

## MID-COAST IPM NEWS

Calhoun

Refugio

Victoria

Stephen Biles  
Extension Agent-IPM  
186 CR 101  
Port Lavaca, TX 77979

Office: 361-552-3324  
Fax: 361-552-6727  
E-mail: [biles-sp@tamu.edu](mailto:biles-sp@tamu.edu)  
Website: <http://calhoun-tx.tamu.edu>

---

Vol. 1, No. 1

April 15, 2005

---

# Crop Status

## Corn

Dr. Roy Parker and I evaluated a corn seed treatment test in on Bruce McDonald's farm in Victoria County at the three leaf stage and found all treatments (Poncho 0.250, Poncho 1.250, Cruiser 0.25, Cruiser 1.25 and Counter 15G @ 8 oz/1000 ft.) to have controlled chinch bugs while the untreated plots averaged 53 chinch bugs per 100 plants. On April 14, the corn had more chinch bugs but as the corn gets bigger, thresholds are higher and these populations did not exceed economic thresholds. *Insecticide should be applied when two or more adult chinch bugs are found on 20 percent of the seedlings less than 6 inches high. On taller plants apply insecticides when immature and adult bugs are found on 75 percent of the plants.*

Eggs were also found on the leaves of the corn plants. Dr. Parker and I believe that these are most likely corn earworm eggs. Corn earworm and fall armyworm moths deposit eggs on leaves. Newly hatched larvae begin to feed in the whorl. Larval feeding will cause the leaves to appear ragged, but *insecticide treatments are seldom recommended and economical control is seldom achieved.*

Many eggs were also found on the leaves of pigweed plants; we also found a few looper larvae. These eggs were smooth, light green and slightly flat suggesting that they were the eggs of some type of looper.

## Grain Sorghum

Yellow Sugarcane Aphids have been seen in area fields. This lemon-yellow, 1/16 to 1/8 -inch-long aphid is covered with hairs. It has two rows of dark tubercles down the back. Yellow sugarcane aphids inject a toxin that causes purple colored leaves or spots. On older plants, leaves become severely yellowed. The yellow sugarcane aphid has a wide range of wild hosts and often is found on johnsongrass and dallisgrass in Central and South Texas.

By the time discoloration symptoms are visible, plants have been injured significantly. Damage often leads to delayed maturity and plant lodging that may be worsened by associated stalk rots. The presence of yellow sugarcane aphids must be determined soon after sorghum plants emerge. The presence of purple-colored seedling plants is an indication of a yellow sugarcane aphid infestation. Scout sorghum by inspecting plants twice weekly until plants have at least five true leaves. As plants grow larger, they become more tolerant of aphid feeding. Very small seedling sorghum plants (one to three true leaves) often are significantly damaged after being infested for a week or less.

Discoloration symptoms may be useful in assessing yield losses, and may be used in a decision to replant. Do not consider the first two "seed leaves" when estimating damage.

Economic injury levels are based on percentage of yellow sugarcane aphid-infested plants at the 1, 2 or 3 true-leaf stage. Do not count the two seed leaves that appear first.

Many predators feed on yellow sugarcane aphid, but the aphid is rarely parasitized. Insecticides are currently the only way to manage yellow sugarcane aphids in sorghum. Gaucho®-treated seed or insecticide applied at planting (carbofuran, disulfoton or phorate) reduces severity of yellow sugarcane aphid infestations.

# Crop Status

## Cotton

Cotton fields range from just planted to 3-4 leaf plants. I have noticed thrips on untreated cotton. These fields should be sprayed if the number of thrips equals or exceeds the number of true-leaves. Do not count cotyledons at true leaves.



## Weed Control

Weeds are beginning to get some size to them in some fields. Remember that weed control should be based on weed size and not crop stage. I know that it is tempting to delay Glyphosate applications in cotton until the 4<sup>th</sup> true leaf. However, if the weeds get much taller, the herbicide may not provide adequate control. Check the label to determine proper application timings for the weed species that you intend to control.

## SOYBEAN RUST WATCH April 7, 2005

Tom Isakeit, Associate Professor and Extension Plant Pathologist, Texas A&M University, College Station

Soybean rust (SBR) was detected in November and December, 2004 in several southern states, including Louisiana and Arkansas, but not in Texas. The initial discovery of SBR in Louisiana spurred extensive surveys in surrounding states. In Texas, the very few remaining fields in Lamar, Delta, Jefferson, Calhoun, and Hidalgo counties were surveyed and there was no evidence of rust in any of them. It is likely that Texas did not receive the spore shower that occurred in other states as a result of hurricane activity in the Fall of 2004.

Although SBR was found in March, 2005 on kudzu in central Florida, the prognosis for Texas is that it is much more likely that SBR will move into Texas from the south, rather than from Florida. Historically, spores of rusts infecting cereals, as well as spores of pathogens of other crops (e.g. downy mildew of watermelon), have moved from Mexico into south Texas during the spring. We do not know whether SBR is present in Mexico or Central America at this time.

We have established sentinel plots of soybeans in several areas of Texas to detect SBR in a timely manner. In cooperation with people at Texas A&M and in private industry, I am coordinating observations of plots which are located in the following counties: Hidalgo, Victoria, Fort Bend, Jefferson, Collin, Ellis, and Delta. Dr. Charlie Rush, at the Texas A&M Agricultural Experiment Station in Amarillo, is coordinating sentinel plots in the High Plains.

Once the soybean plants have emerged and I have had an opportunity to examine them and mark their location using GPS, I enter the location (by county) into the "USDA Public Soybean Rust Web Site", <http://www.sbrusa.net>. This site has a map which will be useful in tracking the movement of SBR throughout the United States.

## **SOYBEAN RUST WATCH**

**April 7, 2005**

Continued . . .

The sentinel locations are marked in green. If rust is detected, the affected county will be noted on the map in red.

The sentinel plots will be examined with more scrutiny than commercial fields, but my plan is to also survey commercial fields for SBR, if there has been SBR reported in an adjacent locality. If SBR is detected in southern growing areas of the state, we will make appropriate recommendations for fungicide treatments for these areas and other growing areas. Weather conditions and the crop stage will be key factors for making these recommendations. At this time, I am not recommending any fungicide applications.