

GAINES COUNTY IPM NEWSLETTER

Manda G. Cattaneo, Extension Agent - IPM
101 S. Main RM B-8
Seminole, TX 79360
(432)758-6669 office
(432)758-6662 fax



<http://gaines-co.tamu.edu>
<http://www.tpma.org>
<http://ipm.tamu.edu>
mgcattaneo@ag.tamu.edu

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Cotton General Situation

Hail storms during the last week have damaged some isolated cotton fields. Damage ranges from minor leaf damage to complete stand loss. For the most part, the cotton has benefited from the warm temperatures and it is starting to stack on several new nodes. Cotton stages range from four true leaves to 8 true leaves. Several fields are starting to put on squares. As we start moving into the squaring stage, we need to keep an eye out for lygus bugs and fleahoppers. I have read several reports from down state indicating high fleahopper populations.

We are still picking up an occasional beet armyworm and we have also found a few yellow striped armyworms. As reported in last week's newsletter, the armyworms have not reached economically damaging levels. Thrips pressure has decreased and a majority of the cotton is past the point at which thrips can cause economic damage. The presence of southern root-knot nematodes is becoming more evident in some fields. Stunting and uneven stands are some of the best indicators of nematode presence. Be sure to examine the roots for nematode galls before concluding that nematodes are the cause of the stunting. Stunting and stand loss can also be associated with diseases, herbicide damage, planting too deep, and other cropping issues.

Peanuts General Situation

Peanuts are looking good and we have seen a few blooms in some fields. *Rhizobium* nodulation has increased in some peanut fields, but we are still seeing low nodulation levels in a couple of the fields we are scouting. Low populations of white grub worms have been found in a couple of fields. Grubs are the immature stage of June beetles. White grubs feed on the secondary or feeder roots of the plant, leaving the tap root intact. Plants appear to die of drought stress because there are no hair roots left to draw water. The beetle larvae do not travel far horizontally, but they do move a great deal vertically within the soil moisture profile. Grubs are usually found in pockets within a field. To locate damaging populations, sift 1 row foot of soil to a depth of 12 inches at each site. White grub larvae are generally whitish to grayish in color, have a tan to black head, and often have a dark area near the end of the abdomen. The key field identification characteristic is that they curl into a "C-shape" when disturbed. White grubs cannot be effectively controlled with approved insecticides.

Weeds and Herbicides Applications

Weeds are quickly becoming a major pest in several fields. In last weeks *FOCUS on South Plains Agriculture* newsletter, Dr. Randy Boman (Texas AgriLife Extension Service - Agronomist) discussed the importance of timely weed control. He said the following: "With the Roundup Ready Flex system, more or less, producers have the option of making glyphosate applications essentially full season, and at higher rates to target more difficult to control weeds. Caution should be taken here to not allow the larger weed size to cause competition losses in the cotton."

Herbicides need to be applied when the weeds are actively growing. If the weeds are stressed, then herbicides will be less effect. The success of herbicides applied postemergence is largely dependent on weed size and coverage, which often go hand in hand. Be careful not to exceed weed size restrictions according to herbicide label. Use an appropriate carrier volume to ensure thorough spray coverage on the weed. A weed that does not come in contact with the herbicide will not be controlled. Controlling weeds early is when you can achieve your biggest bang for your buck. (Reported by Dr. Peter Dotray, Dr. Todd Baughman, and Dr. Wayne Keeling in the Crop Production Guide Series, a supplement to Focus on Entomology newsletter)



Figure 1. Herbicide carry over caused severe stunting in some plants, while other plants were able to escape the herbicide injury and are growing normally.

Herbicide Injury

We have also seen a lot of herbicide injury in both cotton and peanuts. In several cases there has been stand loss and stunting associated with the herbicide injury (See [Figure 1](#)).

It is very important to understand the potential causes of herbicide injury. The following is a list of potential causes: improper incorporation, spray-tank contamination, improper sprayer calibration, excessive herbicide rate for the soil type, improper herbicide application timing or method, failure to adhere to crop rotation restrictions, interaction with other pesticides or spray additives, application of herbicide to crops under stress, off-target drift of herbicides labeled for use in other crops, small concentration of herbicides in irrigation water, and normal herbicide symptomology. (Reported by Dr. Peter Dotray, Dr. Todd Baughman, and Dr. Wayne Keeling in the Crop Production Guide Series, a supplement to Focus on Entomology newsletter)

Garden Webworms

We have found several Garden Webworms in a non-Bt cotton field south of Seminole. Garden webworms are green, have several black dots along their sides, a light stripe down the back, and a narrow head (See [Figure 2](#)). In comparison to a beet armyworm, garden webworms are a thinner worm. The webworms are mainly feeding on leaves. They are skeletonizing leaves and chewing large holes in the leaves (See [Figure 4](#)). There was extensive webbing associated with the webworm feeding and lots of black frass. In some cases, the larvae were drawing leaves together and forming a web between the leaves (See [Figure 5](#)).



Figure 2. Garden Webworm



Figure 3. Side view of a garden webworm



Figure 4. Garden webworm feeding on a leaf



Figure 5. Extensive webbing and frass around a garden webworm

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Information for this newsletter was obtained from the following publications:

- May 6, 2004 Crop Production Guide Series, a supplement to Focus on Entomology Newsletter
- June 11, 2010 Focus on South Plains Agriculture Newsletter
http://lubbock.tamu.edu/focus/focus_2010/June_11/June_11.pdf

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