WEST PLAINS IPM UPDATE

News about Integrated Pest Management in Hockley, Cochran, and Lamb Counties from Kerry Siders

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GENERAL SITUATION

Hot! We really need this current hot dry weather pattern to change. For one I am getting too old to work in this kind of heat. Secondly, I know the dryland acres have made hardly any progress the last couple weeks. And finally, I know we are not keeping up with the water demands of any crop. We need a good soaking rain event across the whole South Plains.

COTTON

Let us look at what the average cotton plant looks like based on what I am seeing in the scouting program:

Average number of total nodes is 13 (range 7 to 15)
1st fruiting branch at node 7.8 (range 6-9)
Square retention of 1st position is 94% (range 82-100%)
Node length is 0.8" (range of 0.5"-1.6")
Plant populations average 36,200 per acre (range 19,500 to 58,000)
Nodes Above White Flower 7.5 (range of 6 to 9)

I am seeing a few more blooms and small bolls daily. When I estimate a field to begin blooming and it occurs 3-6 days sooner I must understand why and explain to a producer the potential up or down sides. Basically the fewer the nodes above white flower (NAWF) the greater likelihood of a short bloom period, or not taking advantage of time to set harvestable bolls. When you reach 5 NAWF technically you are at physiological cut-out. Potentially the plant will be blooming out the top in two weeks. Therein lies the problem. You want the plant to take full advantage of the bloom period which at the earliest for some in the far north and west reaches of Cochran and Lamb counties would be on August 15th, whereas down in Ropes I feel comfortable with August 20 possibly 25. So what would cause this compressed bloom period? Well first it is happening in fields with short water supply. So it is a direct relationship to water availability and the ability of the plant to grow a sufficient plant to produce a respectable yield. So those fields which are going to blow through the bloom period in just a couple of weeks is exactly how dryland cotton is produced. I mention this so that if it happens in some of your fields be careful two or three things can happen: first- it is a short crop and you continue to spend money on a big crop; two- you back off to soon on water in fear that you will have a short crop and it forces it to be a short crop; and finally the best possible scenario is that though you have too few NAWF now it holds there for a couple of weeks producing more fruiting nodes, the bloom does not catch up with the top and it produces a very respectable yield. As I always preach on this, that is why knowing what the NAWF value is so very important.

Insects in cotton have not gotten any more interesting this week. We should continue to scout for fleahoppers until near bloom. I would keep a close watch for Lygus and aphids. I have not seen any situation which a growth regulator has been needed. Try to finish up any fertility over the next couple weeks, before peak bloom.

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Peanuts continue to make excellent progress in peg and pod development. Flowering continues and prospects remain good as long as water demands are met. Not seeing much in the way of foliage feeders. Heat has most likely taken a toll on these pests.

Grain Sorghum acres are few but fortunately we have not had to deal with the sugarcane aphid so far. Currently the sugarcane aphid has been detected in the eastern portions of Floyd and Crosby counties in very small colonies and limited distribution. Now we all know that can change rapidly. I ran a survey along FM 168, from Ropesville up to Olton on Monday 11th. I did not detect sugarcane aphid in any fields along this route or as I checked further west. I will continue this weekly survey until they are found or hopefully not detected this season.

SCOUTING FOR FLEAHOPPERS IN TEXAS HIGH PLAINS COTTON (2016)

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Entomology

Published on Jul 6, 2016
Kerry Siders discusses the fundamentals of scouting cotton for fleahoppers on the Texas High Plains and in West Texas. Click here to see video:

https://youtu.be/epVctkRkTHs

Gearing -Up for Pod Rot

Reported by Dr. Jason Woodward

It is time to consider preventative applications for soilborne diseases. Two different fungi (*Rhizoctonia solani* and *Pythium spp.*) are the primary components of the pod rot complex. These fungi may occur alone, but are often found together. Positive disease identification is necessary to ensure maximum economic returns for chemical applications. Subtle differences between symptoms caused by the two can be observed. Pythium infections may include blackened decay with a greasy appearance (See *Figure 1*); whereas, Rhizoctonia infections may have more of a dry-textured appearance (See *Figure 2*). Laboratory confirmation is often required for a complete diagnosis. Preventative fungicide applications are generally administered 60 to 90 days after planting; however, early initial applications may result in the need for an additional application late in the season if conducive environmental conditions persist. Several factors must be considered when applying pod rot fungicides:

Figure 1. **Symptoms of Pythium pod rot**

1. Growth Stage - Applications made before the formation of pegs and development of pods may limit the amount of product that is ultimately deposited in the pegging zone. Therefore, it is important to monitor peg development and

delay applications accordingly.

2. Pathogen Pressure - The identification of which pod rot pathogen you are dealing with will dictate fungicide selection.

3. Fungicide Selection - Pod rot fungicides with activity against **Rhizoctonia** consist primarily of Abound, Artisan, and Convoy. Other fungicides such as Folicur (and other generic formulations of tebuconazole) and Provost are labeled for Rhizoctonia pod rot; however, their labels specify that applications are made in a 4-block regime (that is more congruent with practices in the Southeastern US). Additional fungicides are labeled for use against Rhizoctonia; however, efficacy data of these products is limited. Fungicide options for **Pythium** are limited to Ridomil (several formulations including a liquid and a granule are available), and Abound (suppression only, at the maximum label rate of 24.5 fl oz/A).

4. Application Method - The activity of these products can be increased substantially when applied via chemigation; however, the banding of initial applications are often more cost effective. Broadcast applications result in fungicide treating bare ground which may be wasteful. Increasing carrier volumes (>20 gallons per acre) will improve deposition into the lower canopy, especially when applying liquid Ridomil formulations (as that product binds very quickly to the leaf). Administering irrigation soon after fungicide applications will also help to redistribute fungicides deposited on the foliage and increase concentrations delivered to the pegging zone.

Figure 2. **Symptoms of Rhizoctonia pod rot**

Private Pesticide Applicators Training

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service will offer the required private Pesticide Applicators Training (PAT) each month. This training is required by Texas Department of Agriculture before taking the exam for obtaining the license. A private pesticide applicator is a person who uses or supervises the use of a restricted-use or state limited-use pesticide or a regulated herbicide for the purpose of producing an agricultural commodity. This license is not for those receiving monetary compensation for a pesticide application.

To participate in training individuals must call 806-894-3159 by 3pm the day prior to the training in Levelland or 806-385-4222 ext 235 by 3pm the day prior to the training in Littlefield, and 806-266-5215 for training in Morton. The trainings will begin promptly at 1pm at the Extension Offices (see addresses below). There is a $60 fee for training materials. This is only the required training. Testing will be conducted at a separate time and location.

Future PAT Trainings:

- July 28 Levelland Extension Office 1212 Houston Street
- August ***TBA*** Littlefield Extension Office, Courthouse, Room B-5
- September 22 Morton Extension Office 200 W. Taylor Avenue
- October 27 Levelland Extension Office 1212 Houston Street
- November ***TBA*** Littlefield Extension Office, Courthouse, Room B-5
- and December 19 Morton Extension Office 200 W. Taylor Avenue

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities for any educational meetings. Please contact us to advise us of the auxiliary aid or service that you will require a week in advance of training.

See You On The Radio

IPM Radio Program Aglife on Fox Talk KJTV, radio 950 AM, on Wednesdays from 1:00 to 2:15 pm.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension in Hockley County Report on KLVT Levelland, High Plains Radio Network, radio 1230 AM, Wednesdays from 7:30 am to 7:45 am.

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