

Mid-Coast IPM News

Calhoun

Refugio

Victoria

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Cotton Farmers have Three Ways to Save Money

There are three ways to save money in the next 20 days with stalk destruction. Stalk destruction is vital for reducing the numbers of over wintering boll weevils. Boll weevils require the cotton plant for reproduction and survival. If all plants are gone, the weevil will not have a food source or a place to lay eggs for subsequent generations.

The first savings is from a \$2/acre rebate from Texas Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation if you have your stalks destroyed by September 20, 2005.

The second savings is also tied to the Texas Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation though reduced application and trapping costs of cotton fields. Fields without cotton plants no longer require treatment for weevils. As such, the cost of eradication is less which will eventually result in lower costs to the cotton farmer.

A third way to save money by destroying cotton stalks is to avoiding penalties from Texas Department of Agriculture. Most of those who receive this newsletter are in either Zone 2 (Area 4) or Zone 3 (Area 1) and have a **plow down date of October 1**.

Zone 2 (Area 4)

Aransas north of Copano Bay (including but not limited to Lamar and Blackjack peninsulas), Calhoun, Goliad, LaSalle, McMullen, Refugio, Victoria and north and west of U.S. Highway 59 in Bee and Live Oak

Zone 3 (Area 1)

Jackson and Matagorda Counties and that portion of Wharton County west of the Colorado River



Stalks Pulled: Cotton Plants after stalk puller.

Traveling around I have seen several methods of stalk destruction including: stalk pulling, stalk shredding, plowing, and herbicide application (2,4-D). I have also noticed that none of these tactics are 100% effective and it is very important to kill all of the cotton plants.

Stalk pullers will have between 60 and 85% kill of cotton plants and requires some additional type of control. Stalk shredding is usually combined with herbicide application such as 2,4-D and this combination can control up to 100% of the cotton stalks depending on the precision of application. One field I found had a few remaining stalks at the ends of some of the rows where the sprayer was turned off too soon. Most fields will require a second application of 2,4-D.



Missed Application: Sprayer turned off too early missing some plants at the ends.



Hipped & Bedded: Cotton after Hipper

The effectiveness of plowing will almost totally depend on soil moisture. Soils that are either too wet or too dry will not allow adequate control and will often require another treatment. Even in soils that have the proper soil moisture plowing alone will not control all of the plants.

Also be sure to check around module building sites for germinating cotton seed.



Cotton at Module: Germinating cotton seed at a cotton module site

The IPM newsletters are also available on the internet at www.tpma.org.



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