

The Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Newsletter for Row Crops in the Lower Rio Grande Valley

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IPM Website: <http://ipm.tamu.edu>

TPMA Website: <http://tpma.org>

District 12 website:

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LRGV Cotton IPM Scouting Program

Thanks to several local and regional sponsors, the IPM scouting program is up and running. The funding for the IPM program was given in the form of donations from sponsors. Sponsors will be acknowledge throughout the season at the end of each *Pest Cast Newsletter*. The scouting program is designed to monitor a representative number of cotton fields throughout the LRGV. Growers in the IPM program have one or two fields scouted and monitored on a weekly bases to gain knowledge of pest and beneficial populations as well as crop stage and development. Approximately 4700 acres of cotton will be part of the scouting program. Additionally, three cotton variety trials (one per county) will provide valuable comparisons between transgenic and conventional varieties currently on the market. I look forward to another year as your IPM agent.

General Situation

Planting was generally delayed this year, due to the lack of soil moisture and cooler temperatures during the month of February. A majority of the valley has received no relief from the drought conditions. The dryland fields have no stand to a poor stand, with the exception of eastern Willacy and Cameron Counties and a few spots that have received rain showers. A windy March has lead to blown out sections in both dryland and irrigated cotton and grain sorghum fields throughout the valley. Several of these fields have or will be replanted. The remaining irrigated cotton is up and looking good. Growth stages of cotton range from not out of the ground to seven true leaf.

Several fields have begun to square and others will reach squaring in the next week or two. On average, it takes 517 heat units from the time of plant emergence to the 1st square. Heat units are accumulating rapidly due to the warm days and nights.

Thrips

Harvesting of mature onion fields has brought about the yearly dispersion of thrips. Thrips damaged has been observed in fields in the lower mid valley. As the onions continue to try out, thrips will continue to migrate into a new food source. Cotton fields around onion fields should be scouted every three to four days. Thrips populations can increase rapidly within a few days if there is a abundant source nearby. Treatment is suggested when the number of thrips averages 1 or more per true leaf. Band applications can reduce your insecticide costs.

Boll Weevil

Boll weevil trap captures have been low. However, cotton fields should be scouted for weevil activity. If weevils are noticed and the field has a history of heavy weevil infestation, early-season control applications may be economically feasible. The first application should be applied no earlier than 1/4 grown-squares.

Spider Mites

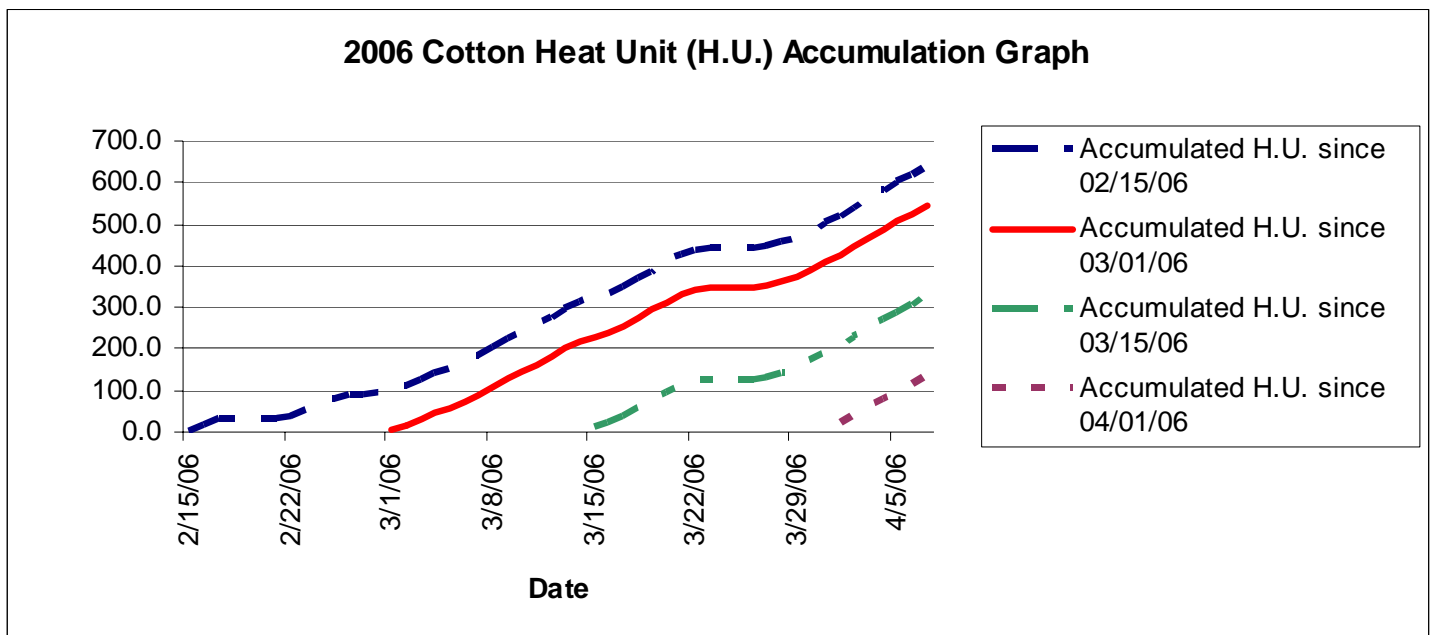
Low spider mite populations have been observed in dryland fields. These infestations have only been observed in portions of the field. Spot insecticide treatments will save you money and give beneficial insects a refuge to survive in.

Cotton Aphids

Aphids populations in Cameron County were observed this week. At least two fields have reached threshold levels and had very little beneficial activity.

Publications

Copies of the Texas Cooperative Extension E-7 “Managing Cotton Insects in the Lower Rio Grande Valley 2006” <http://tcebookstore.org/tmppdfs/5869506-25.pdf> and E-7A “Suggested Insecticides for Managing Cotton Insects in the Lower Rio Grande Valley 2006” <http://tcebookstore.org/tmppdfs/5869506-638.pdf>. New to the 2006 publication, the insecticides list in the publication are classified according to their mode of action. This will make it easier for growers and consultants to determine different modes of action among insecticides. To avoid insecticide resistance, growers should rotate between insecticides with different modes of action.



If you would like to become a regular recipient of the Pest Cast Newsletter, please call 956.968.5581 or email mgcattaneo@ag.tamu.edu.

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