
Gaines County Cotton/Peanut News

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General Situation

The weekend produced an official rainfall amount of 1.9 inches with reports from individual contacts ranging from 1-4 inches across the county. The rain is a blessing and will help relieve some of the stress on the crops. First bloom to peak bloom is the most critical time for cotton when looking at

moisture, and for recent rains to come at this time is perfect.

The peanuts will also greatly benefit from this much needed moisture. One thing to keep in mind when discussing peanuts, rainfall, and cooler temperatures is **SCLEROTINIA BLIGHT (SCB)**.

Conditions are ideal for this pathogen to thrive (further discussion in peanut section).

Cotton ranges in development from first bloom to the 5th week of blooming. Some area fields that have not had sufficient moisture have entered cutout with others that have had moisture holding at 7-9 nodes above white flower (NAWF) with excellent yield potential, especially with the recent rainfall. It is still very important to be out in the fields scouting for problems at this time of the year. The only way to determine if you are having insect problems is to be in the field monitoring the situation.

Beneficial insect numbers in both cotton and peanut fields are maintaining at low to fair levels. We continue to see a decrease in their numbers due to the fact that a food source is not abundant. Lady beetle (LB) adults, LB larvae, bigeyed bugs, minute pirate bugs, and spiders are a few of the beneficial insects that we have observed over the past week and a half. A handout on identification of beneficial insects can be obtained through our office.

Peanut is continuing to make excellent progress. Formed pods are visible in most all fields with continued pegging and good nodulation. Monitoring the peanut crop for insect and especially disease problems should be underway and at full speed. Due to the weather that has set in over the area, disease problems are likely to expand.

What's Happening in the Cotton

Fleahopper:

Most cotton in the area is out of harms way when referring to fleahoppers. In more mature cotton, fleahoppers are considered food for predators or predators themselves ("beneficials"), and should be treated as such. In younger cotton, pre-bloom, first bloom or in cotton that has gotten off to a slow start, they can still cause damage. If more information is needed please contact the office.

Lygus:

Lygus numbers continue to be low in all program fields with numbers falling below 1 per 10 row feet in fields with the highest levels. However with that said, *Lygus* can still be a pest as they can move from alternate hosts and 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. However, while the beat bucket is very good at capturing adults, it would appear that nymphs are not represented well. **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.** These thresholds are based on the drop cloth sampling method.

Cotton Bollworm:

Egg lays continue to be low in program fields, with numbers ranging from 800 to 1,700 per acre. Reports from across the county tend to be similar with a slight increase over the past couple of weeks. Percent damaged squares were between 0-6% with very few worms detected in program fields, all of which were less than 2 days old. 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.

After bolls are present treatment may be justified when counts average 5,000 or more **small worms** per acre. Once you get more proficient at finding small worms, the treatment threshold should be raised. Also, if numbers are not at threshold levels but are relatively close and have been constant over a period of time treatment will be justified (don't let them pick you apart over a period of time). However, if two or more key predators are present for each small worm control measures may not be needed.

Cotton Aphid:

Populations continue to be found in a number of program fields (less than 5 per leaf), at levels still well below economic threshold. 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	7/19	7/27
A1	0	2	3	10	135	89	3	4	7	7	7	13	8	14
A2	3	1	36	20	93	138	8	55	47	121	53	64	184	57
B1	0	0	12	18	30	11	5	13	10	15	13	12	36	14
B2	0	0	16	8	71	43	0	3	2	5	3	5	4	9
C	1	2	3	4	68	21	5	27	27	15	19	16	31	41
D	1	18	106	26	125	135	6	13	83	114	18	30	252	123
E	2	1	12	12	103	95	4	12	6	29	12	14	23	11
F	0	1	10	21	*	52	1	23	11	28	13	21	28	32
Total	7	25	198	117	629	504	31	150	193	334	138	175	566	301

for this pest. Newly infested bolls have a small clear bump or wart on the inside of the bur wall at the site where the larva entered the boll. The developing lint surrounding the wart is depressed or sunken in to accommodate the wart. The tiny, threadlike white worm can be found in the depressed area. The black head and movement of the larvae will make them easier to spot. Sampling bolls this size indicates the current status of the infestations. Bolls which have been infested for several days are much larger, fecal material is easily seen, and the feeding damage is more extensive.

Wide swathing with an airplane at night has been a successful application method.

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

Diseases:

For information on these or any other peanut problem contact the office and I will be happy to assist you.

Rhizoctonia solani: has been detected in program fields at low percentages. Most producers put out a fungicide early which has been extremely beneficial. The peanut plant is susceptible to *Rhizoctonia solani* from planting to harvest. 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



PBW Larvae Damage Pink Bollworm Larvae

Rosetted blooms should be monitored for pink bollworm (PBW) 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. **The economic threshold for PBW is 10-15% infested bolls.** The only sure way to find out what level of infestation you have is by cutting bolls and looking for **PBW** entries and larvae. To sample for **PBW** you need to collect and examine 40 to 50 small bolls per field. Bolls about the size of a quarter should be pulled from the plant and carefully cut and examined

limbs are more likely to rot or be shed at harvest. The pathogen may also damage the primary crop.

Sclerotinia Blight (SCB): has been reported in peanut fields in Gaines County in the last few weeks, and with the rain it has the potential to flourish. The fungus grows most rapidly at 26 degree C (79 degrees F). Sclerotia are produced most rapidly at 22 degrees C (72 degrees F) on all plant parts, in soil, and inside limb and pod tissue. Although this disease is not as widespread as some of the others it has been on the increase in this county over the past few years. You need to be aware of its potential as a serious plant pathogen and the devastation it can cause. If you are aware of this problem in one of your fields, you need to hinder its ability to move into your other fields. This can be accomplished by good sanitation practices. If you enter or use a tool (shovel, your shoes, implements) in one of these fields, clean them before moving on. This can greatly reduce the spread and problems you could face. I have access to information on the status, biology, damage, research and management strategies for **SCB** and publications for those who are interested.

Early Leafspot: recent weather could result in problems for area crops particularly in unrotated fields. Furthermore, leafspot in combination with the pod rotting fungi such as *Rhizoctonia* or *Pythium*, which is currently being found at low levels in some fields, could prove to be a problem.

Control measures should be taken as a preventative and not as a rescue.

*For more information on this disease and others please call my office or go online at:

<http://stephenville.tamu.edu/~clee/pdncr/>

This is an excellent site!

Insects:

Spider Mites: The rain should have reduced populations of this pest, however eggs usually go unaffected and upper canopy leaves shelter at least some mites. Chemical control should be considered only when lower canopy defoliation is taking place or appreciable populations are present.

Upcoming Events

A Later Season Cotton Marketing Workshop will be held at the A&M Center in Lubbock on **August 23 from 3:00-7:30**. To register contact Wendy Durrett at 806-746-6101, registration fee is \$15 payable at the door.

Stocker Cattle Meeting – **Aug 17 10:30-3:00**
Gaines County Ag Tour – **August 23**
Sheep Goat Production Meeting -**August 30**
Tillage Meeting in Morton - **Sept 9**
Western Peanut Growers Farm Tour-**Sept 15**
Ag and Oil Day – **Sept 16**

Fun Fact

There are enough peanuts in one acre to make 30,000 peanut butter sandwiches.

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.

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Central Gaines County 7/27

