

## WEST PLAINS IPM UPDATE

News about  
Integrated Pest  
Management in  
Hockley and  
Cochran Counties  
from Kerry Siders.



**August 17, 2011**  
Vol. 16 - No. 11



### NEW PEST ALERT: THRIPS

As of today, Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> of August, I have seen my first Kurtomathrips in Hockley County. Therefore, I wanted to put out a newsletter with as much information as I could with what we know today. The following is from Dr. David Kerns, Extension Cotton Entomologist, Lubbock.

A new thrips has been observed feeding on and causing extensive damage to cotton in Gaines County. This thrips has been tentatively identified as Kurtomathrips morrilli. This species was originally described in Arizona and has been collected in California, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Texas, Florida, Hawaii, Jamaica and India. It can feed and damage a number of crops including cotton, eggplants, beans and chrysanthemums. Reports of it damaging cotton are quite old, dating back to the 1920-50's, and little information pertaining to these infestations exists.

This species is very small, about the size of a mite, and are very difficult to see with the naked eye. They tend to be found on both upper and lower leaf surfaces although initial infestations appear to begin on the underside of the leaf. They seem to prefer to rest and initially feed along the leaf veins, but will spread their damage throughout the leaf surface.

The wingless adults are tan in color while the winged ones are more amber. The immatures are creamy white. The adults are mostly wingless although winged were originally reported in Hawaii in 1965. We found several with wings in Gaines Co.



Most adult Kurtamatothrips are wingless

Damage can easily be mistaken for mite damage, but tends to be more silvery in appearance and without webbing. There does not appear to be a preference for terminal growth or blooms as we see with most other thrips species infesting cotton.

Kurtomathrips damage



Kurtomathrips damage (photo courtesy of Manda Anderson)

Although we have observed severe damage from these thrips in one field, we have not seen other infestations. However, I suspect that there are other infestations out there and we need to be watching for these. The field where this infestation was observed was highly stressed cotton (drought stress and nematode) which may have set the plants up for infestation by these thrips. Whether or not they will heavily infest less stressed plants is not certain, but we are watching this infestation to see if it moves to a less stressed area of the field.

I would treat these thrips similar to spider mites as far as determining when to treat. If damage is readily evident and thrips are present, an insecticide application may be warranted. Control of these thrips is not certain and there are no insecticide efficacy data for this thrips species. We initiated a test to determine what products may offer control, but we have no data yet.

CONTINUED TO AUGUST 9<sup>TH</sup>

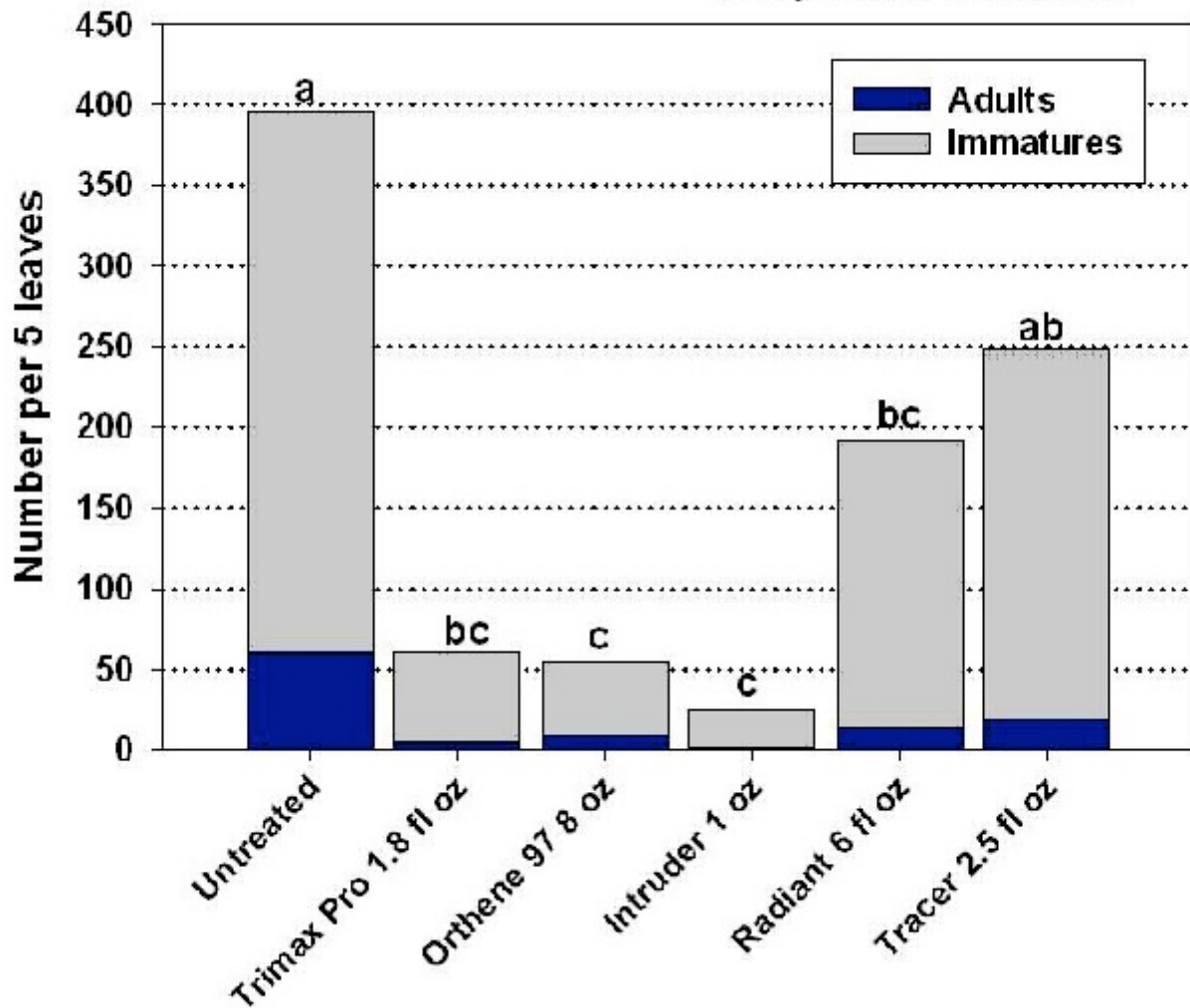
## **KURTOMATHRIPS**

Last week I alerted you to a new pest identified as *Kurtomathrips morrilli* that has been found infesting cotton in Gaines, Yoakum and Lubbock counties. I suspect it is in other areas as well, but at very low numbers. See the July 27 issue of FOCUS for more information of *Kurtomathrips*. This thrips appears to especially prefer infesting highly stressed cotton where it can cause severe damage. However, thus far it has not posed a major problem for area growers.

The damage this pest causes is similar to spider mites causing desiccation to the leaves. This type of damage is primarily a concern in regard to boll filling. If the leaves supplying energy to the developing bolls are damaged, then boll size and yield may be compromised.

We initiated an insecticide test to determine what might work in controlling these thrips and it appears that higher rates of neonicotinoids and acephate at 0.5 lbs/ac appear to be effective.

## 7 days after treatment



IPM Radio Program Ag Talk on KJTV, radio 950 AM, on Wednesdays from 12:30 to 2:00.

AgriLife Extension in Hockley County Report on KLVT, High Plains Radio Network, radio 1230 AM, Wednesdays from 7:30 am to 7:45 am.

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