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PEST CAST

The Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Newsletter for the Row Crops in the Lower Rio Grande Valley

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GENERAL SITUATION: Weeks seem to go on without much change in the weather. Some spotty rain last week turned into no rain this week. Just hot and dry. Most of the crops were progressing well. Rain on the dryland cotton crop would help, but hurt the dryland grain sorghum which has begun to be harvested. Insect pest activity was mixed, but mostly higher in number.

Some Cotton Fields at Cutout

Many fields of early planted cotton were at physiological cutout based on nodes above white flower. Many irrigated fields planted in February and early March were at 3 to 5 nodes above white flower this week. Good boll loads in the cutout fields were good indicators of why the plants were nearly finished fruit setting.

Many dryland fields, most early and many later planted fields, had also achieved cutout this week. While many dryland fields had actively growing terminals, blooms were showing at the 2nd to 4th node position. The active terminals indicated that moisture should be adequate to finish filling out medium sized bolls. A little more moisture very soon could result in even some smaller, nickel sized bolls becoming harvestable bolls in dryland fields.

Irrigated fields should continue to set and fill even more bolls in the next two weeks or so. From July 1st onward, it will become an issue of remaining production time as to how many other bolls can be set and matured before the end of August stalk destruction deadline. It still takes 45 days from bloom to open boll and then another 10 days from defoliation to harvest before the crop can be finalized. That only leaves a few days before the stalk destruction deadline to get the stalks out of the fields. The aforementioned does not take into account the odds of increased rainfall from August 15 forward. Time marches on.

Boll Weevils Continue Slow March

Boll weevil punctured square counts increased slightly this week. Punctured square counts ranged from 0 to 15 per 100 plants. Most dryland fields still did not have much weevil activity and only in a very few situations were whole field infestations reported. Some irrigated fields remained in the once-a-week spray schedule for weevils, a few more were committed for more than once-per-week schedules for weevil control. Traps indicated some weevils still responding to artificial pheromone this week.

Bollworm Egg Counts Increased

Bollworm egg counts were higher in many areas of the LRGV this week. Many bollworm moths were reported in some fields in eastern Willacy county early this week. The majority of the highest egg count reports also came from eastern Willacy

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county. Eggs found early in the week had not turned into worms by the end of the week, but many more eggs were found at the end of the week. Generally, the further south from Willacy county, the smaller the number of bollworm eggs were found.

The timing of the moth activity in cotton this week coincides fairly well with the worms which pupated in grain sorghum a couple of weeks ago. All of the moths seen this week were bollworm. More eggs in cotton could be forthcoming should more moths from sorghum move to cotton. Watch all fields which have recently been irrigated or had plant growth response to the rains of last week. Most of the eggs found this week were in fields with active terminal growth. Even green spots with actively growing terminals in otherwise dry fields had egg lays this week. Egg counts ranged from 0 to100+ per 100 plants.

Worm counts were very light. They ranged from 0 to 6 per 100 plants, but could go much higher if very many of the eggs this week survive.

Creontiades Increased

More *Creontiades* plant bugs were observed in cotton this week. No significant damage was reported, but growers should be aware if the bugs are in their cotton fields and monitor the fruit for damage.

Silverleaf Whiteflies Everywhere

Silverleaf whiteflies (SLWF) were observed in every cotton field scouted this week. The numbers of SLWF adults were low. Obviously, the pests need monitoring, especially in irrigated fields because of the amount of time left before crop defoliation. Adult counts ranged from 1 to 5 per leaf, but eggs and nymphs were almost not found. Without the immature stages building, honeydew deposits likely will be very light and not a threat to the fiber quality. But, keep checking.

Aphids Still With It

Aphids continued to be found, mostly in very low numbers in cotton this week. A few plants could be found, especially in weevil treated cotton fields which had higher numbers, but many producers were using an aphicide with the weevil insecticides to keep “a lid” on the aphids. The strategy appeared to be working.

Reminder: Sorghum Midge Need to be Checked

Sorghum midge have been reported egg laying in blooming tillers in some otherwise matured sorghum fields this week. Late planted or replanted sorghum should be checked very carefully as it begins to bloom. There may be enough midge to cause significant yield loss if the pests are not scouted and treated, if necessary.

Cotton Heat Unit Accumulation Table

Planting Dates	Accum. H.U.	Planting Dates	Accum. H.U.
2/15	1852	3/15	1688
3/01	1820	4/01	1533

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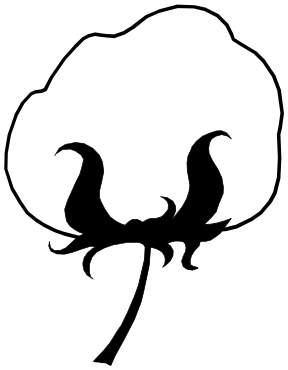

Rio Farms, Inc.

Trap Line Data - 2003 - Boll Weevils per trap per day

Trap Lines	June 3	June 10	June 17	June 24	
Taco Baja	n/a	n/a			
Edinburg Area					
KURV	0.17	0.10			
Hans	0.00	0.00			
Fike Home	0.00	0.12			
Hill	0.00	0.02			
Bobby	0.00	0.38			
Seminary Rd.	0.14	0.40			
Delta Area					
L V-N. Sugar Mill	0.02	0.02			
La Sara	0.19	0.05			
MA North	0.00	0.02			
MA S. West	0.00	0.05			
Hargil	0.10	0.02			
DL South	0.07	0.07			
KSOX - E. DL	0.10	0.00			
Raymondville Area					
Ray West	0.05	0.02			
Ray East	0.02	0.00			
Southmost Area					
Florida	0.14	0.12			
Docberry	1.14	0.50			
Alaska	0.12	0.10			
Arkansas	0.06	0.14			
S. Oklahoma	0.00	n/a			
Santa Rosa Area					
Peterman	n/a	n/a	**End of Season**		
Santa Rosa	n/a	n/a			
Dillan	n/a	n/a			
River	n/a	n/a			

Rio Farms, Inc. Trap Line Data - 2003 - Boll Weevils per trap per day					
Trap Lines	June 3	June 10	June 17	June 24	
Progreso Area					
Nogales	0.05	0.02			
Las Palomas	0.12	0.26			
Santa Anna	0.17	0.00			
Las Milpas	0.07	0.02			
Progreso Gin	0.19	0.67			
Bridge	0.05	0.26			
Sebastian Area					
Armandice	0.00	0.00			
Santa Rosa Lake	0.00	0.00			
Rio Hondo Area					
Airport	0.02	0.00			
Parker Rd.	0.00	0.02			
Paredes Line Rd.	0.02	0.05			
777	0.00	0.00			
Mercedes Area					
Valley Acres Lake	0.05	0.26			
SRS - HQ	0.02	0.21			
Ross	n/a	1.31			
Rangerville Area					
Turner Rd.	n/a	n/a	--	--	--
Tanimachi	n/a	n/a	--	--	--
Chinaberry Rd.	n/a	n/a	--	--	--
McCook Area					
Davis	n/a	n/a	--	--	
Citrico	0.19	0.10			
Wells	0.05	0.02			
Starr County					
Starrco	0.00	0.00			
La Casita	0.00	0.00			
Los Puertos	0.00	0.05			