



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

Very windy and dry down here this week. Temperatures in high 80s almost at 90 during the day. The wind finally let up so Thursday & Friday growers could get into the fields and apply spray treatments if needed.

Cotton

This week in cotton we are seeing low to moderate cotton aphid pressure. The threshold for cotton aphids is 40-70 per leaf before first cracked boll. Most cotton fields in the cotyledon to 2-4 true leaf stages we looked at



Figure 1: Ladybug larva eating cotton aphids

had little to no cotton aphids present. Other mature cotton squaring (on second week squaring) had low to moderate cotton aphid pressure but we had several predators present

(ladybug larvae, scymnus larvae, etc.) feeding on and controlling cotton aphid populations. We are also seeing fleahopper nymphs present this week as well as many adult fleahoppers present in mature



Figure 2: Scymnus larvae eating cotton aphids



Figure 3: Two fleahopper adults on cotton

squaring cotton (second week squaring) across the valley from river to mid Valley. Some fields were turned in this week for fleahopper control as we were picking up on also a few blasted squares. It is during the first 3 weeks of squaring to early bloom that finding 15-25 cotton fleahoppers (nymphs and adults) per 100 terminals (15%) may cause economic damage (Current economic threshold). We also saw several cotton fields with western flower & tobacco thrips concentrated on the squaring terminals in cotton across Mid Valley from Lyford to Sebastian

as we have many onion fields being harvested and some terminated that are causing an influx of thrips pressure migrating into nearby cotton fields and some fields being turned in for spray control this week as well. In the Mercedes, Donna, and Monte Alto areas was picking up on some low whitefly pressure early in the season.



Figure 4: Lacebug, species *Gargaphia arizonica* feeding on cotton leaf

On a different note, from our usual pests we see in cotton, this week I was finding Lacebugs feeding on cotton leaves around the Mid Valley area sporadically here and there. The species of Lacebug I am finding is *Gargaphia arizonica*. Lacebugs have piercing sucking mouth parts that suck plant juices when they feed and cause this chlorotic leaf spot damage, yellowing, stippling damage, and this is what I am seeing on the tops of the cotton leaves in this case. The Lacebugs have sort of a flat body, they look skeletal and clear like, and are small, about 10 mm in length, about the size of a fleahopper adult. If you have high enough infestation of these lacebugs they can cause the plant to die, stifle its growth, or cause leaves to defoliate. Now I've only seen a couple of fields where I saw consistent Lacebug pressure (2-4) per couple of leaves every 3-4 cotton plants that I recommended be sprayed but they also had fleahoppers so in this case we'll kill two birds with one stone. Since Lacebugs are from the same order of insects, Hemiptera, as the fleahoppers, aphids, and other true bugs with pierce sucking mouthparts, applications of Acephate, Sulfoxaflor (transform) and other insecticides we use to control cotton aphids and fleahoppers should control these lacebugs as well in case you happen to encounter them in your cotton fields feeding in abundance. Like I said though I am only



Figure 5: Lacebugs feeding on underside of cotton leaf

finding a few lacebugs feeding in cotton here and there but it has been enough to notice and detect something new was going on. This is first time I have seen lacebugs feeding in cotton, I have found them in sugarcane and even in sorghum years ago but this is a first for me finding them in cotton.



Figure 6: Chlorotic damage on top of cotton leaf from lacebug feeding



Figure 7: Chlorotic leaf damage from Lacebug feeding on cotton on top sides of leaves



Figure 8: Two lacebugs feeding on underside of cotton leaf, showing their black fecal matter stains.

Grain Sorghum

This week in grain sorghum we had to turn in couple of sorghum fields to be sprayed for sugarcane aphid pressure. We are seeing in some flag leaf and booting stage sorghum fields many pockets of sugarcane aphids building where it's getting close to treatment time in another week or so, we also have many fields very clean with little to no SCA pressure so please check fields as each field is different. Many sorghum fields in the earlier vegetative stages were still very clean and still seeing some corn leaf aphids in the whorls. Other than that sorghum looking stressed due to lack of moisture and was really showing it by twisting of leaves this week by midmorning and on. Reminder as we get past the flag leaf stage, and head into the booting stage of sorghum -flower stage that we should try to scout sorghum at least every 3-4 days, so about 2 times per week. That way if we need to control sugarcane aphids, we can beat them before their populations take off and apply a spray application if necessary. Checked a souple sorghum fields in blooming and soft dough stage that is barely starting to get a few adult rice stinkbugs and some egg laying as well.

Corn, Sunflowers & Sesame

Corn looked free of pests this week just really needs moisture as there is lots of corn going into silking stage and leaves looking burnt up along tips this week. Sunflowers continue to look clean of pests as they get closer to blooming stage. Sesame continues to look clean of pests too as more sesame emerged this week and is still in the early vegetative stages.

Audio Update for South Texas IPM in row crops

For those who would like to sign up, it's a 5-minute update on what is going on in the LRGV and Costal Bend areas. We hope that you will follow this link and sign up: <https://www.texasinsects.org/south-texas.html> . You will receive text when a new update is available and can listen to it right there in your truck, tractor, or wherever you may be. This does not replace the Pest Cast Newsletter but is an extra source of information to have available. Thank you.

Signing up is easy: Click on this link, <https://www.texasinsects.org/south-texas.html>

On the top of the page select:>> **Signup to get a text message when a new post is made.**<<

Next, Signup for South Texas IPM Updates, by entering your cell number and input if you are a PRODUCER, CONSULTANT, AG INDUSTRY, AGRILIFE OR OTHER. And that's it!

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