

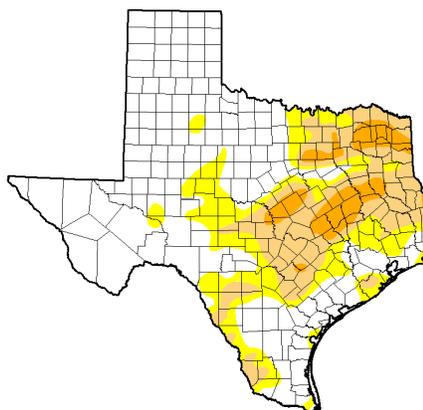
AUGUST 28, 2015

General Status

For cotton, older corn and sorghum, there is a light at the end of the tunnel and the growing season has started winding down. Later corn and grain sorghum is still in the thick of battle with primarily spidermites and sugarcane aphids (SCA) but there also remain with fall armyworm and headworm concerns. It gets even tenser in areas of the region that have not seen a good rain in over a month with irrigated crops reaching peak water use. On the flip side, it does look like much of our dryland crops will make pretty decent yield which includes several fields of dryland corn that have caught some moisture over the past few weeks.



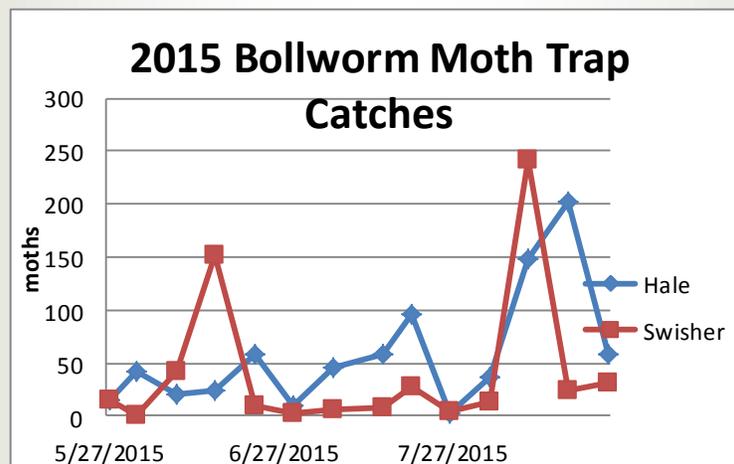
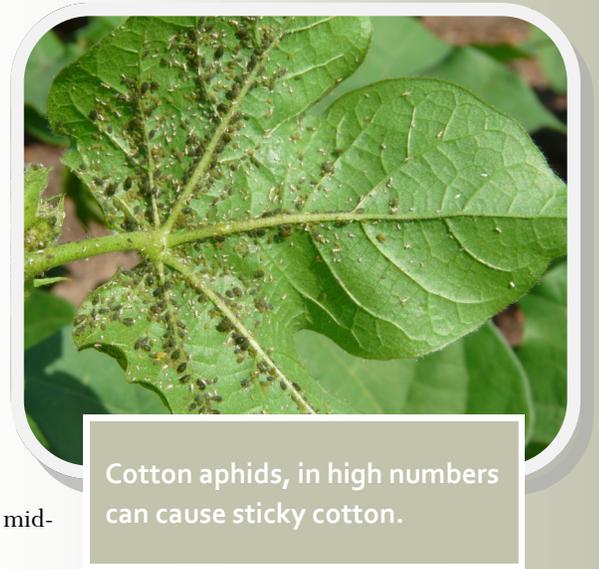
The sugarcane aphid, demanding little star of its own horror movie. Photo taken during a recent TV interview conducted during one of our DAT counts for our SCA Efficacy Trial.



Cotton

The vast bulk of our program scouting acres this week have reached absolute cutout of 3.5 NAWF (nodes above white flower) or less. The latest of our cotton fields came in yesterday at a late 4 NAWF. Cotton should have very few pest concerns from here out. Lygus will still be a concern, but a diminishing one. Lygus should not be able to seriously threaten bolls past 350 heat units of maturing development. Bollworms could also be a concern for non-bollguard fields, but also a diminishing one. It will become increasingly harder for bollworms to establish as the crop matures and smaller fruit becomes harder to come by. We would also expect the bulk of the bollworm moths to be more attracted to our large amount of late corn, where they will be of no economic consequence, or later sorghum. In our program, we had one cotton field where I found a little over 8,000 bollworm eggs per acre and a few fields with less than 1,000 small bollworms per acre.

This week we had a higher occurrence of mites and cotton aphids in cotton than previous weeks. Either of these pests could develop into a problem but of these two pests, cotton aphids would be more of a focus especially once we start seeing open bolls that aphid could deposit honeydew onto that would cause 'sticky cotton' issues. None of our fields had any open bolls yet, but I suspect there are some in the area, particularly in Floyd where the crop has been slightly more advanced throughout the growing season. The economic action level for cotton aphids should be around 12 aphids per leaf (average top, middle, and lower leaves across field) once we reach 5% open boll. Our highest field averaged to 0.8 aphids per leaf this week and cotton aphid were not found in all fields.



Sorghum

This week our program sorghum ranged in stage from a late bloom /early dough stage to a soft dough stage just starting to show color. The SCA has been the focus of sorghum attention again this week but they were not the only pest of concern. We are finding sorghum midge with regularity but have only had one of our fields reach ET for midge this season and none this week. Most of our fields are past bloom stage but not so far past it that it is hard to find that minority of late plants in the field still blooming. On those late heads, we are finding as many as 9 midge per head. While this is not an economic problem for that particular field due to the low number of heads affected in that field, it does indicate to me that any late field still blooming or yet to start blooming is very likely to have ET midge issues.

Headworms, both the bollworm (CEW) and fall armyworm (FAW), were below ET for our sorghum fields. Our highest headworm field had 0.54 headworms per head. This field was quite a long distance away from any late corn field. Those late corn fields are likely drawing away, or sinking, most of the CEW into that corn where they are of little to no economic concern. All of our sorghum fields will remain at risk of headworms until and slightly after black line formation.

Now that we are starting to see some color to our sorghum grain, we have started picking up a few Lygus feeding on those heads. The best information I can share about Lygus on sorghum comes from a study I conducted under the Reed Consulting banner in 2002 with some suggestions from the then IPM agent, Greg Cronholm, and aid from Evans Grain. This trial hinted that the ET for Lygus in sorghum heads should be about 12 per head during soft dough and increase to 16 Lygus per head at hard dough. Our highest Lygus in sorghum counts in our field this week was 1.3 Lygus per head.

Sugarcane aphid briefs

The vastly undesired need for multiple applications on for this aphid in our sorghum is rapidly becoming apparent, regardless of irrigation régime. Our experiences with this aphid and economic populations this month are telling us a few things. The take home message from the researchers involved in various trials and gathered from our field experience these past few weeks is this: **If you got good**

control with your first SCA treatment, you MIGHT be able to hold off on the

next treatment until 17-21 DAT for the next (assuming aphids are still an issue, I have seen no field where they were not). **If**

you did not get good control, it is VERY LIKELY your next treatment needs to fall 10-14 DAT.



This being said, we must keep the economics of any given field in mind. I do not feel we can afford to treat every ten days. Many area professional entomologists including myself are trying to make the next treatment a heavy handed treatment that we really need to last until black line. Until that late grain maturity stage, the plant needs to be sending as much nutrients, sugar, and energy as it can to filling the grain. If we fail in this, the field could fail.

This means we must keep as many of the upper leaves active and producing as we can until the grain is mature. Once the sorghum reaches



Untreated SCA Damage to upper leaf

that black line maturity level, then the field only needs to dry down for harvest, stand without aphid induced lodging, and not have the combine be clogged by sticky honeydew or live aphids. IF any needed second application can hold those aphids down until black line, then we can start evaluating our needs for sorghum harvest aids and chasing the aphids away from the upper portions of the plant as cheaply as possible. By my estimation that could be 4 to 8 weeks away for the majority of the fields in the area. With the intensity of this aphid population both from continuous re-infestation and population rebounding that I see this week, that is a lot to ask of one treatment. My best recommendation is to make that treatment count, or get ready to make more treatments.

Sugarcane aphid pandemonium

Winged SCA ‘fogs’, for lack of a better term, are fluttering about everywhere I travel. These ‘fogs’ to me seem concentrated near any untreated sorghum field and near our area draws. Some of this could be pointing to a continued influx of aphids or they could just be that heavy. However the main point is, these winged SCA are landing on everything that seems green. They are even thick enough to disrupt evening football and band practice at the Tulia High School football field this week. I am finding winged SCA in cotton, corn, trees, rosebushes, peas, . . . just about everything green. This has been well documented by our colleges in the Lower Rio Grande Valley and up the Gulf Coast last year and the year prior. These winged SCA will land wherever and begin reproducing offspring immediately. However, they are failing to establish on anything except sorghum and sorghum type hay crops. There are just a few small colonies that seem to have established meekly on corn margins but should be of no concern. This follows the documented trend from the past few years down State. SCA should not be able to establish on anything other than sorghum type crops, somewhat on sugarcane, and meekly on corn that fades quickly. This should exclude any concerns over wheat – SCA infestation concerns.



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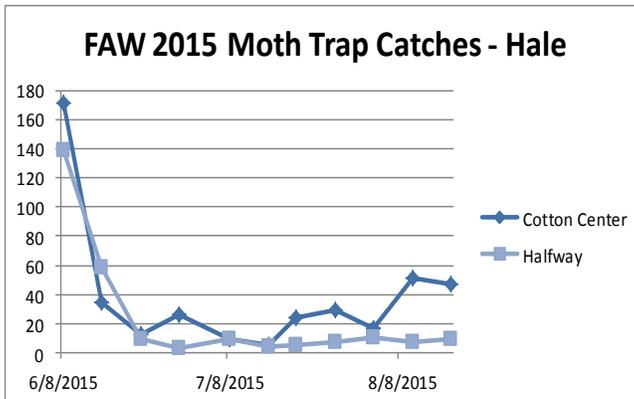
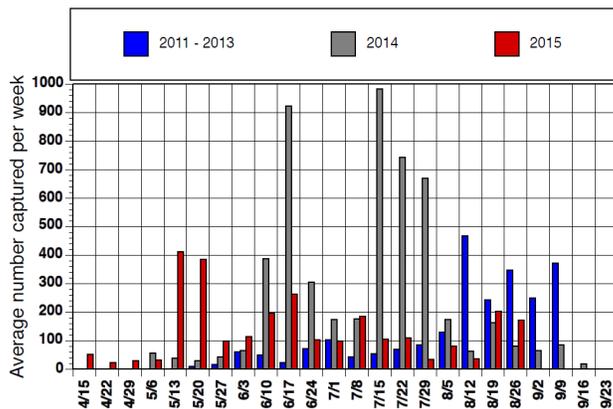
There are many, many aphids that can be misidentified as SCA, and this is a heavy aphid year in general. I have dispelled at least a half dozen cases this week. These other species should be the culprits if any other plant / crop are experiencing issues.

Corn

Our oldest corn in our program should be past economic insect damage. There are several fields that we determined only needed to stand and dry down for harvest. Meanwhile the spidermite issue continues to spread to our mid maturity group of corn fields that are ranging from dough to late dough. We have now treated about 90% of our mid maturity corn fields in our program for mites. The good news is that mite damage ratings remain very low in our youngest maturity corn fields and our predator counts are on the rise.

The disease pressure on our two later maturity groups remains spotty at best. Most fields held steady, but a few fields increased in disease damage quickly with the increased intensity of morning dews and required treatment with fungicide in addition to miticide. We remain on lookout for FAW in later non-Bt 2015 fall armyworm pheromone trap captures (moths per week) at Lubbock. Average of two traps.

or weaker traited Bt corn. Last week we blanket treated one of these late corn fields of this type based upon an increase in FAW trap counts in that area. We did not note any major FAW activity to ears in that field this week.



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