

UPPER COAST CROP IMPROVEMENT NEWSLETTER

Matagorda

Wharton

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IN THIS ISSUE

- TPMA Website
- Upper Coast IPM Program Sponsors
- Cotton Insect Situation
- Managing Aphid in Cotton
- Managing Stink Bugs in Cotton

TPMA Website

The Upper Coast Crop Improvement newsletter and other Extension IPM Program newsletters from across the state can be viewed at the Texas Pest Management Association website at www.tpma.org.

Upper Coast IPM Program Sponsors

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Cotton Insect Situation

During the past week (6/5-6/9), growth stages of cotton in Jackson, Matagorda, and Wharton counties ranged from one-third grown square through the third week of bloom.

Aphid numbers appeared to be increasing; however, cotton fields that were monitored still remained far from reaching the economic threshold.

Fleahopper numbers in **pre-blooming** cotton averaged 4.3% across all fields. Individual field numbers ranged from 0 to 10% per 100 plant terminals.

Bollworm egg and larvae counts ranged from 0 to 4% and 0 to 1%, respectively. Damaged square counts ranged from 0 to 4%.

Brown stink bugs were becoming more prevalent in fields located in Matagorda County.

Also, creontiades were found in very low numbers in a couple of fields located in Palacios and Tintop areas of Matagorda County.

Managing Aphids in Cotton

Three species of aphids feed on cotton plants: cotton aphid, cowpea aphid, and the green peach aphid. Cotton aphids range from light yellow to dark green to almost black. Cowpea aphids are shiny black with white patches on the legs and are common on seedling plants. Green peach aphids range from pale yellow to green.

Insecticidal control of cotton aphids is warranted if infestations exceed 50 per leaf and the infestation must persist for over 7 days. It will take at least two field inspections 48-72 hours apart after their numbers become high to make a final decision. You will often observe a rapid decline in their numbers, sometimes for no apparent reason. Also, if no insecticide has interfered with beneficial arthropod activity and at least 20% of the aphids observed have been "parasitized" (mummies present), the likelihood of a rapid decline in aphid numbers is usually imminent.

Managing Stink Bugs in Cotton

To determine if an insecticide application is warranted for stink bug control, examine at least 50 medium size bolls (the diameter of a quarter) for internal feeding damage by cutting them open with a knife. Internal feeding can easily be identified by observing callous growth on the on the internal boll wall and/or stained lint. If 20 percent or more of the bolls are damaged, then a treatment should be considered.

Second through fifth instar stink bug nymphs and adults can damage bolls. Fourth and fifth instars can cause the same level of damage as adults.

Stink bugs are often clumped near field margins. Spot treatment provides effective control when this situation exists.