Texas Cooperative EXTENSION
The Texas A&M University System

TEXAS IPM
Partners with Nature

Volume XXX No. 4 April 22, 2005

PEST CAST

The Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Newsletter for the Row Crops in the Lower Rio Grande Valley

2401 East Highway 83
Weslaco, Texas 78596
Telephone (956)968-5581
Fax (956) 969-5639
WebSite: http://entowww.tamu.edu
TPMA Newsletter Website: www.tpma.org
District 12 Website: http://agfacts.tamu.edu/D12

Manda Cattaneo
Extension Agent - IPM

GENERAL SITUATION:
This week was cloudy and warm. Temperatures were in the upper 80's and lows in the upper 60's. There was trace amounts of precipitation this week. The warmer nights are contributing to more plant growth and increased squaring. Many of the cotton fields are in the pinhead stage and a few fields are at the 1/3 grown square stage. Increased grain leaf twisting was observed in the dryland sorghum fields this week indicating a continual loss of yield potential in those fields. Irrigation has commenced in several of the irrigated fields.

Cotton fleahoppers ranged from 0 to 17 per 100 plants this week. Several fields have been or soon will be sprayed for fleahoppers. Fleahoppers pose a potential problem for cotton and need to be carefully monitored.

Boll Weevil trap numbers in Texas Cooperative Extension traps around the LRGV are similar to last weeks trap captures. The low trap captures of weevils is probably due to squaring cotton which can be found in most areas of the LRGV. Since the squaring cotton is more attractive than the pheromone traps, we can not be certain how many weevils are in the fields and available to cause damage to the crop. With that in mind, we are encouraging growers to remain highly vigilant and prepared to use overwintered weevil treatments in their fields before weevils begin to puncture squares.

Table 1. No. of Boll Weevils per trap per day.

Field No.	Location	Week		
		April 4	April 11	April 18
1	Northeast Weslaco	3.04	1.17	2
2	East of Delta Lake	9.75	9.87	5.81
3	FM 490 & FM 2099	0.83	0.43	0.2
4	Harlingen Airport	7.5	2.97	2.55
5	Southeast of Rangerville	7.36	5.17	4.93

Overwintered weevil treatments are being suggested at this time in fields with squares and with a history of weevils.

Cabbage loopers and damaged leaves continue to be found throughout the valley. Beet armyworms and terminal feeding damage have been seen in scatter fields in very low numbers.

Cotton aphids remain low. Many beneficial insects were also observed in some of the heavier infested fields. Parasitized aphids (mummies), big eyed bugs, spiders, lady beetle adults, lady beetle larvae, and scymnus lady beetle larvae were all observed in relatively high numbers.

Sorghum fields that have heavy infestations of corn leaf aphids and in drought conditions are showing damage of terminal leaves. However heavy beneficial (e.g., ladybird beetles and parasites) activity is ongoing in these fields. These beneficial insects appear to be migrating from the sorghum into cotton where they are impacting the aphid populations. This is good news since a lot of spraying for aphid control would just add to the cost of insect control in cotton fields.

Thrips were still being found in mid to south valley, but most of the cotton was past the stage at which thrip damage would be of economic concern.

Cotton Heat Unit Accumulation Table			
Planting Dates	Accum. H.U.	Planting Dates	Accum. H.U.
2/15	726	3/15	476
3/01	596	4/01	282

****