

TEXAS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

SOUTHERN BLACKLANDS

PEST MANAGEMENT NEWS

WILLIAMSON AND MILAM COUNTIES

VOL XXIII NO. 13

July 17, 2003

Dale A. Mott
EA-IPM
3151 S.E. InnerLoop
Suite A
Georgetown, TX 78626
Office Phone: 512/943-3300
FAX: 512/943-3301
Internet Address: <http://williamson-tx.tamu.edu/>
<http://www.tpma.org>



GENERAL SITUATION

A few scattered, isolated rain showers fell across the Southern Blacklands last Friday evening delivering up to 0.5 inches of rain in a few spots. In addition a few areas received a light shower on Wednesday afternoon which was in the aftermath of the hurricane that hit the Coastal Bend region of the state and then headed quickly west and south across the lower portion of the state. A few growers have begun to harvest a little grain sorghum, and many more will begin next week as the grain dries down. Corn harvest will also begin shortly. Some fields of early cotton will probably begin developing open bolls within two weeks, depending on heat unit accumulation.

GRAIN SORGHUM

Grain sorghum is all but harvested for the most part across the area. There are late planted and/or uneven fields, some of which are still blooming. These later fields, depending on their uniformity, need to be routinely monitored for sorghum midge, stink bugs and headworm. From what I have seen recently, most of the fields that have insect problems are so non-uniform that insecticide applications are probably not economically justified.

COTTON

Cotton ranges from 1/3 grown square to having large, mature bolls. Most cotton is at 2-3 nodes above white bloom. Because of the good boll set and inadequate moisture in some areas, boll and square loss has increased over the past week. However, recent rainfall in other areas will benefit those fields, depending on accumulations.

Fleahoppers remain very light in the young fields of cotton that have yet to reach the bloom

stage. Fleahoppers in these fields range from 0 to 7 per 100 plants checked and square set is near 90 percent.

Spider mites remain nearly non-existent in area fields. There are small pockets in a few fields where moderate levels of spider mites are being found. These fields are ones that have had some of the least amount of rain over the past month.

Again, as was the case last week, the insect complex that is currently gaining most attention with cotton growers is the cotton bollworm/tobacco budworms (CBW/TBW). The egg lay has decreased considerably this week from where it was late last week. Egg counts are ranging from 0-32 per 100 plants. Worm counts range from 0-23 per 100 plants. With the bulk of the cotton in the Southern Blacklands planted to transgenic Bt. varieties, worm counts have remained very low in these fields with counts averaging from 0-2 per 100 plants checked. However, the non-Bt. cotton has not fared as well with counts ranging from 8-23 per 100 plants. Almost all non-Bt. fields that were not Bt. refuge areas have needed at least one worm application for worm control. On the extreme end, some fields have been sprayed as many as 3 times for worms. There of course is a small percentage of non-Bt. fields that have not reached worm threshold levels.

We ran another set of eggs last Friday, July 11, collected from a field of late planted cotton using the Hel ID kit from Agdia. The eggs from that test were 91% CBW and 9% TBW, which was identical to the results obtained from a set of eggs collected from a different field on Monday of that week. As I mentioned earlier, the test is fairly user friendly and provides clear results when done properly. The two main drawbacks in using the Agdia Hel-ID kit is the cost and the time it takes to run the samples (about 3 hrs). However, the results that it gives can provide you with more information that will help in making worm management treatment strategies, which in turn can be the difference in obtaining good worm control or not.

Beet Armyworm (BAW) are being found in light levels in mainly non-Bt. fields. BAWs are also being found, however, at very low levels in some fields of Bt. cotton as well. Although the levels are relatively light, they are higher than what was found last week. Growers should take into account the presence of BAWs if spraying for CBW/TBW in fields and in deciding what insecticides to apply.

Boll weevil punctured squares were found in one program field this week, which averaged less than two percent punctured squares.

Light to moderate levels of beneficials continue to be found in most fields with lady beetles, minute pirate bugs, lacewings and spiders being the most numerous.

.....
THE INFORMATION GIVEN HEREIN IS FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY. REFERENCES TO COMMERCIAL PRODUCTS OR TRADE NAMES ARE MADE WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT NO DISCRIMINATION IS INTENDED AND NO ENDORSEMENT BY THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE IS IMPLIED.

Educational programs of the Texas Cooperative Extension are open to all citizens without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

