

UPPER COAST CROP IMPROVEMENT NEWSLETTER

Matagorda

Wharton

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IN THIS ISSUE

- TPMA Website
- Upper Coast IPM Program Sponsors
- Cotton Insect Situation
- Managing Stink Bugs in Cotton

TPMA Website

The Upper Coast Crop Improvement newsletter and other Extension IPM Program newsletters from across the state can be viewed at the Texas Pest Management Association website at www.tpma.org.

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Cotton Insect Situation

During the past week (6/14 - 6/17), growth stages of cotton in the Tri-County area of Wharton, Jackson, and Matagorda Counties ranged from one-third grown square to cutout (NAWF=5).

Aphids were light in 96% of the fields monitored during the past week.

There were no live **boll weevils** or boll weevil punctured squares found; however, one consultant reported that a few fields were found to have boll weevil punctured squares in Matagorda County.

Bollworm egg counts ranged from 0 to 11% in conventional and transgenic cotton fields. In conventional cotton fields,

larvae and damaged square counts ranged from 0 to 6% and 0 to 12%, respectively. During the past week, consultants reported that a low number of fields received insecticide applications for bollworm control.

Brown stink bugs (BSB) began to increase in numbers across the entire area. They were found in 28% of fields that were monitored.

Other insect pests found in a low number of fields and in very low numbers included loopers, salt marsh caterpillars, and square borers.

Consultants reported that **creontiades** numbers have increased in fields near the coast located in Matagorda County. A few consultants have reported that lygus numbers are increasing as well.

Beneficial insects and arthropods found during the past week included lady beetles, minute pirate bugs, syrphid flies, parasitic wasps, assassin bugs, lacewings, and spiders.

Managing Stink Bugs in Cotton

To determine if an insecticide application is warranted for stink bug control, examine 6 row feet of cotton in several locations in the field. Control is warranted when there is an average of one or more stink bugs per 6 feet of row. One or more stink bugs per six feet of row can cause excessive damage to bolls and the staining of the cotton lint as well.

Another very effective method includes examining at least 50 medium size bolls (the diameter of a quarter). If 20 percent of the bolls have evidence of **internal** feeding which can easily be identified by observing callous growth on the internal boll wall and/or stained lint. If 20 percent or more of the bolls are damaged and stink bugs are present, then a treatment should be considered. **Keep in mind, internal damage to bolls by boll weevils is very similar to stink bug damage.** (over)

This method is very effective in determining the amount of stink bug damage in areas of the country where the boll weevil has been eradicated.

Second through fifth instar stink bug nymphs and adults can damage bolls. Fourth and fifth instars can cause the same level of damage as adults.

Stink bugs can damage bolls that are less than 22 to 24 days old or that have not reached a total of 450 heat units.

Stink bugs are often clumped near field margins. Spot treatment provides effective control when this situation exists.