

Northwest Plains Pest Management News

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Bailey and Parmer Counties

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Hot dry winds have wreaked havoc on area crops. Wind speeds exceeding 50 MPH have been recorded the last couple days making today's 20-30 seem relatively calm. Thunder storms which exhibited extreme wind and severe hail have also damaged and in many cases destroyed crops. Damage was not wide spread but was severe in the path of the storms. In some cases more hail than rain was reported.

Wheat harvest has begun in a few dryland fields which looked like they would justify cutting. Early yield reports have been disappointing even though expectations were not high. Short plant stature has made harvest difficult in some fields. Irrigated fields are drying quickly but no reports of harvest have been received to date. Recent environmental conditions have taken a relatively green field to a golden tan in 3-4 days.

Cotton emergence has been slow thus far. Early planted cotton emergence was hindered by cool temperatures and later planted cotton has been plagued by hot dry

Cotton Heat Unit Accumulation ¹			
Location	Current	2007	Long Term ²
Farwell	292	170	
Friona	272	152	
Muleshoe	306	157	231
Muleshoe WR	324	170	

¹ DD 60 based on May 1

² Based on Muleshoe long term weather data 1971-2000

winds. Keeping the seedbed moist has proved most difficult. Most cotton has only one true leaf developed. Crop losses as a result of recent high winds have been reported.

Adult **thrips** are abundant and have begun migrating into cotton as other host conditions deteriorate. Heavy pressure has been observed in many fields exceeding 6 thrips/plant, over six times the

Daily Water Use	
Crop	Inches per day
Wheat	.0-.28
Corn	.37
Cotton	.21
Bermuda Grass	.31
Fescue/ Bluegrass	.41



Adult and immature thrips on cotton leaf.

recommended action threshold. Preventative soil applied and seed treatment insecticide effectiveness has declined to the point subsequent foliar insecticide applications have been necessary to suppress thrips pressure. The presence of immature thrips is a good indicator that a systemic insecticide is losing effectiveness. The current established action threshold for thrips in cotton is one per true leaf thru the fifth true leaf stage. If there was a soil applied insecticide, seed



Thrips injury in cotton.

treatment, or a foliar insecticide previously applied for thrips control, there should be immature thrips present in addition to the 1 thrips per true leaf to justify a subsequent treatment. Foliar applications of acephate are very effective but residual activity only lasts about a week or so.

Thrips are slender, straw colored insects about 1/15 inch long, with rasping and sucking mouthparts. Adults are winged and capable of drifting long distances in the wind. Immature thrips are very small and will vary in color from white to yellow. The way thrips move about on the leaf can help distinguish adults from larvae, adults move with a stiff like body appearance and larvae move about with a more flexible like body. Cotton should be monitored closely to prevent excessive damage. Thrips will

hide in leaf folds, along leaf veins, and within curled leaves. A plant should be thoroughly inspected to determine infestation levels. A mechanical pencil is particularly useful to pull apart small plant parts for inspection.

Spider mites have been observed in area cotton as well. No crop injury has been observed as a result but careful monitoring should continue.

Spider mites have also been observed in area **corn**. Most colonies are small at this point but then again so is the corn. Thrips have been observed feeding within some mite colonies and in some cases have naturally suppressed the mites. In this situation the thrips which are a pest in cotton are a beneficial in corn. Judicial use of insecticides may conserve these natural enemies and reduce risks of a future mite outbreak. Now would be a good time to begin considering spider mite management strategies in corn including preventative and/or remedial tactics.



Monti Vandiver
Extension Agent-Integrated Pest Management
Texas AgriLife Extension Service
401 3rd Street
Farwell, Texas
806-481-3300

<http://txipmnet.tamu.edu>
<http://parmer-tx.tamu.edu>

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