

IPM NEWSLETTER

Calhoun County

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Corn

Corn maturity is nearing V10, or the stage in corn having 10 true leaves (counting those which have fallen off the plant). Aflaguard and AF-36 are two products which have been shown to reduce aflatoxin levels in corn when applied just prior to or at tasseling corn. Research with Aflaguard that I conducted in the past five years has not been conclusive because the aflatoxin levels in the research fields never exceeded 100 ppb. However, research from other parts of the state indicate, these products can reduce aflatoxin levels when high levels occur. The problem with these products is we have no way of knowing if a particular field is going to have high levels of aflatoxin when the products should be applied.

Cotton

Cotton fields range from emerging to squaring cotton. Fields with fewer than 5 true leaves should be inspected for **thrips**. I have found most fields contain thrips populations at some levels but many fields do not require insecticide treatment. Insecticidal seed treatments will last about 21 days after emergence. Damage is less likely to occur when plants are growing rapidly as they were early last week. However, the recent cool mornings have slowed plant growth and may contribute to possible losses due to thrips.



Thrips adult

Treatment should be considered when the number of thrips exceeds the number of true leaves (don't count the cotyledon leaves). This damage threshold may vary with growing conditions.

Cotton that is squaring should be inspected for cotton fleahoppers. The cotton fleahopper feeds on developing squares and can cause square abscission on fruit smaller than matchhead square (< 1/8 inch). The cotton fleahopper adult is about 1/8 inch long and pale green. Nymphs resemble adults but lack wings and are light green. They both move rapidly when disturbed. Treatment threshold on cotton fleahoppers is 10-15 fleahoppers per 100 plants. However, I suggest waiting until there are 3 fruiting sites on the plant before considering an insecticide application. The cotton plant can compensate for the loss of early fruit. This is because we are able to grow medium to full season cotton crops without the need to fight boll weevils thanks to the efforts of the Texas Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation.



Cotton fleahopper
Photo by Stephen Biles

IPM Program Notes

Funding for the IPM program is provided by donations from local agribusinesses. Money goes towards postage, travel, and wages for scouts and field research projects. We are still in need of funding so if you know someone you think would be interested in donating please contact them or call me at 361-920-1138.

Research Projects

Research ideas originate with the producers in Calhoun, Refugio, and Victoria Counties. If you have a topic that you would like to see investigated, call me at 361-920-1138.

Two cotton research projects are being funded by Cotton Inc. through the CORE grant program and the Texas State Support Committee. The topic of these projects include: “Evaluation of insecticide over-sprays for control of bollworms in transgenic Bt cotton” and “Integrated Pest Management in the Coastal Bend of Texas”

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