

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: This week was very cloudy and warm. Temperatures only in the upper 80's to low 90's with no significant precipitation. However, late on Friday, April 25, significant damage from hail was inflicted in parts of Willacy county. Several severe thunderstorms over a 3 to 5 hour period struck areas from west of Raymondville to northeast of San Perlita and south to the Willacy-Cameron county lines. Some hail damage was also noted north and east of Rio Hondo, though apparently not to the extent of that reported in some parts of Willacy county. The hardest hit area was just west of Raymondville where reports were received of bark being stripped from mesquite trees and prickly pear cactus being beaten to the ground. Of course, cotton and grain sorghum also were mutilated to the point of total destruction in some fields west of Raymondville. Generally speaking, the cotton crop which was already behind due to weather delayed field conditions will be further behind following the hail damage. Insect activity changed slightly this week.



Most of the LRGV's cotton crop continued to make good progress this week. Obviously, the hailed cotton did not make good progress this week, but even in hailed cotton fields, those plants that escaped hail damage looked very good. The cloudy weather has led to cotton plants being extra tall for their age. However, fruiting has increased and some reports of blooming cotton were received this week.

Cotton aphid infestations were much reduced this week in all fields on which we received reports. Reports indicated that there were many more beneficials working in fields and that insecticides that had been applied were working very well. Some aphids were killed by the fungus that often times appears in Valley fields when moisture levels are at high enough. Between the fungus, beneficial insects and insecticides, cotton aphids were much reduced this week.

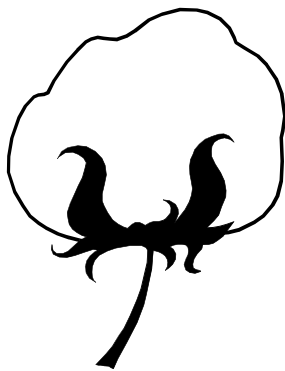
Boll weevils, on the other hand, were showing increases. A report of boll weevil feeding activity in some earlier planted cotton was received this week. Trap counts also showed some locations with very high numbers. Most sites had increased counts in traps this week compared to last week—a few more than doubled over last week. (See attached trap records) Due to the late start of this season's crop and the number of weevils being detected in some locations, overwintered weevil applications still may be advisable through next week. However, the area's crop is starting to mature and worm activity may be subject to increase in the next two to three weeks. So, make note of all available field observations of bollworm egg laying, beneficial insect activity and boll weevil counts in traps before making the overwintered weevil insecticide spraying decision. Since weevils were reported to be feeding on squares, that would indicate that the first generation of weevils following overwintered weevil egg laying, were beginning to emerge in cotton. Thus, it may be a mute point to keep going after overwintered weevils in cotton when the first generation has already been found. Check each field carefully.

Bollworm activity was down this week, but some reports of small numbers of worms were received this week. No significant damage was reported this week.

Cotton fleahoppers were on the increase in many fields, especially in Willacy county this week. Fleahopper numbers ranged from 0 to 8 per 100 plants. Most of the reports were of adult fleahoppers, but some reports indicated that small numbers of nymphs were also seen.

Planting Dates	Accum. H.U.	Planting Dates	Accum. H.U.
2/15-----	827	3/15-----	662
3/01-----	794	4/01-----	508

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

Trap Lines	April 1	April 8	April 15	April 22	April 29
Taco Baja	0.07	0.31		0.07	0.76
Edinburg Area					
KURV	0.02	0.07		0.07	0.00
Hans	0.26	0.64	0.05	0.02	0.02
Fike Home	0.24	0.60	0.31	0.00	0.02
Hill	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.02	0.05
Bobby	0.02	0.31	0.43	0.19	0.93
Seminary Rd.	0.26	2.79	0.79	0.71	0.71
Delta Area					
L V-N. Sugar Mill	0.04	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.12
La Sara	0.23	2.40	0.40	0.36	0.64
MA North	0.27	8.68	0.50	3.64	2.31
MA S. West	0.17	2.12	0.31	0.56	0.74
Hargil	0.02	2.29	0.31	0.67	0.67
DL South	0.33	2.31	0.29	3.64	3.29
KSOX - E. DL	0.00	1.29	0.17	0.19	0.81
Raymondville Area					
Ray West	0.83	15.50	4.24	22.94	5.52
Ray East	0.06	1.02	0.07	0.00	0.10
Southmost Area					
Florida	0.64	1.14	1.76	0.81	2.38
Docberry	2.40	1.36	5.26	5.19	16.19
Alaska	0.29	0.14	0.48	0.31	1.81
Arkansas	0.10	0.12	0.40	0.33	1.26
S. Oklahoma	0.00	0.02	0.38	0.21	0.71
Santa Rosa Area					
Peterman	0.00	0.10	0.02	0.00	0.10
Santa Rosa	0.02	0.25	0.50	0.19	0.05
Dillan	0.02	0.29	0.02	0.15	0.00
River	0.02	0.73	0.24	0.17	1.60

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Progreso Area					
Nogales	0.40	--	0.43	1.02	3.64
Las Palomas	0.31	--	0.67	0.45	2.83
Santa Anna	0.14	--	0.50	2.98	5.14
Las Milpas	0.00	--	0.00	0.19	0.43
Progreso Gin	0.69	--	0.21	0.10	0.57
Bridge	0.14	--	0.17	0.02	0.98
Sebastian Area					
Armandice	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Santa Rosa Lake	0.00	0.02	0.05	0.00	0.00
Rio Hondo Area					
Airport	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.02	0.11
Parker Rd.	0.00	0.17	0.10	0.21	0.38
Paredes Line Rd.	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.07
777	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.07
Mercedes Area					
Valley Acres Lake	2.10	2.48	1.00	0.90	2.17
SRS - HQ	0.00	1.10	0.81	1.00	1.10
Ross	0.26	2.40	0.14	0.21	8.90
Rangerville Area					
Turner Rd.	0.00	0.00	0.00	--	--
Tanimachi		--	--	--	--
Chinaberry Rd.		--	--	--	--
McCook Area					
Davis	0.05	0.45	0.07	0.12	--
Citrico	0.14	0.50	0.26	0.12	0.86
Wells	0.07	0.85	0.50	0.55	0.83
Starr County					
Starrco	0.00	0.05	--	0.00	0.55
La Casita	0.02	0.07	0.02	0.00	0.14
Los Puertos	0.00	0.14	0.00	0.02	0.05