

Plains Pest Management Newsletter

News About Integrated Pest Management in Hale & Swisher Counties

Greg Cronholm ★ Extension Agent - IPM ★ 122 East 6th
Plainview Texas ★
(806) 291-5274 - office (806) 292-2145 (cell) g-cronholm@tamu.edu

Vol. 31, No.10

August 20, 2003

COTTON

Many fields have now entered the “cut out” stage with 1 to 3 nodes above white bloom. This early cut out has been driven by the extremely long dry period and the above normal temperatures, less the week of cooler than normal temperature (low 80's). The water demands of the crop have been difficult to keep up with and where water is short many of the small bolls and squares have been shed from the plant.

Cotton bollworm activity remains highly variable. We have observed fields in the area which have been watered in a similar manner, to have very different bollworm larval counts. It is hard to say why one field is more attractive than another. In fields that have reached full cut out, or are approaching this stage, we continue to see some egg laying activity but very few “worms” have established. Larval counts have ranged from 0 to 20,000 per acre this week, with many fields in the 5,000 to 7,000 larvae per acre range. So far these lighter infestations have not caused any significant damage. Pyrethroids in general have been providing excellent control. In a few situations we have created an **aphid** outbreak by the use of pyrethroids for bollworm control. As these fields approach an average of 50 aphids per leaf, lady beetles are starting to re-colonizing the field indicated by clusters of bright yellow eggs on the undersurface of the leaves. Fields which had heavy aphids (50 - 100/leaf) three weeks ago have now been completely cleaned up by the **ladybeetle** populations. These fields have had very few bollworms surviving which may be due to the lady

beetles shifting from aphid consumption to bollworm eggs and small larvae. With very few aphids left to feed on in these fields they must find some other food source or leave the field. Of course the ladybeetle larvae are locked into their location until they pupate and emerge as winged adults.

Beet armyworm infestations have declined overall. Large larvae can still be found feeding in blooms and on small bolls. Populations within fields remain scattered and damage so far should not result in any significant yield loss.

Lygus bugs increased in a few area fields. In many cases the bolls that would normally be damaged by this pest are now being shed from the plant. Cotton fleahopper numbers remain high and they are of probably some benefit by feeding on small squares that have no chance to make a boll.

Beneficials are very good in fields that have not been treated. Pirate bugs, big eyed bugs, red cross beetles and nabids are relatively common.

SORGHUM

Sorghum ranges from late whorl to late soft dough stage. Blooming fields should be scouted daily for the presence of sorghum midge. In the fields observed this past week, midge populations remain very light to not detectable. This has been a pleasant surprise since midge populations in late blooming sorghum usually exceed thresholds by this point in the season.

Corn leaf aphids in the sorghum head are now being cleaned up by ladybeetle larvae. Honeydew observed on the upper leaves should cease as these populations collapse.

Greenbugs continue to increase in most area sorghum fields, with infestations ranging from very light with occasional colonies observed to fields approaching 1 leaf kill. Some fields have been observed with 5% of the greenbug colonies being parasitized by the parasitic wasp. Greenbugs which have been stung by this wasp turn tan in a few days and swell to twice the size of a normal greenbug. After the larvae of the wasp consumes the internal parts of the aphid it pupates inside. When the adult wasp emerges it cuts an exit hole on the back end of the aphid to emerge and start the life cycle over again. Once a field reaches 20% parasitism, (tan swollen aphid mummies), an insecticide treatment will be rarely justified.

As more fields move into the grain fill period, use a beat bucket to sample heads for corn earworm, fall armyworms and beet armyworms. The beat bucket is a very quick and easy way to sample for headworms.

CORN

Corn is maturing rapidly with the extensive heat we have experienced this summer. The short season, early planted corn is now ready for harvest.

Fall armyworm populations have increased in some area fields. This pest is much more damaging to the ear, than corn earworm. It can also attack ears that are in the hard dough and would generally no longer be attractive for corn earworm.

Educational programs conducted by the Texas Agricultural Extension Service serve people of all socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, handicap or national origin. The information given herein is for educational purposes only. References to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the cooperative Extension is implied



Greg Cronholm

Extension Agent - IPM

Hale & Swisher Co.

122 East 6th,

P.O. Box 680

Plainview, TX 79073-680

806-291-5273 (office)

806-292-2145 (cell)

g-cronholm@tamu.edu