

# TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

## WEST PLAINS IPM UPDATE

News about  
Integrated Pest  
Management in  
Hockley and  
Cochran Counties  
from Kerry Siders.



**July 29, 2013**  
Vol. 18 - No. 7



*Partners with Nature*

### Current Crop and Pest Situation

I am very encouraged by the rains we have had in July. In Levelland we received 3.70 inches during the month of June, with the majority of that on June 19-20<sup>th</sup>. Now in July we have received 3.36 to date, with 3.2 just in the last 14 days. As I write this newsletter we have a slight chance of rain through tonight. Though we have had a couple of cooler days, in general July temperatures have been good in terms of heat units. For most it has relieved a tremendous amount of irrigation demands and has flushed salt and other undesirable minerals deeper in the soil profile. Dryland acres are doing well for the most part, but will need continued moisture in August and September.

I will start with **grain sorghum** since it is relatively easy to summarize right now. I spent a good amount of time this morning in grain sorghum and did not find much but 1 headworm/20 heads in one field. No spider mites or aphids, but yet still some ladybugs. A few grasshoppers noted but little damage. Birds seem to be doing more damage on maturing heads than anything. No midge have been found to date. Continue to watch closely for headworms. I would however encourage producers to monitoring all these pests on a regular basis. Call if questions.

**Peanuts** are doing very well. So far an excellent pod set has been noted in all scouting fields in Cochran county. Larvae feeding on foliage has been seen in many fields but damage has been limited to foliage and none found on pegs or pods. The foliage damage has not been seen in sufficient amount to cause concern yet. Leaf spot, pepper spot, and limited pod rot have been noted. We will have all fields treated with a preventative fungicide by next week. Weeds continue to be challenging. 2,4D-B is product of choice no. Please call if questions.

**Cotton** ranges from 1/3 grown square (not yet blooming) to 5 nodes above white flower (physiological cut out). My ideal plant right now would have 1<sup>st</sup> position bolls developing at nodes 7-10, with a white flower at node 11, and then 6 nodes above white flower. This plant will reach physiological cut-out the first week of August and be blooming out the top the third week of August. This takes full advantage of the growing season while allowing time for maturing this fruit to contribute to quantity and quality.

My IPM intern and I are hard pressed to find cotton aphids, lygus, or any other pest for that matter. I am sure that some of these pests are lurking in weedy field margins and other habitats. We are getting reports well to the south of us of bollworm and other Lepidoptera pest activity. I would encourage all to increase their scouting for these pest over the next month especially in non-Bt cotton varieties.

## A Tale of Two Cotton Plants

The following is an excerpt from my newsletter a couple of years ago this same time of the season: "I pulled a random plant from two fields near Levelland Thursday morning. From the first field, which has been well watered and was fortunate to have caught some rainfall this last month, we see a plant which has excellent plant development. It has 17 total nodes; first fruiting node at 7<sup>th</sup> node; five first position bolls; 100% retention of bolls and squares; five nodes above uppermost 1<sup>st</sup> position white flower (physiological cut-out); and is 22" tall for a 1.3" height to node ratio. This is a very good plant and a great physiological development point to be looking at the calendar. The next plant **just began** to flower at the node seven; it has 14 total nodes; 100% fruit retention; seven nodes above white flower; 22" tall for a height to node ratio of 1.6". Obviously this plant is much younger physiologically. Though not an ideal place to be for crop development, there is time to mature a good crop. If we take the seven nodes above the white flower and say 60 heat units are needed to go from node to node or basically three days than it would take approximately 21 days for those seven nodes to develop into small bolls. We generally consider August 20 as near to the last effective bloom date or a date when a bloom will make a harvestable boll. Therefore, if six of those 7-8 bolls on 37,000 plants per acre, on moderate irrigation, providing 350 bolls to make a pound of lint are taken to harvest, then you could be looking at 634 lbs lint. That is barring any other bumps in the road. I will spare you the calculations for the first plant. You probably would not believe it anyway."



My point of rehashing this information from a few years ago is to illustrate where we are at physiologically today compared to two plants from a couple of years ago. Hopefully you have fields which are closer to the first example than the second. But I will remind you, as I always do at this time, that **WE WILL MAKE COTTON IN AUGUST!**

My priorities this next week are:

1. Keep up with crop water demands, we are at or near peak use in flowering cotton, all peanuts and flowering grain.
2. Wrap up all fertilizing, with exception of some light fertilizer in irrigation water and late milo.
3. Keep close watch on aphids, Lygus, cotton bollworms/headworms over next few weeks.
4. Maintain our good square set going into flowering and maintain a good boll set with limited damage and losses.
5. Be proactive on peanut diseases.

### Upcoming Meetings:

Pesticide Applicators training will be held here at the Extension office in Levelland on August 8 and 22. Call 894-3150 for more information.

## **See You On The Radio**

IPM Radio Program Ag Talk on Fox Talk KJTV, radio 950 AM, on Wednesdays from 1:00 to 2:30.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension in Hockley County Report on KLVT Levelland, High Plains Radio Network, radio 1230 AM, Wednesdays from 7:30 am to 7:45 am.

WEST PLAINS IPM UPDATE is a publication of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service IPM Program in Hockley and Cochran Counties.

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