AgriLIFE EXTENSION
Texas A&M System

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2008 INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

CALHOUN **VICTORIA** **REFUGIO**

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CORN

We do not tend to have late season insect pests that cause economic damage to corn. The sugarcane borer has been investigated over the past several years but has yet to be seen as a yield reducing pest. Problems that this insect may cause involve increasing the infection of various fungal pathogens. This may be difficult to prove as the timing of insecticide applications to control the effective population of borers is difficult to determine.

Photo by Stephen Biles

In my opinion, the borer population that causes damaged kernels is feeding after soft dough. My observations indicate that while insecticide applications at tasseling or silking may reduce caterpillar populations at soft dough, these applications have little impact on sugarcane borer numbers late in the season. I think the egg lay of the sugarcane borer population that causes damage to kernels at hard dough is laid about 2-3 weeks after silking. This is because the larvae will feed for 20-30 days prior to pupation and it is the latter part of the larval stage that tends to feed in the ear at hard dough. Thus, if you back up from hard dough about 15 days, these borers will be just hatching and will not have entered the stalks.

Please show your appreciation to the supports of your IPM program.

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COTTON

Cotton fields range from 2-3 leaves to squaring cotton. Fields that has not reached 6 true leaves should be monitored for thrips. Control should be considered when the number of thrips exceeds the number of true leaves.

Photo by Stephen Biles

Squaring cotton should be checked regularly for cotton fleahoppers. I have seen fleahoppers in fields that do not yet have squares but these fields have not yet reached the damage window for this pest. Some of the research conducted last year may indicate that the first week of squaring may not need to be protected as much as later in the squaring period. During the first three weeks of squaring, **10 to 15 cotton fleahoppers per 100 plant terminals** may cause economic damage.

SOYBEANS

Soybean fields that are blooming should be scouted for stink bugs. Don't wait until pod fill to look for stink bugs, it may be too late. Research conducted last year showed that the red-banded stink bug can cause flat pods.

Photo by Stephen Biles

Reducing the economic threshold (ET) due to a higher crop value has been a frequently asked question. Our current ET for stink bugs is 36 stink bugs per 100 sweeps or 1 per foot of row but I would reduce the threshold to 24 per 100 sweeps if red banded stink bugs are present. Georgia's ET may shed some light on this topic due to the higher value of beans grown for seed.

Their guide suggests:
"After full bloom and up to the mid-pod-fill stage, stink bugs should be controlled when an average of 1 per 3 feet of row is found. After mid-pod-fill, through maturity, they should be controlled when an average of 1 per foot of row is found. If beans are being grown for seed, 1 stink bug per 6 feet of row will justify control measures."

The ET of 1 per 3 feet of row would be similar to 12 per 100 sweeps. I think 12 per 100 sweeps may be reasonable, but I think 1 per 6 feet of row (6/100 sweeps) may result in the over application of insecticides and economic loss.