Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

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WEST PLAINS IPM UPDATE

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

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Current Crop and Pest Situation

I am encouraged by the rains we have had in July. In Levelland we received 3.60 inches during the month of June. Now in July we have received 2.12 as of today (7/29) with chance of rain for the next couple of days. 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 some of that constant demand for irrigation water, and has helped bring back some of the health of the soil from salts and minerals, or at least slowed the continual build-up. Dryland acres, are doing well for the most part, but will need continued moisture in August.

I will start with **grain sorghum** since it is fairly active right now with worms. I spent a good amount of time yesterday in grain sorghum and found anywhere from 1-20 headworm/20 heads. So some fields are at or close to threshold. In younger, still whorl stage sorghum, worms are generally heavy causing the typical shot-hole feeding damage. But I am not seeing this translate into a continuous cycle going into boot stage. Rarely, under most all circumstances it does not as technology exist today, pay to go after whorl feeding worms. Okay, spider mites and aphids have not been noted as of today, other than some small pockets of cornleaf aphids. Beneficial insect and spiders have been present and most likely staying on top of most aphid populations. A few grasshoppers noted along field margins but little damage. 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 most all fields but damage is light and has been limited to foliage and none found on pegs or pods. Worms have been found up to 3 per row foot. The foliage damage has not been seen in sufficient amount to cause concern yet. As of today only an occasional leaf spot has been noted no other foliage or pod disease have been noted. I anticipate with the current conditions we will need to protect with a preventative fungicide by next week if weather conditions continue cooler and wet. Weeds continue to be challenging. 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 1st position bolls developing at nodes 7-10, with a white flower at node 11, and then 7 nodes above white flower. This plant would reach physiological cut-out (5 NAWF) around August 5-10 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. The scouts and I are finding pockets of cotton aphids, cotton square bores and stink bugs. Occasionally we will find a bollworm eggs. Beneficial insects and spiders and Bt are doing their job here. I would encourage all to increase their scouting of this pest over the next month especially in non-Bt cotton varieties. Resistant Palmer amaranth continues to take top pest, as it continues to develop a presence in many cotton fields.

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 7th node; five first position bolls; 100% retention of bolls and squares; five nodes above uppermost 1st position white flower (physiological cutout); 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 baring 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.

6. Let us all be good neighbors and prevent herbicide drift damage to nearby susceptible crops or anything for that matter!

Upcoming Meetings:

Pesticide Applicators Training

Required to obtain private pesticide applicators license from Texas Department of Agriculture

August 14 and 28, 1 PM, Extension Office - Levelland

Cost $60. Please call the day before training to reserve your spot! 806 894-3159

See You On The Radio

IPM Radio Program Ag Talk on Fox Talk KJTV, radio 950 AM, on Wednesdays from 1:00 to 2:15 pm.

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.

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TEXAS IPM

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