



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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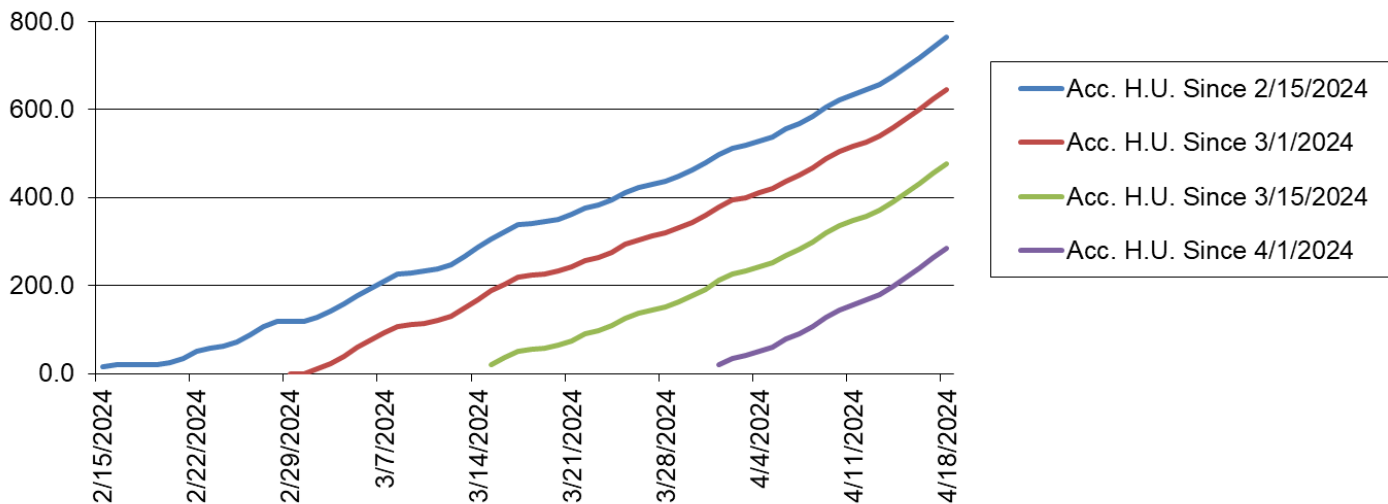
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General Situation

This week we were averaging out to about 90 during the day and nights at about 70, with very high winds at about 20mph and wind gusts up to 30 mph. Very dry and dusty around the LRGV with limited to no moisture. Thursday and today the winds were calmer and growers were seen applying spray treatments. Also saw some fields of sorghum and corn being irrigated for those that have access to water.

2024 Cotton Heat Unit (H.U.) Accumulation Graph



Dates for Cotton H.U. 2024

Accumulated Heat Units for Cotton 2024 compared to 2023 at this time

	Acc. H.U. Since 2/15	Acc. H.U. Since 3/1	Acc. H.U. Since 3/15	Acc. H.U. Since 4/1
2023	897	689	457	232
2024	763	645	477	286

Cotton

This week more cotton was emerging as we are at about 117,000 acres of cotton planted and growing across the LRGV. We are still seeing low to moderate cotton aphid pressure. The threshold for cotton aphids is 40-70 per leaf before first cracked boll. Most cotton fields we scouted had very little cotton aphid pressure as we saw even more predators present (ladybug larvae, scymnus larvae, etc.)

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feeding on and controlling cotton aphid populations this week. We are also seeing fleahopper adults and a few nymphs present this week in mature squaring cotton in Mid valley and north Cameron County areas. Some fields were turned in this week for fleahopper control as others that were treated late last week looked very clean of pest pressure. 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).

Grain Sorghum

Main pest in sorghum this week is still sugarcane aphids (SCA) as we are finding them on a field-to-field basis. In the vegetative stages of sorghum, we are picking up on a couple of SCA adult alates laying a few babies after inspecting several leaves. Those who have flag leaf, booting and flowering sorghum have light pockets of SCA to very high SCA populations, it just depends on your field

and is imperative that you walk through your sorghum fields during these stages to evaluate if control is necessary. Sugarcane aphids established populations early this year (two weeks earlier) in commercial sorghum as compared to last few years. We do have a lot of very clean sorghum out there in many fields where as little as a couple to none SCA is being found and many predators feeding on the little populations of SCA that are present. We are Not seeing any headworms or midge at this time. Still seeing a couple of adult rice stinkbugs but nothing of concern yet.



Figure 3: SCA aphids feeding on underside of sorghum leaf



Figure 1: SCA feeding on sorghum stalk & glistening from sugars they excrete.



Figure 2: Adult winged SCA alates laying their babies on sorghum leaf.

Sorghum Growth Stage	Threshold
Pre-boot to boot	20% of plants infested with 50 or more aphids.
Flowering to milk stage	30% of plants infested with 50 or more aphids.
Soft-dough to hard-dough	30% of plants infested with established aphid colonies and localized areas with heavy honeydew.
Black layer	Heavy honeydew and established aphid colonies. Treat only to prevent harvest problems.

Figure 3: Sugarcane aphid threshold table, on pg. 15 of the Managing Insect & mite pests of Texas Sorghum guide, ENTO-PU-170 April 2023, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Click on link below to access the Sorghum insects guide for insecticide charts:

<https://southtexas.tamu.edu/files/2023/05/managing-insect-and-mite-pests-of-texas-sorghum.pdf>

Click on the link below to access the Cotton insect guide:

https://southtexas.tamu.edu/files/2023/05/Managing-Cotton-Insects-in-Texas-ENTO-075_2019.pdf

Sesame

We are seeing some blooming sesame this week and a lot more fields of sesame emerging and in the early seedling stages. We did find very high populations of tobacco thrips larva in seedling sesame around the Mercedes, La Villa and Santa Rosa areas. If you have seedling sesame, check under the leaves for thrips larva (yellow tiny larvae) as we were picking up on 4-8 per sesame leaf and consistently on every other plant in the fields, populations as high as this it is necessary to apply treatment to avoid loss.



Figure 5: Blooming sesame.



Figure 4: White speckling on tops of sesame leaves gives indication of thrips feeding on undersides.

***** Please save the date, Thursday May 9, 2024, we will be hosting a Cotton & Grain Scouting School for Pests and Diseases at Rio Farms in Monte Alto, 2 IPM & 1 General TDA CEUs. Sign in will begin at 8:30 am, The program will begin at 9am, end by noon, with lunch provided. We will send out a flyer about this next week with more information. Thanks.**

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