



News about Integrated Pest Management for producers in Castro and Lamb Counties.

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GENERAL CROP CONDITIONS

Cotton

Things have really turned around from where we were at three weeks ago when we all wondered if it would ever rain. Cotton has really responded very well to the rainfalls that we have received over the past couple of weeks. The questions that I am getting now are mostly aimed at plant growth regulators (PGR's) and when or if to make applications. Personally I would be very careful about applying these materials. Just like anything else these materials are inputs that cost money and I am one that does not like to throw away money. The use of plant growth regulators does not

guarantee an increase in yield. As a matter of fact research conducted by Texas A&M does not indicate consistent increases in yields. The main function of PGR's is to control vegetative growth, not to retain fruit or increase squaring rate. The bottom line is that PGR's may play a role in a cotton production system, but there is no guarantee that the money you invest in those materials will result in yield increases.

Corn

Corn producers continue to benefit from beautiful climatic conditions for corn production. It is easy to see fields that were moisture stressed as they are taking on the "wavy" appearance when you drive by them. Local forecasts show hot temperatures and dry weather beginning Thursday, so it will be important to keep up with irrigation demands. This is especially true for those fields that are beginning to pollinate.

INSECTS AND DISEASES

Cotton

It is always good to report that we are not finding heavy insect pest pressures in cotton fields. Fleahopper infestations remain very light in program fields. The highest counts we had this week for cotton fleahoppers was one field that had 3 adult fleahoppers/100 terminals. One thing that I have noticed is that we are not finding any fleahopper nymphs in program fields at this time. Also it is important to know that once cotton has moved into the blooming stage, this insect is no longer considered a pest. Fleahoppers become beneficial insects after cotton has moved into the bloom stage. Lygus bug pressure is also very light in program fields at this time. We are only finding an occasional lygus bug infesting cotton fields at this time. Square sets remained very high for the most part as we are now moving into the blooming stage. We did get reports last week from Gaines county that bollworm eggs were being detected in cotton fields. To this date we have not seen or heard reports of a bollworm egg lay in Castro or Lamb county.

Corn

We have began to find spider mite infestations in area corn fields this week. We are finding mite colonies up to the top of the plant, with the majority of the infestation on the leaves below the ear leaf. At this time insecticide options are limited. Some labeled pyrethroids, Oberon, Onager, and Komite are some options that are available to control mite populations, but one should be very careful about using these products for the following reasons: Pyrethroid applications have demonstrated a drop in efficacy against spider mite populations.

Komite and Onager have not proven to be effective against adult spider mites and realistically need to be applied when infestations are just developing.

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This would leave Oberon as the best option to control established mite colonies in corn at this time. This product is still fairly new on the market and there is limited data on its performance so don't expect this product to be a fast working insecticide or as we like to say a rescue treatment. Beneficial insects can also play a key role in controlling this pests but with the local forecast we could be in for a major spider mite problem. Southwestern corn borer infestations have not yet been detected in program fields but I would intensify scouting for this pest over the next three weeks. Second generation egg lays usually occur between now and the first couple of weeks in August. Most of the eggs are laid on the upper surfaces of the middle seven leaves. These leaves are: the ear leaf, two leaves above and four leaves below the ear leaf. Eggs are laid singly or in masses of two or more. Eggs overlap like fish eggs or shingles. Freshly laid eggs are creamy white and one day later the eggs develop three red bands across each egg. Eggs will hatch in about 5 days.

Heat Unit Accumulations For Cotton As of May 1st-June 27th

	2006
Dimmitt	944.5
Earth	969.5

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