

Plains Pest Management Newsletter

News About Integrated Pest Management in Hale & Swisher Counties

Greg Cronholm ★ Extension Agent - IPM ★ 225 Broadway , Suite 6 Plainview Texas ★ (806) 291-5274

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COTTON



Cotton is now recovering from the cool wet May we experienced. Stand conditions range from poor to excellent Extensive hail damage

was reported in May in the Petersburg, Abernathy and Cotton Center areas. Some fields have had problems with seedling disease and foliage blight. With the recent warm temperatures fields are now recovering and starting to grow at a normal rate. Blowing sand this past Wednesday was not as bad as earlier predicted. Most growers were able to “sand fight” across most acres prone to blowing. This is one year where delayed weed control in our Roudup Ready Flex® fields helped to moderate the effects of blowing sand. Dr. Randy Boman and Dr. Robert Lemon, Extension Agronomists recently wrote an article titled “Making Replant Decisions in Cotton” which can be found at the Lubbock Extension website <http://lubbock.tamu.edu/> They indicate optimum cotton production and harvesting efficiency is found at 25,000 to 50,000 plants per acre or 2 to 4 plants per row-foot on 30 to 40 row spacings. Field test have shown that acceptable yields can occur with stands at 13,000 to 26,000 plants per acre or 1 to 2 per row foot when plants are fairly uniformly spaced. In most cases we like to see

stands above 20,000 plants per acre (1.5 plants ft.) when irrigated production is considered.

For cotton replant decisions we are past June 5 deadline for Hale County and May 31 deadline for Swisher, so we should look at other alternative crops if the decision to replant is made. Crops normally considered are sorghum, sunflower, soybean, corn and forages. When deciding what crop to replant, herbicides used this year and in 2006 can impact which replacement crop is selected. If Staple® was used in 2006 then sorghum cannot be planted. If Staple® was used this season then replant options are very limited. STS ® soybeans may be planted, but seed may need to be shipped into the area.

Water resources should also be considered before replant decisions are made. Sorghum and sunflower can be grown with limited irrigation, while corn and soybean are much more water demanding.

Thrips infestations are highly variable. The seed treatments and in-furrow applications have worked well this year, but as residual activity of the insecticide diminishes one will need to scout for thrips infestations. Growers often combine glyphosate applications with a foliar thrips treatment. Foliar insecticides commonly used have been acephate, dicrotophos (Bidrin®) and dimethaoate. Economic treatment levels for thrips can vary depending on cotton growth stage, growing conditions and potential for continued migrations into a cotton field. A general treatment level is when thrips average 1

thrip per true leaf. Decisions should be influenced by amount of leave damage, leaf damage already sustained by blowing sand or disease and if damage to the terminal is occurring from thrips feeding.

Cotton aphids have been observed in several area cotton fields. So far populations are not widely distributed, but this is a pest for which we will keep our guard up. False chinch bugs and salt cedar marsh caterpillar have been reported in some areas moving from pasture or wheat into fields. So far no major damage has been reported.

A large amount of our cotton acres were planted to Roundup Ready Flex® varieties. With the increase in corn and sorghum planting we will need to be much more cautious about wind direction and speed when applying glyphosate. Corn and sorghum are very susceptible to glyphosate drift. We have observed glyphosate drift onto corn up to two miles away when the product was applied by aerial application. Drift from ground rig applications has generally been only 25 to 50 yards into adjacent fields, but if this is a neighbors crop then we have a problem.

CORN

Most corn is now knee high to waist high in the mid-whorl stage. The cool temperature and consistent rainfall in May has been excellent for corn growth. Fields planted adjacent to wheat need to be watched for potential mite infestations along field margins. Beneficial populations have been excellent in area corn fields with pirate bug adults and convergent lady beetles abundant. Very little corn earworm or fall armyworm feeding has been observed in the whorl. Beneficials may be holding these infestations in check. Common rust has been observed in many corn fields, but most of the pustules have been confined to the lower leaves on the plant. Hot dry weather can stop the spread of this foliage disease.

WHEAT



Thrips adult

The wheat crop ranges from ready to harvest to fields that are still green. Overall the crop looks like it has a very good yield potential, even in the dryland production areas. In most cases the freeze injury was not as bad as we thought it could be and very little evidence of injury can be found. As wheat continues to dry down, thrips will move from this crop to the cotton. Cotton located in close proximity to wheat will probably have higher infestation levels. Also wheat dries down we can expect to see Banks grass mite movement into corn and sorghum.

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The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Court of Texas Cooperation

We will seek to provide reasonable accommodations for all person with disabilities for any of our meetings. We request that you contact Texas Cooperative Extension (806)291-5270, as soon as possible to advise us of the auxiliary aid or service that you will require.

Greg Cronholm

Extension Agent - IPM

225 Broadway Suite 6

Plainview, Texas 79072

806/291-5274

g-cronholm@ag.tamu.edu

www.tpma.org (TPMA website)

<http://hale-tx.tamu.edu> (Hale County website)

