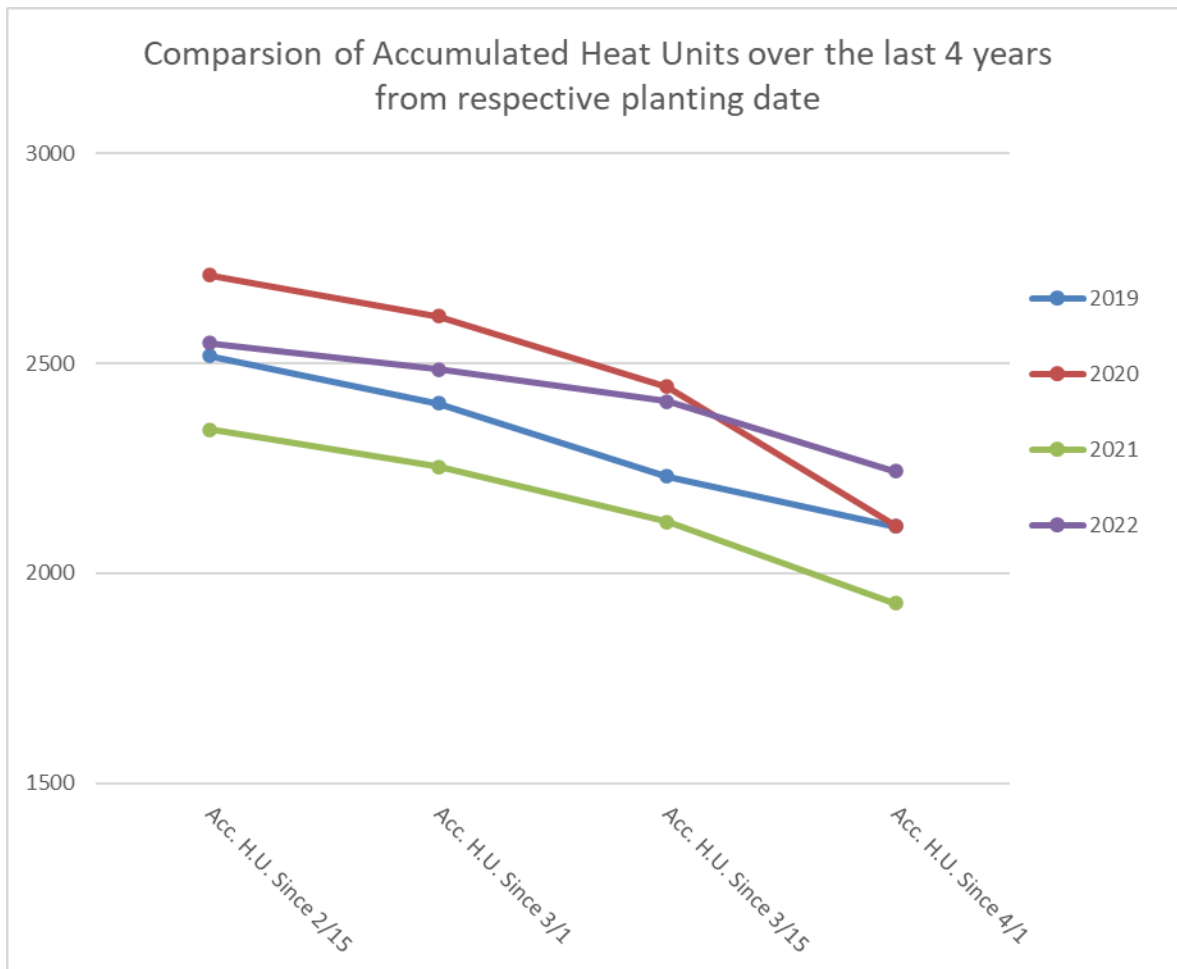
Danielle Sekula
IPM Extension Agent

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General Situation

Heat units are accumulating quickly now as we are in the home stretch with our cotton crop as it continues to mature, and we see more open boll cotton as harvest is just around the corner. Many cotton growers are still harvesting their corn and sorghum this month.



Comparison of Accumulated Heat Units over the last 4 years				
	Acc. H.U. Since 2/15	Acc. H.U. Since 3/1	Acc. H.U. Since 3/15	Acc. H.U. Since 4/1
2019	2518	2406	2231	2112
2020	2710	2612	2445	2114
2021	2343	2254	2122	1929
2022	2549	2486	2410	2243

Cotton

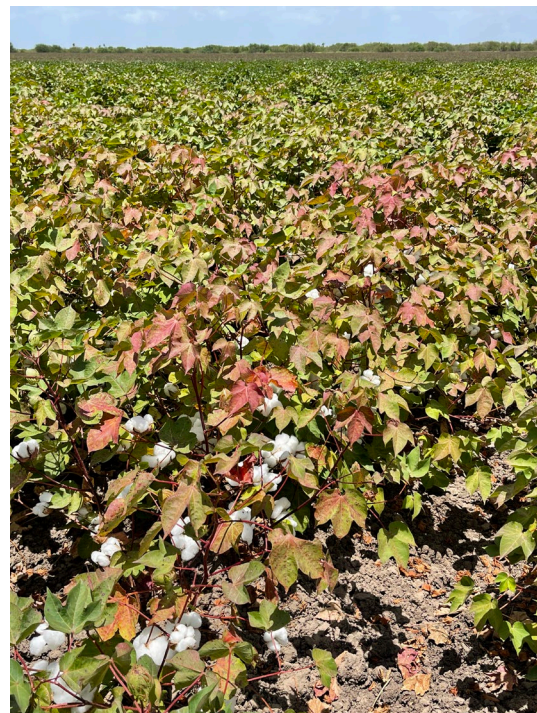
Majority of cotton in the Valley is anywhere from 20-40% open bolls with some of the earliest cotton planted at 60% open bolls. Harvest is right around the corner as cotton continues to mature. This week we were not picking up on many plantbugs as majority of cotton bolls are now mature and big enough to sustain punctures. We did look at some younger cotton with dime size bolls and those fields were pretty clean as well. Along the river again this week we are seeing a definite increase in chilli thrips pressure in some cotton fields on the upper leaves as they're feeding is causing a bronzing and crinkling effect to the upper leaves and if not controlled can cause early defoliation. Still seeing moderate pressure of whiteflies in some cotton along the river as treatment is necessary to prevent the sooty mold that grows on sugars excreted by whiteflies feeding from staining lint on open bolls.

Maybe some of you all have noticed a general reddening of the leaves in your cotton around the Valley within this last month. I've noticed this in low spots in fields and where cotton might have been very stressed due to lack of water. Upon bringing back a few leaves to the office and having our plant pathologist Femi inspect them he noted that it appears to be something physiological; perhaps some nutrient deficiency of sort and that a few other leaves have symptoms of foliar fungal leaf spot diseases, which could be either *Stemphylium*, *Alternaria*, *Cercospora* or Target Leaf Spot. They may also occur in mixed infections.

We see a mixture of this every year, just for some reason this year it seems a little more pronounced to me as I inspect cotton around the Valley, and I attribute this to the drought/lack of rainfall stressing our cotton plants. The good thing is that these physiological symptoms/ foliar fungal diseases are occurring very late in the season at a time when the crop has already established a very good boll load and most cotton is heading towards defoliation soon so it should have little to no effect on yield. I just thought I would share this in case any were wondering as I did driving around looking at our cotton crop this year. Sometimes we see reddening and purpling on leaves more pronounced on some cotton varieties than others (varietal effect) and this is sometimes the plants response perhaps to stress and other environmental factors.

The link below is a publication titled, "Diagnosis and Management of Foliar Diseases of Cotton in the United States", describes each of the foliar fungal leaf spot diseases and the subtle differences that can be used to distinguish between them (I also attached this publication in email). The two that seem prominent in the Valley from what I've seen seem to be *Alternaria* and maybe *Stemphylium*, again though because they are appearing so late in season and is usually triggered by a nutrient deficiency, fungicide treatments are not considered to be economical and are relatively ineffective. And honestly once we see it, not much we can do about it anyways.

<https://southtexas.tamu.edu/files/2022/07/Diagnosis-Management-Foliar-Diseases.pdf>



Grain

Sorghum harvest is full blown in all three counties Hidalgo, Cameron and Willacy counties and yields have varied greatly due to drought conditions in different areas but overall, it has been a good

harvest season for grain in the LRGV thus far. Those with late grain flowering/soft dough stages be mindful of midge and headworms as they are abundant when we do come across a late planted field so treatment of these pests will be necessary. I saw some sugarcane aphid pressure this week but not

much just because a lot of sorghum has already been harvested, continues to be harvested and has been dried out completely but again if you have mature sorghum with green leaves still and might be harvesting in next two weeks check for SCA pressure prior just to make sure so you do not have any problems with your combine gumming up if treatment is necessary to prevent that.



Sesame

I looked at a bit more sesame this week in early vegetative and blooming stages and looks clean of pests of concern. Still no sesame leafroller activity which is also good news for sesame growers.

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