



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

This week scouting in between the scattered rain showers and **prior** to the rain received in the early AM hours this Saturday morning April 29th we were not really seeing any pest activity in all crops. This last weeks crops looked very clean. Hopefully everyones crops and homes faired well with the recent storms received this Saturday morning in early hours of April 29th 2023. Will have more on the effects of storm later this next week.

Cotton

Cotton looks great throughout the Valley, many growers spraying to control weeds that are getting out of hand, but majority of cotton growers have a handle on it. Fertilizer went out in many cotton fields this week. We are seeing a little bit of cotton aphid activity but with recent rains they have been displaced in many fields and we were finding mud reaching the growing points and undersides of leaves due to hard fast rainfall, we were also finding many ladybug larvae present feeding on any cotton aphids that were present. While checking squaring cotton across Valley fields they were looking very clean, barely picked up on 2 fleahopper adults after checking many cotton fields, so nothing of concern. Very clean pest-free week in cotton.



Figure 1: Beautiful squaring cotton

Grain Sorghum & Corn

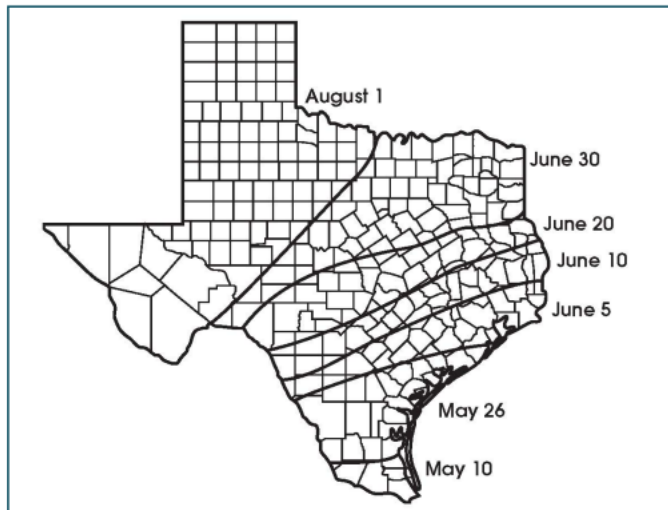


Figure 22. Estimated latest sorghum flowering dates most likely to escape significant damage by sorghum midge



Figure 2: Sorghum blooming

We have lots of sorghum blooming throughout the Valley. Sorghum looks very beautiful across the Valley, and scouting sorghum we really did not pick up on any pests in sorghum this week, it was great. As we head into the later part of May, we will be looking out for sorghum midge, head worms and rice stinkbugs. Midge is not of concern right now and is still too early, fields blooming now are very clean, midge usually does not become a pest of concern until late May into June, when heat units are higher. The thresholds for head worms in soft dough stage is 1-2 larvae per head so get out that old 5-gallon white bucket and go check your sorghum by beating some heads. The threshold

for rice stinkbugs is 0.5-1 per sorghum head depending on the planting population. We did not see any headworm or rice stinkbug activity present this week of concern but moving forward all soft dough sorghum needs to be checked to prevent damage. We are seeing pockets of sugarcane aphids here and there but nothing at threshold this week, however moving into next week with higher heat units we will just have to be on the lookout if populations increase. Corn is looking beautiful with many fields done silking and many just starting, some fields have been sprayed the last two weeks for corn earworms on the silks but

other than that corn looking very clean and beautiful. Here is the Sorghum guide for managing insects and mites, click on link below:

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

Sesame

We have Sesame up and growing throughout the Valley. Sesame is in the early growth stages coming up in McCook, Pharr, and Progresso as well as other locations across the Valley. It looks good and has been able to break through the soils.



Figure 3: Sesame fields across Valley in early vegetative growth stages

Sunflowers

Sunflowers are blooming in McCook and look clean so far, I did **Not** pick up on any sunflower moth (a.k.a. head moths) larvae or adults flying earlier in the week, but it is important to be on lookout for sunflower headmoths. I did, however, see some sunflower budmoth larva activity but very little damage and very sporadic throughout the fields, I did not see any adults flying. The deal with sunflower budmoth larva is once you see the damage the larva is buried deep in the bud, and it is incredibly hard to get insecticide inside to kill them. The good thing is here in Texas yield losses have been minimal and have only occurred when larvae burrow into small, unopened buds, thus preventing head formation. Moving forward as the sunflowers boom the main pest to be on the lookout for is sunflower moths (head moths). Please click on link below for photos and more information regarding sunflower pests:

<https://extensionentomology.tamu.edu/resources/management-guides/managing-insect-pests-of-texas-sunflowers/>



Figure 4: Sunflower bud moth larva (left) & thier damage upon entering the sunflower bud (right) and Sunflowers blooming in McCook, Texas



***** Please save the date, Wednesday May 24, 2023, we will be hosting a Cotton & Grain Scouting School for Pests and Diseases at the Weslaco AgriLife Station, 2 IPM & 1 General TDA CEUs. Please see attached flyer and make plans to attend.**

To register click on this link: <https://bit.ly/3VjMZTm>

All of this is made possible by your generous Pest Cast Sponsors this 2023 year , thank you 2023 Sponsors! Please make plans to attend, this will be good for all growers, scouts, new scouts, consultants and anyone wanting to learn about Cotton & Grain in the LRGV.

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