

Northwest Plains Pest Management News

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Bailey and Parmer Counties

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Hot dry weather has accelerated wheat maturity and allowed wheat harvest to progress quickly. A few good irrigated yields have been reported but for the most part irrigated yields have been fair to poor. Dryland yields are being reported from 2 to 15 bu/acre.

The low wheat grain yields throughout much of Texas and Oklahoma will likely result in a shortage of quality wheat seed for the next crop. This will likely be compounded by increased demand by producers who normally would have saved some of their own planting seed but were unable to because of the poor crop.

A good wheat crop starts with quality seed regardless of the crop's purpose, forage production or grain. One exception to this may be wheat planted for cover. Test weight is generally considered a good measurement of seed quality. Generally wheat seed with a test weight of at least 58 pounds per bushel is considered adequate for planting. Make sure that the seed is free of weed seed. Field bindweed is particularly easily spread in contaminated wheat seed. This potential wheat

Daily Water Use	
Crop	Inches per day
Corn	.47
Cotton	.20
Grain Sorghum	.24
Bermuda grass	.29
Fescue/ Bluegrass	.39

Cotton Heat Unit Accumulation ¹			
Location	Current	2005	Long Term ²
Farwell	661	526	
Friona	731	517	
Muleshoe	725	506	457
Muleshoe WR	752	553	

¹ DD 60 based on May 1

² Based on Muleshoe long term weather data 1971-2000

seed shortage may mean that producers will not be able to be as choosy about planting seed as normal but it should not be allowed to dictate recklessness.

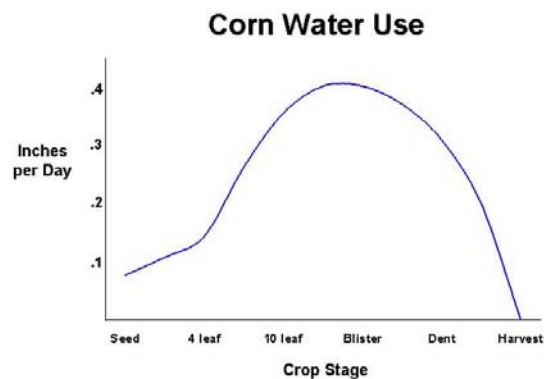
Keep in mind that Plant Variety Protection Act (PVPA) enforcement is stronger now, and less wheat seed will be sold as VNS or variety not stated. In brief, you may only save seed from your own fields for your own use, and you cannot save more than you would use. For a summary of the current PVPA rules, consult "The Plant Variety Protection Act: Information for Texas Small Grain Producers," by Texas Extension small grains specialist Dr. Gaylon Morgan at:

<http://varietytesting.tamu.edu/wheat/docs/plantvarietyprotectionact.pdf>

Brent Bean, Texas Cooperative Extension Agronomist reports that fines as high as \$30,000 have been levied against a number of individuals or companies that have violated the Plant Variety Protection Act.

Corn's naturally high water use combined with high temperatures and constant winds are putting extreme demands on soil moisture.

Corn will reach its peak water use in the next two to three weeks (tassel/silking stage). Many corn fields are currently at less than 80% of soil moisture holding capacity and many irrigation systems are no longer able to keep up with demand. In some cases irrigation may only be buying time for much needed precipitation, without which, yields could be severely reduced. Additionally, spider mites typically develop faster on corn under moderate drought stress and slower on fully irrigated corn.



Most cotton has 5 to 9 true leaves and has begun to square. Square set is excellent thus far, 95% to 100%.

A few cotton fleahoppers have been found in area fields. Numbers have been well below economic threshold. Upper and lower surfaces of top leaves and plant terminals should be closely inspected to determine infestation levels.

Adult fleahoppers are about 1/8 inch long and pale green. Nymphs resemble adults but lack wings and are light green. They move very rapidly when disturbed. Adults move into cotton from weed hosts when cotton begins to square. Both adults and nymphs suck sap from the tender portion of the plant, including small squares. Pinhead size and smaller squares are

most susceptible to damage.



Phil Sloderbeck, KSU

Adult cotton fleahopper.

The decision to apply insecticide should be based on the number of fleahoppers present, the squaring rate and the percent square set. During the first week of squaring, the economic threshold is 25 to 30 cotton fleahoppers per 100 terminals combined with less than 90 percent square set. In the second week of squaring, the economic threshold is 25 to 30 cotton fleahoppers per 100 terminals combined with less than 85 percent square set. Starting with the third week of squaring up to first bloom, the economic threshold is 25 to 30 cotton fleahoppers per 100 terminals combined with less than 75 percent square set.

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