



# Northwest Plains Pest Management News

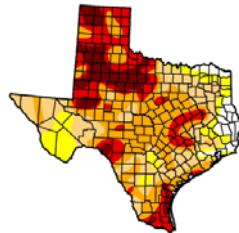
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Bailey and Parmer Counties

June 28, 2013

Bailey and Parmer Counties as well as most of the rest of the South Plains and Panhandle of Texas continue to be in extreme to exceptional drought according to the U.S. Drought Monitor (June 25, 2013).

While June precipitation was a definite blessing it has been nowhere near enough to pull the area out of the extremely dry conditions experienced over the last two and now going on three years.

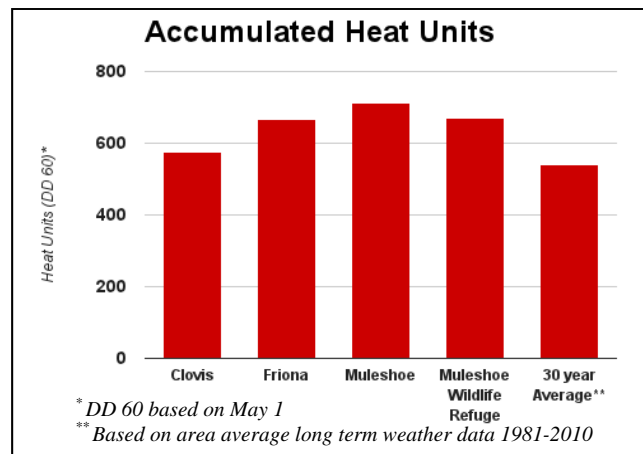


Area crops look remarkably well considering the harsh environmental conditions thus far, but signs of stress can be seen across the landscape. Year to date local weather stations have only recorded 1 rain event which was equal to or greater than 1 inch each (Friona, Muleshoe, and Muleshoe Wildlife Refuge) while the Clovis, NM site has yet to record an inch or more rainfall.



Corn showing drought stress

**Weeds** continue to be the primary pests area producers are having to deal with. Producers have continued to



report suspected glyphosate resistant pigweed most, of which are small spots within fields. These spots need to be addressed quickly and decisively. Assuming a sprayer glitch could be costly if the weeds turned out to be resistant to glyphosate and are allowed to go to seed.

Most weed control operations have been completed in corn but are on going in sorghum, cotton, and other crops. Hot dry conditions are making weeds tougher to control.

**Huskie** is a new herbicide for sorghum which has shown to be very effective. Normally a half pound/of atrazine and 1 lb of ammonium sulfate on a per acre basis should be included in the tank mix to enhance weed control. Under good growing conditions ground applications should be made in a minimum of 10 gallons per acre (GPA) total volume and under tough conditions 15-20 GPA. I realize that high volumes of water may slow spray operations but the risk of unsatisfactory weed control should be considered.

**Corn** is growing rapidly and moisture demands are

Potential Dailey Water Use*	
Crop	Inches/Day
Corn	.40-.45
Cotton	.17-.30
Sorghum	14-.26

\*Daily estimated crop water demands (inches of water per day) based on PET data from Halfway.



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quickly climbing exceeding .40 inches per day. **Green snap** has been observed in many area fields recently in varying degrees. Green snap may occur when corn is rapidly growing and is exposed to high winds. Several factors contribute to risk of green snap, first and for most is wind velocity and condition of the plant. The faster the corn is growing the more susceptible it is to green snap. The use of phenoxy herbicides (ie dicamba, 2,4-D, ect) may also contribute to green snap. Different corn hybrids may be more or less disposed to green snap; most seed companies rate their hybrids as they are developed.



*Green snap in corn*

**Spider mites** have been observed in some area corn but for the most part in fairly low numbers. As corn approaches silk we need to really think about what pest management tactics may be implemented. For example if an insecticide application for corn rootworm beetles will likely be made then that insecticides impact on beneficial arthropods and resulting mite flare up should be considered and a mitigating plan developed. If spider mites are established in a field which will be treated for CRW beetles a preventative miticide application about two weeks prior to silk should be contemplated. Currently labeled miticides are designed to work in concert with natural enemies of spider mites, when these beneficials are removed from the equation the product efficacy may be adversely affected. In research conducted in 2012 under relatively heavy mite pressure and where beneficials were removed from the system with a previous insecticide application I found that miticides struggled to suppress mites below economic threshold. That is not to say they did not work because they did, I had the luxury of an untreated check to compare the miticide treatments too. If it weren't for the untreated check to compare too most would consider the mite suppression unsatisfactory.



*Untreated*



*Treated*

The area **cotton** crop is extremely variable ranging from very good to beatup but beginning to turn the corner to just emerged due to late rains. The larger cotton is squaring, the square sets have been near 100% in observed fields. Squaring cotton should be closely monitored for square robbing pests. The cotton **flea hopper** can be a significant pest from 1st square to first bloom in Texas High Plains cotton. Fleahoppers can easily disperse from wild hosts to cotton by flight. The good news at this point is very few have been collected in local surveys sampling weeds growing in ditches and uncultivated land. Adult fleahoppers are yellowish green to almost off white and approximately 1/8 inch long with an oval flattened shaped body. They have piercing and sucking mouthparts. Nymphs, the immature stage, look similar to the adult but smaller and without wings.

Cotton fleahoppers, especially nymphs, have a somewhat translucent appearance. Small black spots may also be present on the back, legs, and antennae.



*Cotton flea hopper adult*

Fleahoppers are very flighty and will rapidly move when disturbed. Both adult and immature cotton fleahoppers will feed on tender vegetation including terminal growth, leaf buds and small squares. Pinhead sized squares are most vulnerable and will take on a blasted appearance 1 to 3 days after the feeding occurs. High populations of fleahoppers may cause excessive square shed. Twenty five to thirty cotton fleahoppers per 100 plants and unacceptable square shed (90% square set during the 1st week of squaring and 85% the 2nd week) is the established action threshold.

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