

Plains Pest Management Newsletter

News About Integrated Pest Management in Hale & Swisher Counties

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COTTON

Many fields are now in the early bloom stage, with a few in the second week of bloom. About 25 percent of the fields inspected recently have not yet entered the bloom stage. With the hot dry weather, irrigation demands have increased. To keep up, growers will need to apply 1.5 to 2 inches per week for maximum production potential. A number of fields have been treated with mepiquat type plant growth regulators. This product is used to control plant growth and has been effectively used on picker type cottons that tend to be very growthy. In our area these products have not been shown to increase yield. Boll formation and hot temperatures can also control plant growth in fields, especially in our stripper type cottons where irrigation is limited.

Cotton bollworm counts have increased over the past week in area cotton fields. Egg and small larvae counts have ranged from 0 to 8,000 per acre. Trap collections of moths has increased this past week, which means we could see additional egg lays in cotton. The following is a summary of cotton bollworm trap collections.

	June 23	June 29	July 11	July 19
Av. No. Moths/ Night	9.4	19.6	19.1	79.8

The 79.8 moths per night brings us to over 550 moths per week average. This is enough of a population to have significant egg lays. Key beneficial counts remain high and in most fields inspected the beneficials should be able to maintain

bollworms below economic thresholds. In many fields when damaged fruit is found the beneficials have already eliminated the bollworm larva. It has not been uncommon to find 30,000 to 50,000 key predators per acre. With these numbers, bollworms and beet armyworms will have a hard time establishing. Fields treated for plant bugs (cotton fleahopper & Lygus) may have as many beneficials and should be watched closely for bollworm survival rates.

Cotton fleahoppers and Lygus bugs continue to be found in area fields. Fleahoppers have declined slightly and Lygus have gradually increased. At this time square retention is acceptable, with most of the fruit loss observed, occurring in previous weeks. As we move into the early boll period Lygus populations need to be watched closely and if they exceed an average of 2 per 3 row feet in blooming cotton, control may be justified.

Cotton aphids and beet armyworms are still present in many fields and may become a problem if a field is treated for bollworms or Lygus bugs, when beneficials have been eliminated.

CORN

Southwestern corn borer trap collections increased in the Cotton Center area this past week. The following is a summary of trap collections for Cotton Center.

	July 13	July 19	July 21
Av. No. Moths/ Night	1.45	7.2	153.2

SORGHUM

The Edmonson/Kress area tends to run 5 to 7 days later than the Cotton Center area.

With this big jump in moths we also saw an increase in egg lays. See last weeks newsletter for description of eggs and leaves to be scouted for eggs. The economic threshold for this pest is when 20 to 25% of the plants are infested with eggs and small larvae.

Fall armyworms have also been observed in corn. Third instar larvae have been found behind leaf collars and feeding on secondary ears. Larvae can be very damaging to the primary ear. Many of the insecticides used for southwestern corn borer control can also control fall armyworm. Bt corn can suppress this pest. Ask your seed company representative about how effectively your Bt corn hybrid is for control of this pest.

Pyrethroids have commonly been used for southwestern corn borer control. These include Asana XL®, Warrior®, Ambush®, Pounce® and Baythroid®. Intrepid®, an IGR, has also been effective and has the added advantage of low impact on beneficials. This can be important when mites are present.

Banks grass mites have continued to increase over the past week in area corn fields. Damage ranges from very light to moderate. A few fields are nearing economic threshold, but beneficials may turn them back. Lacewing larvae have been very effective in cleaning up colonies. Pirate bugs and cecidomyiid larvae have been common. In some cases mite damage is visible but eggs and mites are not present.

SUNFLOWERS

Late planted sunflowers are near bloom and should be scouted for the presence of sunflower moths. If present, initiate first application at 20% bloom. Remember most sunflower hybrids go from 5% bloom to 20% bloom in one day. Depending on moth flights a field may need 2 or 3 applications for protection.

Sorghum entering bloom now should be scouted daily for sorghum midge populations. The best time to scout is from noon to 2 p.m. or when morning temperatures reach 85EF.

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