

Pest Management News *Improving Lives. Improving Texas.*  
News About integrated pest management for  
producers in Runnels-Tom Green Counties

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A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL WHO SPONSORED THE 2008 RUNNELS/TOM GREEN COTTON TOURS!

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<b>Delta Pine &amp; Land Co.</b>	<b>Norton Gin Co.</b>	<b>Central Tx Farm Credit, ACA</b>
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<b>Western Ag Chemical</b>	<b>Haechten Crop Ins. Agency</b>	<b>Roger Bryan Insurance</b>
<b>Porter Henderson Imp. Co.</b>	<b>Southern Rolling Plains Cotton Growers Association</b>	

We appreciate everything you all have done to help us make our crop tours and our demonstrations successful. We look forward to working with you next year.

## GENERAL SITUATION

Cotton has really progressed the past several weeks with the clear open weather we have been experiencing throughout the Concho Valley. Dryland cotton harvest has begun and reported yields range from ½ to one bale to the acre. Much of the dryland cotton is 85 to 90 percent open and ready for a harvest-aid application. It has been somewhat challenging this year trying to prepare this crop for harvest. Regrowth issues have made it challenging. In most dryland cotton fields, the Gramoxone Inteon plus a PPO inhibitor such as Aim®, ET® or Blizzard has looked the best. We currently have a harvest-aid evaluation established on a drip irrigated cotton field planted to FM 9180 B2F. There are twenty different combinations in this evaluation. Results will be in the next newsletter.

A number of growers have asked about the increased amount of red and purple color in the cotton leaves. Many of these leaves are going into premature senescence. This is a result of four days of solid cloud cover from several weeks ago. The plants survival mechanism resulted in the breakdown of chlorophyll in the plant leaves. This results in reduced efficiency of sunlight and extends the boll maturity period. There is nothing a producer can do about this situation.

**Cotton Aphids.** Cotton aphid populations have built up to fairly high levels in some cotton fields. Some possible reasons for this significant increase in populations is: 1) reproduction occurs best at 68°to 77°F; 2) populations tend to increase when moisture conditions are good; and 3) cotton aphids require Nitrogen (N) for reproduction and cotton fields which have high populations of aphids at this time probably are those fields which have some re-growth, residual N left in the soil profile and adequate soil moisture levels. Biological control is poor late season because lady beetles become scarce and are generally replaced with lacewings. The problem with lacewings is not the fact they are good predators of aphids; it is the fact that lacewing survivorship is low in most cases due to other predators preying on the lacewings. Many times the aphid fungus (NEOZYGITES FRESENI) will appear in late August and wipe out the aphid infestations but it didn't happen this year.

The big issue with cotton aphids late in the season is the honeydew excreted by the aphids. The honeydew drops on fibers of open bolls. A black, sooty fungus can develop on the honeydew deposits during wet periods. It's warm and dry right now, that's good. But fiber can become stained, sticky resulting in a difficult harvest and ginning. If your cotton field is near defoliation (65 to 80% open), I would do nothing. The honeydew is already present and your dropping the leaves soon. If you are not in this situation, then the recommended threshold is used.

Aphid Action Threshold	
Cotton Stage	Action Threshold
Prior to First Cracked Boll	50 aphids per leaf
After First Cracked Boll	10 aphids per leaf

**Armyworm Alert.** Scattered outbreaks of fall armyworms have been reported infesting bermuda grass pastures, wheat and lawns. The fall armyworm is often abundant during August through early November in our area. When present in large numbers, caterpillars can consume a pasture, crop or lawn in a short period of time. Much of the following are excerpts from an Armyworm *FactSheet* produced by Dr. Allen Knutson, Extension Entomologist.

**Eggs.** Eggs are laid in masses of up to 50 eggs on the grass leaves and are difficult to find. The eggs are covered with grey scales from the moths body, giving the egg mass a fuzzy appearance. Eggs hatch in 2-3 days.

**Caterpillar.** Fall armyworms are green, brown or black. A distinct white line between the eyes forms an inverted Y pattern on the face. There are four black spots aligned in a square on the top of the 8<sup>th</sup> segment near the back end of the caterpillar. Larvae feed for 2-3 weeks and full grown larvae reach about 1 to 1.5 inches long. Armyworms consume 80% of their total food intake during the last few days of development.

**Management.** It is important to detect armyworm infestations early before they cause economic damage. Fall armyworm larvae feed primarily during the night and during cloudy weather. During the day, look for armyworms under loose soil and fallen leaves on the ground. The presence of chewed leaves can indicate the presence of armyworms. Small larvae chew the green layer from the leaves and leave a clear or window pane effect and consume only a small amount of foliage. Consequently, infestations may go unnoticed unless the field is closely inspected. Once the larvae are greater than 3/4-inch, the quantity of leaves they eat increases dramatically. During the final 2-3 days of feeding, armyworms consume 80% of the total foliage consumed during their entire development. For this reason, extensive feeding damage can occur in a few days. The density of armyworms sufficient to justify insecticide treatment will depend on the stage of crop growth and value of the crop. Seedling plants can tolerate fewer armyworms than established plants.

**Labeled Insecticides for Armyworm Control in Pastures and Hayfields.** Always read and follow all label instructions on pesticide use and restrictions.

Malathion 57% and Malathion ULV.– Zero days to harvest or grazing.

Mustang Max- (9.6% zeta-cypermethrin).–The first pyrethroid insecticide labeled on pastures and hay fields. Applications may be made up to 0 days for forage and hay, 7 days for straw and seed screenings. Labeled for a large number of insect pests, including armyworms, grasshoppers.

Tracer.–Do not allow cattle to graze until spray has dried. Do not harvest hay or fodder for 3 days after treatment. There is no preharvest interval for forage. Treat when eggs hatch or when larvae are small. Use higher rates for larger larvae.

Sevin 4F, Sevin XLR, Sevin 80S, Generic Carbaryl.– When applied to pastures, there is a 14 day waiting period before grazing/harvest.

Dimilin 2L.– Wait 1 day until harvest. Label does not list a restriction on grazing. To be effective, Dimilin must be applied before larvae reach inch or longer. Will not control larger larvae. Provides residual control for up to 2-3 weeks, as long as forage is not removed from field. Dimilin acts as an insect growth regulator.

Intrepid 2F.– Do not harvest hay within 7 days of application. There is no preharvest interval for forage. Begin applications when first signs of feeding damage appear. Use higher rates for heavier infestations. Intrepid is an insect growth regulator.

Lannate.– Bermuda grass only. Do not apply within 7 days of feeding forage or allowing livestock to graze. Do not apply within 3 days of cutting for hay. Lannate is highly toxic POISON and all label precautions must be carefully followed. A restricted use pesticide.

**Labeled Insecticides for Armyworm Control in Wheat and Small Grains Include:** Baythroid, carbaryl, Lannate, Mustang Max, methyl parathion, Proxis and Tracer. Refer to label for restrictions on grazing and harvesting treated crops. Always read and follow pesticide label directions.

**Insecticides for Armyworm Control in Lawns.** Insecticide labeled in lawns and turf include: halofenozide (Mach® 2), bifenthrin (Talstar®), cyfluthrin (Tempo®, Bayer Advanced®), carbaryl (Sevin®), permethrin (multiple brands) and spinosad (Conserve® and others).

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

**2008 Delta Pine and Land Co. Field Day, Tuesday, October 7<sup>th</sup>**. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at Billy Ray Schwartz's place on FM 388 & Hohmann Rd. Following the tour, meet at St Ambrose BBQ Hall for meal.

**Texas AgriLife Extension Service** will be hosting its Master Marketer program in San Angelo, Tx starting in January 2009. The Master Marketer is an in-depth, intensive risk management education training that teaches participants how to development marketing plans, evaluate marketing alternatives, manage production and price risk and help teach the skills and discipline necessary to execute a risk management and marketing plan. The cost of the program is \$250.00. Contact Bill Thompson at (325) 653-4576 if you have any questions. More information on Master Marketer can also be found at: <http://agecoext.tamu.edu/programs/marketing/master-marketer.html>. You can also register for the program on line at: <http://AgriLifeevents.tamu.edu>.