



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

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PEST CAST

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GENERAL SITUATION: Monday's rain showers were spotty. Spots in NE Willacy County received a good 1+ inches rain and Harlingen's recorded rain fall was 1.5 inches. Other parts of the LRGV received 0 to 1 inches of rain. Although some cotton fields received a good amount of rainfall, a majority of the fields still need rain. Growers are starting to harvest sunflowers. Grain Sorghum fields are maturing. A majority of the cotton fields have started to bloom.



Boll weevil activity has increased in fields. Boll weevil punctured squares have been found on plants and on the ground along field edges. Punctured squares ranged from 0 to 4 per 100 plants, adult boll weevil ranged from 0 to 2 per 100 plants. Even more punctured squares could be found on the ground near the plants. Increasing weevil activity likely will be observed over the coming weeks, so field scouting for weevils is critical.

Extension boll weevil trap counts continue to be low. Most cotton fields were past first 1/3 grown square stage and weevils were finding cotton fields more attractive than artificial pheromone.

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

Fld No.	Location	Week						
		4/4	4/11	4/18	4/25	5/2	5/9	5/16
1	Northeast Weslaco	3.04	1.17	2	0.38	0.45	0.03	0.14
2	East of Delta Lake	9.75	9.87	5.81	2.10	1.32	0.17	0.6
3	FM 490 & FM 2099	0.83	0.43	0.2	0.10	0	0	0.17
4	Harlingen Airport	7.5	2.97	2.55	0.78	0.67	0.07	0.14
5	SE of Rangerville	7.36	5.17	4.93	0.62	1.26	0.07	0.28



Beet armyworm continue to be found in fields. Most BAW populations are found in dry fields with open canopies and skippy plant stands. Egg masses are still being found in light numbers. "Hits" continue to be found, with 0 to 5 observed larvae surviving. Some larvae are feeding on the bracts of the squares and have been observed burrowing into the cotton square to feed on the pollen (as seen in picture).

Bollworm/budworm complex: Some fields were treated this week. Two diseased larvae

with an unknown pathogen were detected this week in a field in Willacy county. Damaged squares ranged from 0 to 10 per 100 plants, eggs 0 to 4 per 100 plants, larvae 0 to 8 per 100 plants. One Tobacco budworm moth was seen in a field.

Later maturing fields had an increase in **cotton fleahoppers** this week. Growers with late planted fields need to continue to scout for fleahoppers. Cotton fleahopper counts ranged from 0 to 30 per 100 plants.

Reports of increased **thrip** activity in cotton fields bordering mature sunflowers were received this week. Growers need to be aware of this potential problem and be sure to check field areas bordering sunflower fields.

Aphid populations were increasing this week. A few fields were treated for aphids.

Cabbage looper activity light. Looper larvae ranged from 0 to 1 per 100 plants.

A few **barber pole worms** have been found in scattered fields.

Silverleaf whitefly populations have increased. A few fields were treated for whiteflies. When scouting fields, the number of adult whiteflies, immature whiteflies and eggs should all be noted. If treatable levels are present, growers need to make sure that the insecticide(s) of choice will be effect at controlling the life stage(s) present. The following is a segment from Extension Publication E-7 "Managing Cotton Insects in the Lower Rio Grande Valley 2005."

Silverleaf whitefly management decision making.

Sampling for SLWF is generally conducted by examining the underside of the third leaf from the top of the plant and counting adults, and/or counting immatures on the underside of the fifth leaf from the top. Currently, thresholds for whitefly treatment in cotton are not set. However, adult SLWF populations that have been observed to cause damage have ranged from 5 to 15 adults per leaf. Immature populations of 1 per square inch maintained for at least 6 weeks have been shown to cause yield losses of approximately 20 pounds per acre.

Beneficials insects continue to be observed in cotton fields this week. Ladybird beetles, lacewing larvae and minute pirate bugs were observed in large numbers in most fields.

Grain sorghum fields that will be blooming in the next several weeks could be subject to damage by midge infestations. Check all blooming sorghum fields, as later planted sorghum will become a sink for sorghum midge emerging from mature sorghum fields.

The period of grain sorghum susceptibility to sorghum midge may last from 7 to 9 days (individual grain head) to 2

to 3 weeks (individual field), depending on uniformity of flowering. To determine if adult sorghum midges are in a sorghum field, check at mid-morning when the temperature warms to approximately 85° F. Sorghum midge adults are most abundant then on flowering sorghum grain heads. Because adult sorghum midges live less than 1 day, each day a new brood of adults emerges. This fact requires sampling almost daily during the time sorghum grain heads are flowering. Sorghum midge adults can be seen crawling on or flying about flowering sorghum grain heads. The simplest and most efficient way to detect and count sorghum midges is to inspect carefully and at close range all sides of randomly selected flowering grain heads. Handle grain heads carefully during inspection to avoid disturbing adults sorghum midges. Check a number of blooming heads at random across each field and avoid checking only the field edges since midge often congregate on the edges and sometimes do not move further into the field. Checking only the edges could lead to unnecessary insecticide applications. If a few midge are found on the edge of the field, then move at least 150 feet inside the field so that more plants can be sampled which will provide a more accurate determination of actual midge infestation levels.

Midge lay their eggs inside the yellow flowers of sorghum. The sorghum flower is no longer susceptible to midge once flowers turn from yellow to orange or brown. More details on sorghum midge can be found in Extension publication #B-1220, Managing Insect and Mite Pests of Texas.

Cotton <u>H</u> eat <u>U</u> nit Accumulation Table			
Planting Dates	Accum. H.U.	Planting Dates	Accum. H.U.
2/15	1213	3/15	963
3/01	1083	4/01	769

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