

Plains Pest Management Newsletter

News About Integrated Pest Management in Hale & Swisher Counties

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COTTON

Rain has continued to fall over the area the past six days and is expected to continue with the recent cold front that moved through the area on Tuesday night. Rainfall in my backyard gage had the following totals: Friday morning August 7 - 1.65 inches, Saturday morning August 8 - 0.25 inches, Wednesday morning August 12 - 0.60 inches for a total of 2.5 inches. I have not been in a cotton field on Monday through Wednesday that I would not consider to have adequate moisture. In some fields you may sink 4 to 6 inches in the mud as you are walking through them. Many more cotton fields are entering cut out with 1 to 3 nodes above white bloom reported. Well irrigated fields have remained at 5 nodes above white bloom and a few are at 7 nodes above white bloom. Many cotton fields continue to be treated with plant growth regulators (PGR's), especially where rainfall has been abundant. Fields in "cut out" are probably past the stage of using PGR's for regulating growth.

Cotton bollworm infestations remain very spotty, but egg lays have increased since last Thursday. Egg counts have ranged from 0 to 14,000 per acre, with typical average of around 3,500 eggs per acre. Bollworm larval counts have ranged from 0 to 4,500 per acre with typical counts of 1,100 to 2,700 per acre. Bollworm damaged bolls have been very low; generally less than 1% of the bolls observed. I thought we would have high populations by this point in time, but temperatures have been much cooler than normal and the soils have remained

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moist for over three weeks which could slow emergence profile and shift it later in August. So far beneficials (although lighter than normal) have helped pacify bollworm egg lays in cotton which have occurred the past 5 weeks. **Pirate bug** populations have been on the increase, with many late instar nymphs observed. The Pirate bugs are excellent predators of bollworm eggs and small larvae.

At this point in the season we typically use an economic threshold of 8,000 to 10,000 larvae per acre. As square and small boll densities decline (cut out) treatment thresholds may be elevated to 10,000 to 12,000 larvae per acre and the majority these larvae should exceed 1/4 inch.

Lygus bugs can be found in most cotton and some of the small boll shed has been due to this pest. Feeding damage (black spots) continues to be observed on some of the bolls inspected.

Cotton aphids can still be found in every cotton field if enough observations are taken. So far **lady beetles** and **green lacewing** larvae have kept populations in check. With the very low numbers in most fields I am not sure if pyrethroid applications for cotton bollworms will create an outbreak. If aphids average 5 per leaf or more it would be a good idea to add an aphicide to the pyrethroid for suppression or control. Dr. Jim Leser, Extension, Extension Entomologist has indicated Intruder® and Centric® have provided excellent control in recent years.