

Plains Pest Management News

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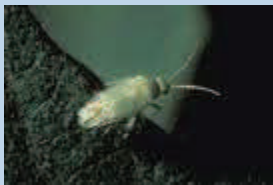


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General

Rains fell over Hale and Swisher Counties this past week with cumulative totals reported ranging from a trace to 1.6 inches. Most areas had from 0.2 to 0.6 inches. The cloudy conditions associated with these storms helped to relieve some stress on corn. Even with these scattered showers, irrigation wells continue to run.

Cotton

Many fields are now entering the bloom stage. As we move into uniform bloom, cotton fleahoppers diminish as a concern. Early bloom is usually a time we see movement of Lygus bug adults into the field from adjacent weed host. With the extremely dry conditions surrounding weeds have been limited, therefore Lygus movement into our cotton fields may be limited. Other pests to watch for over the next several weeks will be beet armyworms, cotton bollworms and fall armyworms.



Corn

Tasseling corn is shorter than normal as fields have entered this stage. Early planted fields are in the brown silk to blister stage. So far pollination

appears to be good, but with this drought we can probably expect some reduction in ear size.

Dr. Pat Porter, Extension Entomologist from Lubbock reported trap collections for fall armyworm exceeding 100 moths per week and southwestern corn borers at 34 moths per week. Non-Bt corn should be scouted for southwestern corn borer egg lays over the next few weeks. Growers with Bt corn have found hybrids with this technology to be highly effective for control of southwestern corn borer and European corn borer.

Banks grass mites continue to dominate the pests observed in area corn fields. This past week counting colonies that were active ranged from 10% to 80%. An active colony is one that has any live mites observed. Sometimes a colony 4 inches long may only have 2 to 6 live mites and the rest have been consumed by predators. Those few mites left alive are enough to recolonize the leaf and lead to damage later in the season.

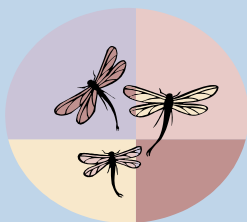
Some area fields have mite hot spots. Don't base your treatment decisions on these areas. If one looks at 20 spots in a field and one has 40% leaf damage in one location and rest have 2% to 15%, then one should delay treatment to see if predators will increase enough to stop mite progression. When determining if mites are present or absent in a colony or mite

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INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT IN HALE & SWISHER COUNTIES

Corn—continued

damaged area, pull the leaf from the plant and hold it in direct sunlight. At just the right angle one can see the small mites crawling under the silk. If your eyesight is limited a 10x hand lens works well.

Six-spotted thrips have been observed in more fields this past week and in some they can be commonly found. The immature thrips observed feeding in colonies are now considered to be six spotted thrips since no adult western flower thrips have been observed in corn recently, while adults observed have been six-spotted thrips. The spider mite destroyer lady beetle has not increased, with only an occasional larva, pupae or adult observed. Sometimes this beetle does not increase rapidly until mite populations are well established over the whole field.

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