

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

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PEST CAST

John W. Norman, Jr.
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GENERAL SITUATION: Moisture from rainfall has met deep soil moisture all over the LRGV. That news is good for some, bad for others still trying to plant their crops. Timing has everything to do with the outcome of a rain dance and so it goes for cotton planting. Fields need to be planted as uniformly as possible in order to avoid a stretched-out season when some fields can be overwhelmed by late season insects and potentially crop-destroying weather - like tropical storms. But, rain or shine, most folks have not complained about the moisture we have been handed, so far. Replanting due to the heavy rains, which dumped from ½ to 10 inches on Saturday, March 15, likely will be considerable in a few spots, but minimal in most others. Some additional variable amounts (up to an inch reported from one spot just north of Harlingen) of additional rain on Wednesday morning, March 26, will only delay further planting. Those fields of cotton which had already been planted, but not yet emerged, in particular near the east Rio Hondo-Arroyo City area, where the heaviest rain fell, likely will have the most to replant. Growers in numerous locations were making determinations this week about the need to replant or stay with the stand that emerged through the rain event. Overall, fields which had cotton plants already up and growing came through in good shape. Good stands were also being reported where rainfall amounts were less than one inch. Most growing crops now have a good wet soil profile from which to work. The near future looks good for the LRGV's summer crops.



A series of cotton insect meetings will be held at various locations across the LRGV starting on April 1. Andy Scott, Rio Farms, Steve Bearden, Texas Department of Agriculture and John Norman, Extension Agent-IPM will be speaking about cotton insect management and other related topics at the meetings. The following list of dates, sites and times are included so that you may attend the one of your choice. We hope to see you there:

- April 1-Ross Gin, Mercedes- 8:00 am
- April 1-Progresso Coop-12:00 noon
- April 2-Rio Hondo Texas Air Museum-12 noon
- April 3-Rio Farms, Monte Alto-12 noon
- April 4-La Feria Coop-12 noon
- April 8-Willacy Coop-San Perlita-12 noon
- April 9-Rangerville Coop-7:30 am
- April 10-Lyford-Luthern Church Fellowship Hall-12 noon
- April 11-McCook Grain-12 noon
- April 15-Brownsville Coop-Los Fresnos (formerly Cross Roads Gin)-12 noon

Cotton planting is probably near 80% complete. Planting resumed this week and some replanting will be conducted within the next week, weather permitting. Moisture shortage, obviously is not a problem for planting or replanting.

Boll weevil trap counts varied, depending on location around the LRGV this week and last week. A reported count of 900 weevils caught in 3 traps in 36 hours near Bayview, in eastern Cameron county, was the highest trap capture noted so far this season. Most trap captures were showing 0.02 to nearly 19 weevils per trap per day last week and 0.0 to 10.5 weevils per trap per day this week. Weevils appear to be plentiful at present and the earliest cotton to square will be the first target of overwintering weevils now being monitored with traps. (See latest trap count data on enclosed sheet)

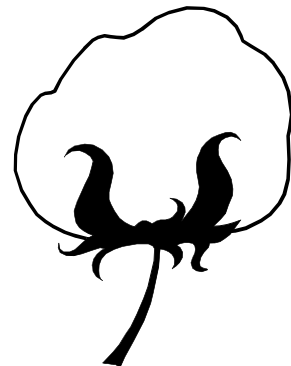
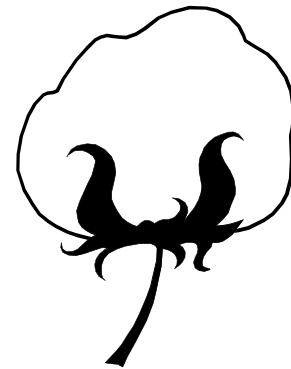
A few other insect pests have made their presence known in sporadic fashion this week. White grubs, which usually do not bother the summer crops like cotton, have been observed behind planters in unusually high numbers in a few fields. Numbers of white grubs ranged from 0 to less than 1 per square foot of soil. White grub control, no matter the infested crop, would not be feasible at this late date. Grubs tend to be very large and about to pupate in the soil. Generally, we tell home owners that controlling white grubs in their lawns needs to be conducted in late May and June in order to attack the smallest size grubs and have the best chance for success. Adults (May or June beetles) start laying their eggs in May and young larvae are the easiest to kill. The best that can be hoped for at this juncture is that already-applied insecticide will have moved the grubs aside to keep them from feeding on the roots of the seedling plants. Side dressing for grubs after the plants have emerged and the grubs have started their feeding is not economical and normally has little effect on white grub infestations. We expect little, if any, significant grub damage to cotton. Corn and grain sorghum more likely will be the targets of the white grubs at this time of the season.

Cotton aphids, while very low in number, can be found in fields and deserve to be monitored frequently.

A small number of bollworm moths were observed in seedling cotton near Weslaco this week. More-than-normal bollworm activity may occur this year, so it is probably a good idea to start watching those young cotton fields for egg-laying moths.

Cotton Heat Unit Accumulation Table			
Planting Dates	Accum. H.U.	Planting Dates	Accum. H.U.
2/15-----	312.5	3/15-----	148
3/01-----	280	4/01-----	0000

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Rio Farms, Inc.
Trap Line Data - 2003 - Boll Weevils per trap per day

Trap Lines	March 4	March 11	March 18	March 25	
Taco Baja	0.02	0.00	0.02	0.00	
Edinburg Area					
KURV	0.10	1.10	2.19	0.40	
Hans	0.21	2.98	3.55	1.19	
Fike Home	0.64	2.60	6.45	0.95	
Hill	0.00	0.45	0.95	0.14	
Bobby	0.24	1.24	2.33	1.33	
Seminary Rd.	0.36	2.83	5.19	0.79	
Delta Area					
L V-N. Sugar Mill	0.19	0.83	2.00	0.36	
La Sara	0.26	3.95	10.95	1.34	
MA North	0.33	6.24	14.02	7.69	
MA S. West	0.19	3.10	8.40	4.14	
Hargil	0.05	3.10	15.50	3.08	
DL South	0.19	4.81	7.90	7.95	
KSOX - E. DL	0.17	1.12	4.57	1.26	
Raymondville Area					
Ray West	1.07	4.00	6.40	5.86	
Ray East	0.14	1.55	3.21	1.07	
Southmost Area					
Florida	0.40	1.64	7.16	5.74	
Docberry	0.00	0.02	1.02	8.21	
Alaska	0.17	0.14	3.57	2.14	
Arkansas	0.02	0.07	0.95	2.98	
S. Oklahoma	0.02	0.07	1.38	0.90	
Santa Rosa Area					
Peterman	0.98	1.21	5.40	0.76	
Santa Rosa	1.67	1.76	8.76	1.05	
Dillan	0.38	2.07	8.10	0.86	
River	0.14	0.26	1.24	0.62	

Rio Farms, Inc.
Trap Line Data - 2003 - Boll Weevils per trap per day

Trap Lines	March 4	March 11	March 18	March 25	
Progreso Area					
Nogales	0.48	6.43	3.83	3.88	
Las Palomas	0.17	2.93	2.43	2.31	
Santa Anna	0.50	3.10	8.60	5.79	
Las Milpas	0.45	0.76	5.31	3.26	
Progreso Gin	0.43	0.45	1.33	0.81	
Bridge	0.50	1.12	1.95	1.40	
Sebastian Area					
Armandice	0.03	0.00	n/a	0.05	
Santa Rosa Lake	0.03	0.21	n/a	0.79	
Rio Hondo Area					
Airport	0.00	0.00	0.31	0.26	
Parker Rd.	0.05	0.07	1.57	0.36	
Paredes Line Rd.	0.00	0.00	0.12	0.19	
777	0.02	0.00	0.31	0.19	
Mercedes Area					
Valley Acres Lake	1.95	9.79	17.40	10.45	
SRS - HQ	1.55	4.93	10.36	1.57	
Ross	6.38	9.69	18.45	8.95	
Rangerville Area					
Turner Rd.	0.02	0.00	0.29	0.31	
Tanimachi	0.33	1.28	n/a	n/a	
Chinaberry Rd.	0.14	1.06	n/a	n/a	
McCook Area					
Davis	0.05	0.21	1.76	0.10	
Citrico	0.07	1.24	4.10	0.67	
Wells	0.05	1.00	5.17	0.90	
Starr County					
Starrco	0.14	0.17	0.71	0.07	
La Casita	0.45	0.45	1.19	0.10	
Los Puertos	0.14	0.05	0.21	0.05	