



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

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**GENERAL CROP CONDITIONS**

***Cotton***

Cotton fields are either sinking or swimming at this point. Those fields that have had sufficient moisture are progressing just fine while those that are lacking the moisture are nearing or have reached physiological cut-out. Those fields that have reached cut-out are also shedding fruit in many instances. Again this would be caused by the lack of moisture and not insect induced. I did hear of one report this week where some lygus bug treatments were recommended, the trouble is that this recommendation was based on fruit shed and not lygus counts. In a season like this it is important to not make useless applications of pesticides or even plant growth regulators. This is money that would be better off in your pocket or spent on harvest aids later in the season. Irrigation capabilities is the key at this time to whether cotton fields will do good or not. Those who are not able to keep up with irrigation are going to have an early maturing crop and there is nothing to stop this from happening. We have accumulated a ton of heat units up to this point and so this crop is a lot further along than where we have been at this same time the past two seasons.

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***Corn***

Corn continues to demonstrate signs of moisture stress along with stress from spider mite infestations in some fields. Many of the program fields are in the milk stage or beyond. Hopefully most of these fields have passed their peak water demand and so the strain of keeping up has diminished some what. This doesn't mean of course that we should abandon our corn but it does mean that there is the potential to sneak into some cotton and give some cotton fields a quick drink.

**INSECTS AND DISEASES**

***Cotton***

There just hasn't been a change in insect pests populations in program fields this week. Insect pest populations remain very light with little to no lygus bug infestations in program fields. The scouts and I have yet to find any bollworm activity in the form of eggs or larvae. I feel like sometimes we stress if we aren't out controlling insect pests in our crops, but I think that this year we should relax and be thankful that we are not having to spray insecticides. Remember we have had very hot temperatures and very little rain so our weed hosts for many of these insect pests are very light and it could be that we are reaping the benefits of light insect pest infestations. We are also finding very little beneficial insect activity. Crab spiders are not present in fields like they have been over the past two seasons and neither are lady beetle populations.

***Corn***

Spider mites continue to be the main concern for corn at this time. Spider mite infestations are very erratic across the area, and I believe it depends on irrigation. In fields where irrigation has been sufficient, spider mite populations are considerably lighter compared to those fields that are moisture stressed. Beneficial insects are able to keep up with mite populations where irrigation has been sufficient. At this point of the season I'm not so sure that trying to control spider mites is economic. Most program fields will begin to dent within the next two weeks. At that point spider mites can no longer effect grain production. Severe spider mite infestations have the potential to cause lodging in corn fields so it is still a tough decision to make. I feel like I would take my chances and try to out run mite populations rather than

attempting to control the pest with materials that are expensive or have demonstrated the inability to control mite populations efficiently. I continue to monitor program fields for southwestern corn borer eggs and small larvae, but infestation levels remain light in program fields. We have reached threshold for this pest in only one field so far. This field was located south of Springlake and had a heavy first generation infestation. Otherwise, we are only finding about 5% to 10% of the plants infested with eggs or small larvae. I have checked with other agents and consultants and they are reporting the same findings in their corn fields. Keep in mind that if you need to treat for southwestern corn borer infestations, it would be better to use an insecticide that is light on beneficial insect populations. Spider mite pressures could blow up if beneficial insects are taken out. So think about materials such as Intrepid that are light on beneficial insects.

**Heat Unit Accumulations For Cotton As of May 1<sup>st</sup>-July25<sup>th</sup>**

	<b>2006</b>
<b>Dimmitt</b>	1221.5
<b>Earth</b>	1254.5

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