

CROP MANAGEMENT REPORT

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If you would like to be added
to our newsletter mailing list
please email
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THANK YOU

Upcoming Events

Tri-County Crops Crop Tour	9/11
Americot/NexGen Field Day	9/18
GLJLA Dove Hunt	9/19

ST. LAWRENCE PEST MANAGEMENT
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COTTON

These past two weeks may have been the slowest since we put seed in the ground. It appears that our stink bug numbers are finally starting to subside and I have not seen a field in over a week that I would spray. I am still finding some bollworm feeding in many of our taller, lusher, more attractive fields. Most of the worms that I am finding are 1/2" or less with an occasional 3/4" worm. At this point in time I am not overly excited about any of the worm feeding in the area cotton. We have a trial planted this season which compares the various Bt technologies as well as non-Bt and after scouting these varieties this summer the preliminary data show that the older two-gene Bt varieties are holding up much better than we originally thought. This is especially true when you compare them to non-Bt. Of course, just like with the newer three-gene technology, when they become overwhelmed with extremely high populations we may have to spray. I will have data to present on this including yield data at a later date, but ultimately I feel the take home message is that when it comes to our Bt technology, "The sky is not falling, but we do need to do everything in our power to preserve this technology for as long as possible."

Aside from the hit-and-miss stink bugs and the low level bollworms we also have low level aphids and spider mites. Caution needs to be taken with these insects present in the area. An unnecessary insecticide application can easily lead to another unplanned one, especially if aphids get out of hand. Low levels can also be tolerated for extended periods of time without any economic loss. However, once bolls begin to open, our threshold for aphids goes from about 50/leaf to 10/leaf. Also, to answer a question I've received a couple of times, the aphids in the sorghum are not the same as what gets in cotton, so they will not be moving to cotton when we start harvesting milo.

Now is the time that everyone needs to be shutting that plant down except for the latest planted cotton. I have been looking over the past 10 year's weather data as well as the research that Warren did for final bloom date in St. Lawrence and it all corresponds with August 28th to September 1st. Out of the past 10 years only one year, 2015, did we receive 800 heat units after September 1st, which is the minimum number of heat units required to mature a bloom to a mature boll. Pushing these late maturing bolls at the end of the season in hopes that they will mature is risking the higher quality bolls that are already on the plant for bolls that may not mature out and if so may not be of as high a quality.

SORGHUM

Early sorghum is making real good progress and is not far from being ready for harvest. The late July and August rains were perfect for that crop. SCA has shown up in a couple of places but fortunately these fields should be fine and as usual should be able to outrun the aphids to harvest. For the late planted crop, the best thing that I can say is #1, we have something covering this ground so it will not blow anymore, and #2, a lot of this ground is being rotated for the first time is longer than anyone can remember. Now, despite the descent little shower that we received almost a month ago, most all of that moisture has played out. That's what happens when you start out so far in the negative, it takes a lot just to get you back to 0. So after the moisture deficit, next comes the constant onslaught of headworms. For most growers there just isn't enough money in this dryland milo crop with no significant rain in sight to warrant spraying for headworms. Now if that isn't enough, sugarcane aphids are building and will more than likely be an issue for this late planted crop. I just cannot see any profit in spraying for headworms and SCA. But hopefully it will rain and the yield potential will go way up. At least we have something covering the ground.

And to follow up on the aphid question several folks have asked me, no the aphids that are in the sorghum at this time will not move to your cotton when we start harvest. We actually have 3 different species of aphids in sorghum right now. The ones which are feeding down in the whorl and appear to be darker in color are corn leaf aphids. These aphids are generally not an issue and actually help to build beneficial populations. I have only sprayed one field over the years for this aphid but in was in a situation similar to what we are in right now. Economics will determine if we should spray. There are also several colonies of greenbugs out there. These are tiny little lite green aphids, the same species as we see in wheat every year. This is actually not a very good sign if we are seeing this many greenbugs this early. We already know we will have a lot of wheat planted, so they may be a problem this year. Then the third aphid is the sugarcane aphid. We actually have fewer of these guys right now than the other two, fortunately. We need to keep our eyes open for all three aphids, some species require more management than others.

WHEAT

As we prepare for this upcoming wheat crop and several of you have already jumped in and begun sowing wheat for grazing, try to keep a couple things in mind when it comes to pests. Everyone gets worried about fall armyworm (FAW), and right fully so. The best thing you can do to fight FAW is to start out as clean as possible. Don't have any green living material in your field for at least 10, preferably 14 days prior to planting. This will starve this generation out and force them to start over. There is no point in planting into a colony of FAW just because you want to take advantage of a little volunteer. If you are trying to take advantage of the moisture then try to control the weeds ahead of time. Also be mindful of the weeds in the ditches, these can be a host for FAW as well. Just like we check ditches and fence rows for fleahoppers in cotton, do the same thing for your wheat. If you have to spray the weeds, it is generally cheaper than spraying your entire field. For anyone still trying to decide what varieties of wheat to plant, the [2018-2019 Wheat Variety Grain Picks for Texas](#) has now been published.

TRI-COUNTY CROP TOUR

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11TH

2:00 PM

MEET AT ST. LAWRENCE PARISH HALL

SOCIAL & MEAL TO FOLLOW TOUR