

# Northwest Plains Pest Management News

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Bailey and Parmer Counties

July 28, 2006

Scattered showers popped up locally Thursday July 27 and more are forecast for Friday. Local weather stations recorded 0 to .14 inch while other individuals report good rains (near 1 inch). While any rain is a good rain, the area is in desperate need of a wide spread soaking rain. Current crop moisture requirements are high. Many irrigation systems normally irrigate at a deficit level this time of year but this year's extremely hot and dry conditions have depleted soil moisture reserves which are normally used to carry the crop thru the high moisture demand period. Some tough decisions are having to be made in these situations. Some producers are having to abandon irrigation on a portion of their crop in an attempt to salvage the rest. Once most of the soil moisture reserves are used irrigation applications less than 1 inch are not likely to have a great impact on crop performance. Irrigation systems with minimal capacity may be better off reducing irrigated acres and increasing the

<b>Daily Water Use</b>	
Crop	Inches per day
Corn	.33-.36
Cotton	.33
Grain Sorghum	.29
Bermuda grass	.13
Fescue/ Bluegrass	.18

<b>Cotton Heat Unit Accumulation<sup>1</sup></b>			
Location	Current	2005	Long Term <sup>2</sup>
Farwell	1207	1101	
Friona	1309	1116	
Muleshoe	1307	1095	1050
Muleshoe WR	1316	1178	

<sup>1</sup> DD 60 based on May 1

<sup>2</sup> Based on Muleshoe long term weather data 1971-2000

irrigation applied on a per acre basis.

Moisture requirements for corn have started to decline in some of the more mature fields which have reached the dough stage but most fields continue to exceed .3 inch per day.

Beneficial insects, primarily six spotted thrips and minute pirate bugs, have taken their toll on spider mites. Some fields which had 70% of the leaves infested with mites 10 days ago have now been reduced to around 10%. Many mite infestations which



*Adult six spotted thrips*

continue to be observed are individual mites with no developed colony. Keep a close eye on mites as conditions are very favorable for rapid development. Mite feeding after full dent will not cause yield loss, but may contribute to premature plant lodging if

mite feeding damage is severe and the crop is stressed.

Southwestern corn borer infestations have been variable from near 0 to 85% of plants infested with eggs or small larvae. When infestation levels exceed 20-25% an insecticide application is warranted.

Fall armyworms have also been observed in area corn. The fall armyworm is a sporadic pest of corn. It migrates north during the growing season from overwintering sites in south Texas and northern Mexico. Infestations occurring from tassel to dough stage can be very damaging.



University of Georgia Archives,  
The University of Georgia,  
[www.ipmimages.org](http://www.ipmimages.org)

Larvae feed on ears and ear shanks and behind leaf collars. Heavy infestations may cause substantial yield losses because larvae feed directly on the ear. Additional losses can occur when shank feeding causes ears to drop and when stalks lodge as a result of feeding damage to the nodes. Fall armyworm larvae range from a light tan to a dark green or black color. Light and dark stripes run longitudinally on the body. Dark spots or bumps occur in a pattern over the body, especially when viewed from the top. The head of a larva has a prominent inverted "Y" in a light color that contrasts with the dark head capsule. Scouting for fall armyworms can be difficult. Check corn leaves and grasses in the furrow for egg masses. There may be

50 to 100 eggs per mass. Also check for small larvae behind leaf collars and at the bases of primary and secondary ears. Small larvae differ from late instar larvae in that they are pale tan in color and have a small black spot on each side toward the head. This distinguishes them from corn earworm and southwestern corn borer larvae. Currently, Texas does not have an established economic threshold for this pest. If control is necessary, it should be targeted at small larvae before they enter the primary ear.

Cotton pests continue to be very light. Cotton fleahoppers are no longer considered a pest and *Lygus* bugs are few and far between. Bollworms and loopers have been observed occasionally but in very low numbers. There have been a few beet armyworm "hits" observed but again nothing to get alarmed at.

**Northwest Plains**  
  
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