
Gaines County Cotton/Peanut News

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Contents

- I. General Situation
- II. What's happening in the Cotton
- III. What we are seeing in Peanut
- IV. Field Day
- V. Acknowledgements

General Situation

The cotton crop is progressing rapidly due to the hot dry weather we have experienced the last two weeks. Early planted cotton ranges from first bloom to quarter size bolls with later planted cotton at 1/3 grown square stage to first bloom. Overall the cotton crop looks very good with square sets

averaging above 85% and in some cases 95%+. With the high temperatures and no sign of rain irrigation will become a major factor. During this time (blooming) irrigation is essential for maintaining a good fruit load. If this dry, hot pattern continues expect fruit shed due to heat stress. During this time in the season fields need to be scouted thoroughly and carefully inspected as many

insect pests will begin to show up and establish themselves in local fields. The only way to determine if you are having insect problems is to be in the field monitoring.

Beneficial numbers in both cotton and peanut fields are at fair to good levels. We have seen a decrease in the numbers lately due to the fact that the food source is not there. Lady beetle adults, big eyed bugs, assassin bugs, and spiders are a few of the beneficials we are seeing. A handout on identification of beneficial insects can be obtained through our office.

Peanut are continuing to peg and are making excellent progress. Monitoring the peanut crop for both insect and disease problems should be underway because it is this time of the season when we tend to see problems start to show up.

What's Happening in the Cotton

Fleahopper:

Cotton is in the squaring stage in some areas of the county and monitoring for fleahoppers is still critical. We are continuing to find between 5-20 fleahoppers per 100 terminals in these fields with percent square set ranging from 80-97%. Adult fleahoppers are about 1/8 inch long and pale green. Nymphs resemble adults but lack wings and are light green, and they both move very rapidly when disturbed. Fleahoppers attach and damage small squares and terminals. Pinhead size and smaller squares are most susceptible to damage. **Starting with the third week of squaring up to first bloom, the economic threshold is 25 to 30 cotton fleahoppers per 100 terminals combined with less than 75 percent square set.** Scout your fields carefully for this pest and base treatments on actual populations and not just square damage.

Fields that are more mature (blooming) are not at such high risk for damage. The point of first bloom on, fleahoppers can be considered beneficials as they will act as food for other predators or feed on other insect pests.

Lygus:

Lygus numbers continue to be low in most program fields, however in a few fields we have seen numbers beginning to rise (1-2 per row ft.) with both

adults and nymphs present. This insect is difficult to detect, therefore it is very important to frequently monitor your field. *Lygus* will continue to be a pest as they can damage **squares** of all stages and young **bolts** that have accumulated less than 350 heat units. Reliable methods for detecting *Lygus* are the use of a beat bucket or drop cloth as visually sampling may be difficult due to the fact that *Lygus* move quickly when disturbed. **In the third week of squaring, the economic threshold is 1 lygus bug adult or nymph per three feet of row combined with less than 75 percent square set. After the third week of squaring, the economic threshold is 2 lygus bug adults or nymphs per three feet of row with less than acceptable fruit retention.**

Cotton Bollworm:

Egg lays were low the past two weeks, with numbers ranging per acre from 100 to 1,500. Percent damaged squares were between 2-8% with very few worms detected in program fields. These populations are well below economic threshold.

***When small worms are in the upper part of the plant they are most vulnerable to control by insecticides and predators.**

Before cotton blooms, treatment may be warranted where 15 to 25 percent of the green squares examined are worm damaged and small worms are present. After bolls are present treatment may be justified when counts average 5,000 or more small worms per acre. However if two or more key predators are present for each small worm control measures may not be needed.

Cotton Aphid:

Populations are beginning to be found in a number of program fields, however treatable levels have yet to be reached. Aphids at this time of year can affect yield by reducing boll size. Therefore, it is critical to protect the crop from high aphid populations during the boll filling period. **So remember, that treatments should be initiated when the field averages 50 aphids per leaf and if the population is continuing to climb.**

Pink Bollworm:

The following table depicts numbers of pink bollworm captured per week. Traps were set on April 15 and there were no moths captured on the 22nd of April. Locations of the traps are as follows in each section of Gaines County.

A: NW	B: N	C: NE
D: SW	E: S	F: SE

Trap	4/29	5/7	5/14	5/20	5/27	6/3	6/8	6/15	6/22	6/29	7/6	7/13
A1	0	2	3	10	135	89	3	4	7	7	7	13
A2	3	1	36	20	93	138	8	55	47	121	53	64
B1	0	0	12	18	30	11	5	13	10	15	13	12
B2	0	0	16	8	71	43	0	3	2	5	3	5
C	1	2	3	4	68	21	5	27	27	15	19	16
D	1	18	106	26	125	135	6	13	83	114	18	30
E	2	1	12	12	103	95	4	12	6	29	12	14
F	0	1	10	21	*	52	1	23	11	28	13	21
Total	7	25	198	117	629	504	31	150	193	334	138	175

Disease:

For information on early leaf spot refer to the previous newsletter or contact the office.

Rhizoctonia solani: The peanut plant is susceptible to *Rhizoctonia solani* from planting to harvest. The fungus is responsible for rotting pods and any of the above ground portions of the plant in close proximity of the soil. Symptoms appear as lesions usually

beginning on the lower branches in contact with the soil. The lesions are small and light to dark brown in color with a distinct target pattern. These lesions may extend inward to crown of the plant. Additional lesions may form on the stems either from direct infections or from fungal growth up infected pegs or leaves. Pods formed on the outer limbs are more likely to rot or be shed at harvest. The pathogen may also damage the

primary crop.

*note control measures should be taken as **preventative** and not as a **rescue**. For more information on this disease and others please call my office



Pink Bollworm Larvae

Pink Bollworm Adult

Rosetted blooms should be monitored for pink bollworm larvae at this time. This will not tell you if a treatment is necessary but will let you know you have activity and need to cut bolls as they mature.

Copies of Texas Cooperative Extension cotton guides *Managing Insects in Cotton* as well as *Suggested Cotton Insecticides* are available in the office or can be e-mailed. If interested call the office or e-mail your request to amcranmer@ag.tamu.edu

What We are Seeing in Peanut

Field Day

A Peanut field day will be held on July 22nd. Registration will begin at 8:30 in the Gaines County Civic Building with the meeting lasting from 9:00 – 12:00 and lunch from 12:00- 1:00.

Acknowledgements

Funding for the IPM program is provided by donations from local agribusinesses. About \$15,000 dollars per year is required to run the program with money going towards postage, travel, and wages for scouts. We are still in need of funding so if you know someone you think would be interested in donating please contact them or call our office so we might be able to.

The IPM staff would like to thank these businesses that donated to the program and

encourage producers to support their business as they have supported the producers.

names are made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by Texas Cooperative Extension is implied.

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Central Gaines County 7/12



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