



INSECTS AND WEEDS IN FOCUS

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COASTAL BEND IPM PROGRAM COTTON INSECT REPORT

Generally, Coastal Bend cotton is well into the fruiting stages throughout the area. Some Kleberg County fields are already at the first-third grown square stage, while other isolated fields across the region are still growing through the early true leaf stages.

Just about every field in our program has begun to grow past the thrips damage window. Aphids have remained light in most of the area's fields, however one program field in Kleberg County was sprayed this week for a combination of aphids and fleahoppers. Its amazing what rain and natural enemies can do to an aphid population. One week aphids can heavily infest just about every plant in the field and the next week, after a rain and time for beneficials to do their job, not be able to find hardly a single aphid. Hence, spraying for aphids can be a very difficult decision. Producers should carefully track aphid abundance changes and, even if your field is heavily infested, give the beneficials at least a week and a half to work on the aphids. Also, you may get lucky and get a rain too to further reduce aphid abundance. Under right conditions aphids could rebound.

Fleahoppers have really begun to show up in many of the Coastal Bend's cotton. We've found fields with fleahopper numbers up to 20%. Unlike aphids, fleahopper thresholds are pretty hard and set. So, when fleahoppers reach this level its time to clean house and spray. Be very vigilant of checking for fleahoppers along the sides of fields nearest weedy land. These weedy areas serve as sources of

fleahoppers and not checking the cotton near these areas can be very misleading. One cotton field Cindy and I checked this week had 40% fleahoppers on the side near a fallow, weedy field and 0% on the other side! Obviously, making thorough checks is essential.

So far, we've avoided any worm problems. Corn earworms/cotton bollworm (*Helicoverpa zea*) actually prefer corn as a host. Right now while corn silks are still fresh and moist, these worms will be congregating in corn. However, as the corn silks begin drying down and becoming less suitable as hosts, you can expect cotton bollworms to start migrating into cotton. Very, very few eggs or worms were found over the past week in scouting program fields EDB

EPA GUNNING FOR CARBAMATE INSECTICIDES

Last week I attended the Furadan stewardship meeting in Robstown and learned a few things you might be interested in hearing. As you know, with the passage of the FQPA, all of our organophosphate and carbamate (such as Furadan) insecticides are under the gun for review again. Chris Cole, FMC Technical Representative, mentioned that the EPA has a great big bull's-eye on the file cabinet containing records and technical data for carbamate chemistry, literally. They like to call it "dirty chemistry." Please be exceedingly careful this season as you utilize these essential insecticidal chemistries. Mr. Cole suggests that EPA regulators WILL BE in our area this season to check for abuses and misuses. If any are found, you can bet you will be made into an example of why carbamate chemistries should be banned. Be careful and do the right thing. EDB

PECAN NUT CASEBEARER EGG NUMBERS HIGH

It has been warmer than normal, therefore pecan nut casebearer treatment dates would be expected to occur earlier this season. It seems that is in fact the case. Casebearer egg numbers in Victoria County ranged on Thursday (4/29/99) from 2 to 26.5 per 100 nut clusters. About 1/3 of the eggs had just hatched, 1/3 were about to hatch and 1/3 appeared to be freshly laid according to Joe Janak, Victoria County Extension Agent. This insect, in certain years, is capable of destroying a high percentage of the nut cluster; it appears to be a heavy year. Treatment dates, without other evidence, should be now. Pecan groves should be inspected immediately. Labeled insecticides

include Lorsban, Imidan and Confirm.

RDP

SORGHUM INSECT SITUATION

We have noticed a slight increase in greenbug numbers on lower sorghum leaves. Since beneficial arthropods are running out of corn leaf aphids, I don't expect greenbug numbers to cause much problem. It would be a good idea, however, to inspect sorghum weekly for the next 4-6 weeks to monitor greenbug numbers. RDP

BOLL WEEVILS REMAIN LOW

Boll weevil pheromone trap data is shown in Table 1 for various years. The year 1981 is pulled out of the 6-year average since it followed a dry year and captured the fewest number of boll weevils during the spring of any of those years. I pointed out, however,

in a previous newsletter that the average trap catch for the last 6 months in 1981 was 279.9 per trap. That data points to the reproductive capacity of this insect under the right conditions and, further, demonstrates how diligent the eradication program must be to prevent a resurgence.

Table 1. Number of boll weevils captured per pheromone trap per month, Nueces and San Patricio Counties, TAEX operated traps.

Month	6 yr avg	1981	1998	1999
Jan	5.3	0.5	.22	.22
Feb	5.5	0.3	.27	.00
Mar	7.7	0.4	3.00	.33
Apr	7.4	0.9	30.94	.00

NOTE: 6 yr avg is 1977-1982 by Segers et al.

The data in Table 2 is from Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation traps throughout this zone. Note that their numbers are higher than our trap catch since, obviously, we did not catch a single weevil in our traps.

Table 2. Number of boll weevils captured per pheromone trap in April 1999 by geographic area, Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation traps.

Geographic area	Avg. trap catch for April
Uvalde	2.082
Robstown	0.040
Sinton	0.065
Kingsville	0.004
Victoria	0.085

NOTE: Taken from South Texas/Wintergarden Texas Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation weekly report.

RDP

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