



“Rio Blanco” Integrated Pest Management Update

Vital Crop Production Information for **Crosby** and **Floyd** Counties

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☛ This newsletter was supposed to have been issued last week, but due to storms wreaking havoc on power lines in our area, electronic media was put on hold for a few days.

☛ **Cotton planting** conditions in Crosby and Floyd Counties have improved, at least with emphasis on soil and air temps. Latest heat unit accumulations are **160** total through May 15, 2005, with the same time frame last year yielding approximately double that number at **317** heat units accumulated. Heat unit accumulations historically begin around March 15th in our area each year. March of 2004 yielded a total of **68** Heat Units with March of 2005 totaling only **0.05**. We have some ‘catching up’ to do.

☛ Rainfall amounts accompanying last week’s storms have been very beneficial for most cotton producers who were beginning to become impatient with the general lack of soil moisture after field preparation practices and eliminating the large number of winter weeds that flourished following 2004’s record rainfall. There have been reports of rainfall amounts of ½ inch in southern Crosby County to upwards of 15 inches from northern Floyd County on the Briscoe County line.

☛ From Dr. Chris Sansone, Texas A&M University: [Monsanto Announcement for Minor Changes in Spraying Cotton Refuges](#). On Monday, May 9th, the EPA approved changes to refuge requirements for Bollgard and Bollgard II cotton. These changes will allow insecticidal sprays on the 5 percent refuge in both the embedded and external 95/5 cotton refuge options for control of Lepidoptera, but only through the pre-

squaring stage of development. These IRM changes are good news for producers and crop advisors who have been seeking options to effectively manage the increased infestations of cabbage loopers that threaten the stand in young cotton planted for refuge this year. The new IRM requirements will give cotton producers options for managing these lepidopteran populations in refuges, while continuing to maintain the effectiveness of the 5% refuge. The timing of application of the insecticidal sprays is limited to the pre-squaring stage of development of the cotton because the plant is not considered to be a significant host for the cotton bollworm, tobacco budworm, or pink bollworm at this stage. Therefore, the application of the foliar spray will not impact these insect populations, thus managing the potential for resistance development as originally designed in the stewardship plan. These changes by the EPA are supplemental to the 2005 Bollgard and Bollgard II Insect Resistance Management (IRM) Guide and Technology Use Guide (TUG). All other practices in these 2005 guides must be followed as indicated, including the guidelines for the 20% Sprayed Refuge option which remains unchanged. Producers should consult their crop advisors for specific recommendations and implementation plans for their individual cotton operations. **This ruling will most likely not affect Crosby and Floyd Counties as we seldom see cabbage looper numbers sufficient to cause significant leaf loss in local fields**, however, growers need to maintain vigil for this pest.

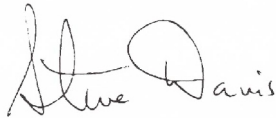
☛ Speaking of **cabbage loopers**, a large

number of the “inch worms” have been found in borrow ditches and CRP acreage lately as sweep net samples have been run for grasshoppers.

• **Very few grasshopper** nymphs have been captured in CRP, but most seem to be in borrow ditches and lake beds that contain rye grass and other cool season weeds.

• **Thrips** are on the move out of ditch banks where rye grass and wheat are currently maturing and drying down. Producers who have cotton just emerging this week should be aware of this potential problem.

• **Beneficial predator** insects, such as Lady beetles, Green Lacewings, Nabid bugs, and several species of spiders have been sampled in sweep nets in most weedy environments in the last month. This is a positive note from the ‘bug world’ as they will undoubtedly follow thrips and other small food sources into adjacent cotton fields when the weeds dry down.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Steve Davis".

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