

MID-COAST IPM NEWS

Calhoun

Refugio

Victoria

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The rain that fell this past weekend varied from 0.5 to 2 inches.

Cotton

Cotton fields range from 3-4 leaf to early bloom. Thrips continue to be a nuisance in fields with less than 6 true leaves and aphids are still being found in low numbers.

I have been finding cotton fleahoppers in fields at populations up to 34 per 100 plants. Every field of squaring cotton should be inspected 1-2 times per week and treated if populations exceed 15-25 fleahoppers per 100 plants.

Soybeans

Soybean maturity ranges from first trifoliolate (V1) to pod fill (R4). Stink bugs should be monitored in soybeans starting at bloom. I am finding stink bugs at low numbers (2-5 per 100 sweeps) but I have been given reports of local consultants finding red-banded stink bugs at 20/100 sweeps.

The economic threshold for all stink bugs is 36/100 sweeps. Research projects that I am conducting may lower the threshold for the red-banded stink bug. In Louisiana, the economic threshold for stink bugs in soybeans is 36/100 sweeps but can be lowered to 24/100 sweeps if the prevalent species of stink bug is the red-banded stink bug.

Soybean Scouting Clinic

Date: Thursday, May 11, 2006

Time: 9:00 - 10:30 a.m.

Location: Dr. Tom Moscatelli's soybean field on Boehm Road and Rabbit Run Rd.

Grain Sorghum

Some sorghum has begun to head out and I have received several calls about sorghum midge and scouting for midge. Thus far, I have not found midge in sorghum.

From "**Field Guide to Pests and Beneficials in Texas Grain Sorghum**"



Sorghum Midge: *Stenodiplosis sorghicola* (Coquillett)

Description and Damage: The sorghum midge is one of the most damaging insects to sorghum in Texas. The adult is a tiny, fragile looking, reddish orange fly about 1 /16 inch long. Larvae are colorless at first, but dark orange when fully grown. Larvae developing inside sorghum flowers prevent seed for-mation, often resulting low grain yields.

Biology: Female sorghum midge are most abundant from about 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day when sorghum is 25 to 75 percent in flower. Each female lays about 50 eggs

inside flowering spikelets during her 1-day life. Eggs hatch in 2 to 3 days and larvae develop between the spikelet glumes, feeding on the developing kernel. Larval development takes 9 to 11 days. They then pupate between the glumes of kernels. The pupal period is completed in 3 days. Shortly before the adult emerges the pupa works its way toward the apex of the spikelet until about three-fourths of its length protrudes. When the adult emerges the white pupal skin remains at the tip of the spikelet. Larvae diapause in a cocoon within a spikelet. Johnsongrass is an important alternate host for midge before the new crop of sorghum.

From “**Managing Insect and Mite Pests of Texas Sorghum**”

To determine if adult sorghum midges are in a sorghum field, check at mid-morning when the temperature warms to approximately 85° F. Sorghum midge adults are most abundant then on flowering sorghum grain heads. Because adult sorghum midges live less than 1 day, each day a new brood of adults emerges. This fact requires sampling almost daily during the time sorghum grain heads are flowering. Sorghum midge adults can be seen crawling on or flying about flowering sorghum grain heads.

The simplest and most efficient way to detect and count sorghum midges is to inspect carefully and at close range all sides of randomly selected flowering grain heads. Handle grain heads carefully during inspection to avoid disturbing adult sorghum midges. Other sampling methods can be used, such as placing a clear plastic bag or jar over the sorghum grain head as a trapping device for adults.

Because they are relatively weak fliers and rely on wind currents to aid their dispersal, adult sorghum midges usually are most abundant along edges of sorghum fields. For this reason, inspect plants along field borders first, particularly those downwind of earlier flowering sorghum or johnsongrass. If no, or few, sorghum midges are found on sorghum grain heads along field edges, there should be little need to sample the entire field.

However, if you find more than one sorghum midge per flowering grain head in border areas of a sorghum field, inspect at least 40 more grain heads from the entire field (avoiding plants within 150 feet of field borders). Calculate the average number of sorghum midge per flowering grain head. Sample at least 20 flowering grain heads for each 20 acres in a field. Base the need for insecticide treatment on the number of adult sorghum midges per flowering grain head after at least 20 percent of the grain heads in a field are flowering.

Insecticide residues should effectively suppress sorghum midges 1 to 2 days after treatment. However, if adults still are present 3 to 5 days after the first application of insecticide, immediately apply a second insecticide treatment. Several insecticide applications at 3-day intervals may be justified if yield potential is high and sorghum midges exceed the economic injury level.

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