



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 in Cotton, Sorghum, & Corn

Welcome back everyone. Very dry, hot and windy in the LRGV as we have been having days reach into the high 80s and lower 90s. We've experienced already this month a couple of days over 100°F. Winds have been very gusty (15-25 mph) each day and seem to be drying out any moisture we might have had. Growers have been planting a little in some areas with some cotton emerging in Cameron county as of last week, only noticing a couple aphid alates but very clean this early on. We have plenty of grain sorghum up from V1-V5 up in all counties, no pests of concern there yet. We have corn also growing in all counties in stages V3-V8 as of now. Noticing on these hot days that corn and sorghum are starting to stress during the afternoon as their leaves start twisting to reserve any moisture they have.

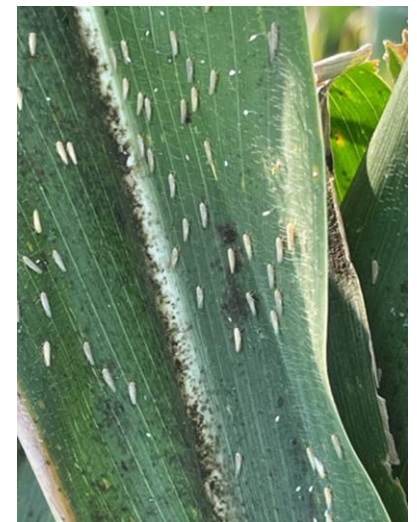
Corn Leafhopper update

I have been monitoring for corn leafhoppers, *Dalbulus maidis*, around the Valley since January. Corn leafhoppers are a small pest, about 5mm in size and are a tannish, light yellow in color and can be identified by two black dots between their eyes. You can find the adult corn leafhoppers feeding in the whorl in the early stages of corn VE-V8, which makes it difficult to detect them right now with just regular scouting methods so I have been using a leaf vacuum to monitor their populations. VE through V8 is the critical period for managing corn leafhopper to prevent disease transmission as finding just one is grounds to spray and manage corn leafhoppers. The adults are very active/fast and hop/fly, as the corn grows the nymph stages will be crawling fast on the underside of leaves.

We have a lot of corn V3-V5 and some corn already in V6-V8 stages. Monitoring corn in the early stages of growth V1-V4 these last 4 weeks, I have not been able to find any corn leafhoppers as it seems the insecticide seed treatments are doing a good job controlling any insect populations. In stages V4-V5, especially V5, this is where I am starting to pick up on 1 corn leafhopper / 100 plants vacuumed, this is already about 43-45 days after planting so seed insecticide treatments have worn off. I have been monitoring actively looking in volunteer corn (corn with no insecticide treatment) for corn leafhoppers and have found a few adults present. Last week (Mar 11th) and this week (Mar 17th) I am finding reproductive (adults & nymphs) corn leafhopper populations on volunteer corn, as they have really increased in numbers this week. Populations of corn leafhoppers so far are mainly being seen in southern Cameron County closer to the river and in Weslaco mainly on volunteer corn that continues to be destroyed and again in commercial corn as of now I am finding 1 corn leafhopper per 100 plants. Northern Cameron and Willacy Counties I have yet to find corn leafhoppers in



Figure 1: Corn Leafhopper adult (top & bottom), photos from May 2024



commercial corn nor in volunteer corn. Please eliminate any volunteer corn when possible. It serves as a host for the hopper and a reservoir for the pathogens.

Last year in May 2024 we had very high populations of corn leafhoppers present in corn throughout the Valley. Populations had to have been building from late March 2024 and all of April of 2024 to have had the explosive populations we saw in May 2024. With that said I predict we will likely see the same scenario come this May 2025 so it will be critical to continue monitoring this pest and treat in stages V5-V8 where we find populations present as these are the stages they can transmit various pathogens through feeding. Keep in mind that early-planted corn is not affected as much by corn leafhoppers and its diseases. It is simply a matter of getting the corn beyond V8 before the leafhoppers infest it and we certainly have a lot of corn that is right at V7-V8 already in Willacy & Cameron counties where I am Not detecting corn leafhoppers so this is good news.

Treatment. With the detection of any corn leafhoppers, you should assume they are potentially viruliferous. In turn, this should trigger an insecticide application. Currently, we have little insecticide efficacy data for Texas. But we have some best guesses and anecdotal information about what works. The currently labelled insecticides that may control corn leafhoppers include Sivanto® Prime and Transform®, and products with the active ingredients dimethoate, and pyrethroids such as bifenthrin. The efficacy of these products, their residual control, and ability to prevent red stunt disease transmission in the U.S. are not fully known. In 2024 efficacy trials, the pyrethroids bifenthrin and lambda-cyhalothrin provided excellent control for at least 7 days, and dimethoate provided good control. Anecdotal evaluation of a Sivanto® Prime application suggests that it has very good activity as well. Corn growers should use caution if utilizing pyrethroids, and to a lesser extent, dimethoate or chlorpyrifos, to manage corn leafhoppers because these products may flare spider mite populations.

The above written was taken from Ento – PU- 229 (attached pdf) link below as well, please read: <https://southtexas.tamu.edu/files/2024/10/ENTO-PU-229-Corn-Leafhopper-and-the-Red-Stunt-Disease-Complex.pdf>

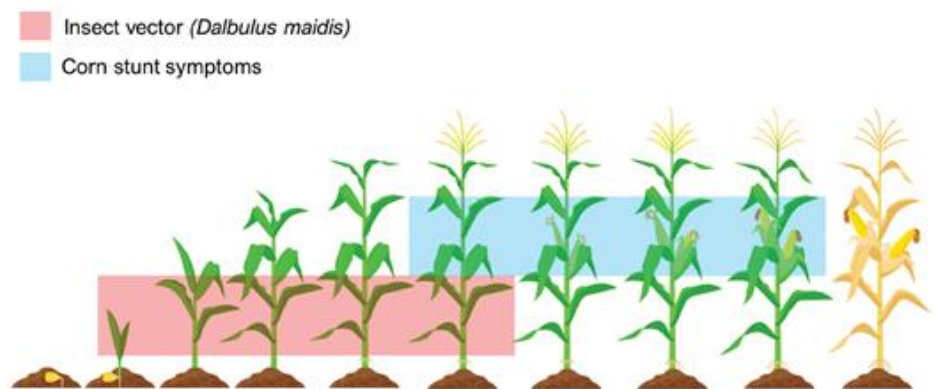


Figure 2: Figure showing susceptible corn stages VE-V8 to corn leafhopper feeding

Audio Update for South Texas IPM in row crops & Corn leaf hopper updates

For those who would like to sign up, you will be receiving weekly corn leafhopper updates and weekly updates on LRGV row crops 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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If you would like to sponsor the LRGV IPM Program & Pest Cast this 2025 season, please reach out to me, and I'll send you the sponsorship info I sent earlier this month, thank you.

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<https://southtexas.tamu.edu/programs-and-services/ipm/>

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