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Integrated Pest Management Calhoun, Victoria And Refugio Counties

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Grain Sorghum

Sorghum has been planted over a wide range of dates and maturity ranges from 2-3 leaves to flag leaf, or near boot. Insect pests that we should be getting ready for depend on the maturity of the crop. I don't see much insect activity in local fields. Caterpillar pests can affect all stages but are usually not economical until after heading. Once the sorghum begins to bloom, sorghum midge will be the primary pest. I will discuss midge to a greater extent in the next newsletter.

Sorghum Downy Mildew (SDM) has been found in several Victoria County fields. I have included a fact sheet on sorghum downy mildew on the back of this newsletter. Disease control with a fungicide is not recommended except the use of the seed treatment Metalaxyl. The recommended method of control of sorghum downy mildew is 2-3 year rotation to crops not susceptible to SDM. Crops that the disease does not reproduce in include cotton, soybeans and corn.

With regard to corn, we have found a field of corn that has plants infected with SDM. Dr. Tom Isakeit and I are watching these plants to determine if the disease will produce oospores and thus be reproducing in the crop.

We also need to document the spread of the disease. If you find SDM in your sorghum fields please contact me so I can verify the occurrence.

Cotton

Cotton maturity ranges from 2-3 leaves to squaring. We are finding several potential pests in cotton fields. Thrips, mites and aphids are in many fields but their low populations and warm growing conditions are preventing them from causing significant damage warranting insecticide applications. A good rain would probably eliminate them from reaching pest status.

Most fields have cotton fleahoppers, but not all fields are squaring. **The treatment threshold for squaring cotton is 15 cotton fleahoppers per 100 plants.** Cotton fleahoppers can only cause damage in cotton with squares (flower buds). Treatment is not recommended for fields that do not have squares.

Some research has indicated that the first week of squaring may not need protection from fleahoppers. I am conducting a trial to evaluate the need to treat fleahoppers in the first week of squaring and will have more information on the timing of fleahopper control at the end of the season.

Soybeans

Most soybean fields are in bloom and should be monitored for stink bugs. The economic threshold for stink bugs in soybeans is 36 bugs per 100 sweeps or 1 bug per row foot.

In the past few years we have been looking for soybean rust in local fields. The dry, warm environment conditions are not conducive to rust disease infection. Thus, the risk level is very low a this time.

cotton

TEXAS SOYBEAN BOARD