

WEST PLAINS IPM UPDATE

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

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GENERAL SITUATION

A good gentle widespread rain event would sure be nice for this 4th of July weekend. It would help alleviate the need to start watering irrigated acres and for certain the dryland acres. If you are interested in tracking heat units try this link: <http://www.cottonheatunits.com/heat/>

COTTON

Based on the IPM Scouting Program cotton is averaging 7.5 total nodes (range 5 to 11); the 1st fruiting branch at 7 (range 5 -8); 97% (range 82-100%) square retention of 1st position; node length is 0.9" (range of 0.5"-1.5"), and plant populations average 36,200 per acre (range 19,500 to 58,000). Based on average plant mapping data and going into bloom with 8 nodes above white flower, we should generally begin bloom around July 25th. With a last effective bloom date of August 20, that gives us a full month for effective blooming.

Weed control has been the order of the day for the past several days. Liberty herbicide has worked very well up to this point. But be careful as temps go up and we lose our humidity. Many of the at-plant preemergence herbicides are most likely playing out. You may need to supplement that weed control with some layby treatment.

Cotton fleahopper numbers continue to remain very low. Lygus have not been detected in cotton, only a few in weeds. No cotton aphids have been noted this week but beneficials are hanging around fairly well so I suspect that there are a few aphids lurking. No worms have been found.

PEANUTS

Peanuts are doing very well. Most all fields are well into bloom and are beginning to set pegs. You must decide now if you have good nodulation which will fix nitrogen. If it is not sufficient (>10 nodules per plant) then you will need to supplement or supply all the nitrogen needed. Weed control still remains as pest priority number one. Do pay attention to crown and foliar disease possibilities.

GRAIN SORGHUM & CORN

Grains range from just planted to tasseling corn. Limited whorl feeding by larvae pest has been noted in most area fields. This has not been near as severe as previous years. Also limited are aphids in general - greenbugs, yellow sugar cane aphids and cornleaf aphids. **NO** sugarcane aphids have been found to-date (see page 2). Beneficial insect and spiders are present in most fields with numbers dependent on limited food source. Only occasional small colonies of mites have been seen.

Sugarcane Aphid on the Texas High Plains; So Far a No-show

By Dr. Pat Porter, Extension Entomologist, Lubbock

Given that we know sugarcane aphid overwintered as far north as Plainview, and that it was found on Johnsongrass in Lubbock County in early May, the question we are most frequently asked lately is, "Why don't we have sugarcane aphids yet?"

That is a good question, and I wish I could be totally certain of the answer. I suspect that our beneficial insects wiped out the overwintering aphids. We had extremely high numbers of ladybugs, syrphid flies and the other predators that went into overwintering last year after feasting on sugarcane aphids. In what should be considered to be good news, we also had fairly heavy aphid numbers in wheat this spring, but not enough to do significant economic harm. But these wheat aphids, which were not sugarcane aphids, provided food for our early season beneficial insects, which in turn were available to start munching on the overwintering sugarcane aphids in the area. This is just conjecture on my part, but it is the simplest explanation of why sugarcane aphid was here in the early season and is now gone.

The next most common question we are getting is, "When will the aphids arrive?" Of course no one knows the answer, but later is better, and growers who planted early are seeing a benefit from that practice. Last year the first sugarcane aphids found on the High Plains were discovered in Lubbock County on June 27th, and within three weeks we were scrambling to get fields sprayed. I think that last year we had some colonies beginning to build locally in late June, but, given the wide area infested a few weeks later, it is most probable that one or more flights of winged aphids came up from the south on wind or storm events. This year we probably do have some small pockets of sugarcane aphids locally. The good news is that aphids are not extremely numerous on the Gulf Coast and in the Hill Country. Our colleagues south and east of here are reporting that they have only light to moderate infestations (although some fields required treatment). They are also saying that beneficial insects are catching up to the aphid populations and decimating them. This means there will be fewer aphids traveling on the winds and landing on our front door. If we have fewer aphids colonizing our plants then the beneficial insects we have in the system will have a better chance of suppressing those that do arrive.

I wish I could predict what will happen in the next few weeks, but of course I can't. If you find sugarcane aphids in your fields then please give us a call. The telephone numbers for your High Plains IPM Agents and Extension Entomologists [are listed here](#). We sincerely appreciate people who take the time to call and report pest problems.



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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