

Northwest Plains Pest Management News

Volume 5 Issue 14

Bailey and Parmer Counties

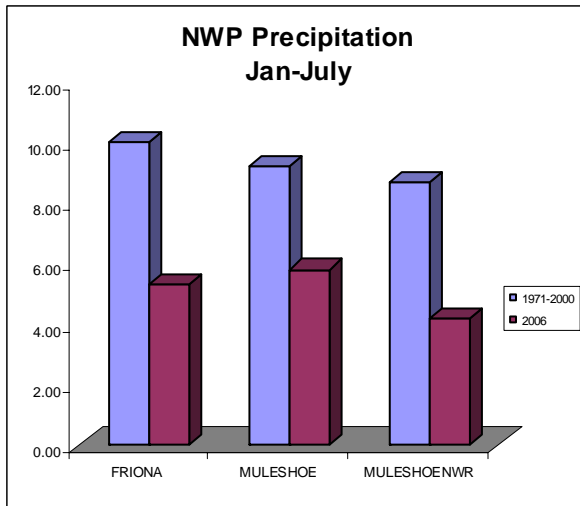
August 18, 2006

Much needed precipitation was received in most of the Northwest Plains this week. Local weather stations recorded .20-2.73 inches and individual reports exceeding 4 inches were received. Still, some areas received only minimal rainfall. Area wide, the Northwest Plains received only 55% of normal precipitation from January thru July based on long term weather data (1971-2000). The resulting 45% deficit may not tell the whole story. Rainfall events which were received,

Cotton Heat Unit Accumulation¹			
Location	Current	2005	Long Term ²
Farwell	1542	1374	
Friona	1665	1382	
Muleshoe	1657	1343	1394
Muleshoe WR	1683	1461	

¹ DD 60 based on May 1

² Based on Muleshoe long term weather data 1971-2000



came in small increments which limited their effectiveness. The Friona weather station did not record any rainfall within a 24 hour period in excess of 1 inch in 2006 till August 14. The Muleshoe station only recorded three rainfall events exceeding 1 inch, two this week, August 14 and 16, and one June 23. The weather station located at the Wildlife Refuge still has not recorded any daily rainfall greater than .75 inch. This lack of precipitation is further compounded by 15% more accumulated heat units in 2006 compared to the long term average.

Daily Water Use	
Crop	Inches per day
Corn	.19
Cotton	.17-.21
Grain Sorghum	.18-.21
Bermuda grass	.14
Fescue/ Bluegrass	.19

Recent precipitation will not likely have a great impact on many summer crop yields but are none the less extremely valuable in that pumping costs can be reduced. Pumping costs exceed \$10.00/acre inch thus a 3 inch rain would save \$30.00/acre in pumping costs in addition to any yield enhancement. Irrigation costs have been reported to have reached \$300.00/acre in some area corn fields. You have to have a razor sharp pencil to even come close to “pencil” a breakeven level with this extreme irrigation expense. On the other hand recent rains have, in some cases, provided a

decent base on which to establish a wheat crop.

The cotton pest situation continues to be light. Nightly rainfall has limited bollworm moth activity this week. Bollworm egg lay has ranged from 0 to over 10,000 eggs per acre and worm populations have been observed as high as 8,500 per acre. In some cases natural enemies, environmental conditions and crop conditions have prevented a bollworm population from becoming established. For instance, a bollworm population of 8,500 small worms (less than a 1/4 inch) had decreased to less than 1,000 in a three day period in a local cotton field. This particular field had bloomed out the top and had little tender vegetation available. This emphasizes the need for field scouting and careful consideration of pest numbers, natural enemies, and crop and environmental conditions when making pest management decisions.

The established economic threshold for bollworms is **10,000** or more small worms, less than a 1/4 inch, per acre. However, if two or more key predators are present for each small worm, control measures may not be needed. Once larvae reach 3/8-1/2 inch in length the threshold should be reduced to 5,000 worms per acre. The actual treatment level will vary according to the ability of the individual scout to locate small larvae, the age structure of the infestation, maturity of the crop and crop value.

Minute pirate bugs have been commonly observed in area cotton. They typically inhabit the upper 1/3 of the cotton plant as well as other blooms. These very small predators (approximately 1/8 inch) have the ability to quickly respond to increased prey. Minute pirate bugs will feed on many key cotton pests including bollworm eggs and small larvae. They



Minute Pirate Bug Adult

can consume one cotton bollworm egg per day and/or 1 to 2 small larvae every 2 days.



Minute Pirate bug Nymph

Mark your calendar!

Stocker Cattle Meeting will be held on August 23, 2006 at the Olton Ag Center. Discussion will include Stocker Forage Allocation and Supplementation, Stocker Cattle Health Issues, Pre - conditioning Yards and Order Buying, Cattle Feeding, and Wheat Grazing. For more information Call Kent Lewis 806-385-4222 ext. 235 or 806-773-8981. Lunch will be provided, please RSVP by August 21, 2006.

There will be a Bailey-Parmer **Cotton Field Day** held August 30. Research trials including cotton varieties, herbicide systems, seeding rates and plant growth regulators will be discussed and visited weather permitting. Three CEUs will be available. More information to follow.

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