

Plains Pest Management Newsletter

News About Integrated Pest Management in Hale & Swisher Counties

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COTTON

Cotton ranges from early squaring to ½ grown squares in fields we have inspected this past week. A few blooms have been reported from the Petersburg area. Thunderstorms have moved over the Hale and Swisher Co. area on July 6, 7 and 8. High winds and hail were associated with storms on July 6 and 7. Severe hail damage was observed west and southwest of Cotton Center. Moderate to severe hail damage was found about 8 miles northeast of Plainview.

Cotton can recover from total defoliation this time of year if enough terminals are intact. The severity of stem damage will also influence whether or not a plant can recover. If the terminal is still intact the plant starts squaring and producing leaves fairly quickly after the damaging hail. If the terminal is knocked out it will take much longer for the plant to recover, since it will have to initiate a new terminal from one of the main stem nodes. The amount of stalk damage is a major factor on whether or not a plant will be able to recover. If the hail damages the stalk to the extent that it is girdled, the plant will usually die. If only a few bruises or damaged areas are found on the stalk then the plant may recover and become productive. Any damage the 1st week of July can result in significant delay in maturity which will result in reduced yield. In the past, severe hail damage in early July has resulted in substantial yield reductions. A number of years ago a field in the Edmonson area which was striped of leaves and fruit around July 10 had a 400 to 500 lb/a yield at the end of the season. This was about a 50% yield reduction compared to other fields in the area. When it comes to hail damage, there are so

many variables that it is often difficult to predict if a field will be a near total loss or if it will recover and produce a decent crop.

Cotton fleahopper infestations have increased in some fields and remained the same in others. Some fields have had many newly hatched nymphs this week and in others no fleahoppers can be found. Counts have ranged from 0 to 23 per 10 plants. In a few fields square sets have fallen to as low as 64%. The majority of fields are still in the 85 to 95% range for square set. In fields with low percent square set, some of the losses occurred earlier from high winds and blowing sand. The fleahoppers have caused additional square losses resulting in these fields falling below acceptable square sets. Fleahoppers are relatively easy to control and products such as Acephate (Orthene or Address), Bidrin, Trimax, Centric and Intruder can be highly effective. If Lygus are part of the plant bug mix then higher rates will have to be used for a number of these products. This past week Lygus numbers are very low as compared to the fleahopper counts.

Beneficials continue to be excellent. Some fields have almost one spider per plant. I have observed a number of crab spiders this past week with a cotton fleahopper in its clutches. Nabids (damsel bugs) are on the increase along with big eyed bugs and pirate bugs. Hooded beetles are also abundant, but I am not sure if they should be considered a key predator.

A few cotton bollworms have been observed in area cotton, but damage remains very light. Cabbage loopers and beet armyworms have almost been non-existent based on field sampling.

SORGHUM

Early planted fields have been blooming for about a week now. So far no sorghum midge have been observed in fields inspected.

SUNFLOWER

Sunflowers have also been in full bloom this past week. Growers should continue to scout for the presence of sunflower moths until bloom is complete.

CORN

Corn is in the silk/tassel stage to brown silk stage. Spider mites remain very light. The continued rainfall has prevented stress in corn and delayed any potential mite threat.

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☆☆☆ UPCOMING EVENT ☆☆☆

Plant Health Clinic

JULY 13, 2005

Plainview Chamber of Commerce

710 West 5th

Plainview, Texas

9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m

Dr. Harold Kaufman and myself will be available at the Plainview Chamber of Commerce on July 13 to assist area homeowners with the identification of ornamental & lawn plant diseases and insect pests from 9 to 10:00 a.m. After this we will visit residences in Plainview for 30 minutes each to assist them with plant problems. If you are interested in having Dr. Kaufman visit your home please call our office at 291-5274 to get on the schedule. We will make visits from 10:30 to 4:00 p.m.

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