

## Blayne Reed Named Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Agent – IPM Hale / Swisher

Texas A&M Agrilife Extension is pleased to announce the hiring of a new employee. Blayne Reed has been chosen to fill the position of Hale / Swisher County IPM Agent. The position had been vacant since longtime specialist Greg Cronholm retired almost four years ago. After his official retirement Cronholm had remained active at his former post on an interim basis maintaining the Hale / Swisher scouting program for the producer members. Without Cronholm's diligent efforts, and a committed group of producers, the position may well have been cut during the State's recent budget crisis.

Dr. Charles Allen, State IPM Coordinator for Texas A&M Agrilife Extension, spoke to potential interviewees during the lengthy process of filling the position, "Myself and many others view the Hale and Swisher IPM program as one of the premier in the State." After filling the position, Dr. Allen spoke at the annual Texas Pest Management Association meeting in San Marcos, "When funds became available, this was one of the very first open positions we sought to fill... A very strong producer group in Hale and Swisher helped make sure that happened as quickly as possible. I am very excited to have such a highly qualified individual able to fill this much needed role."

Michael Clawson, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Administrator District II, was quoted in the February 6<sup>th</sup> edition of Agrilife Today, "I am very happy about this posting. Reed has a keen sense of the importance his position brings to these key agricultural counties."

Ronald Groves, Hale County Producer and President of the Hale / Swisher County Producer Group, spoke at the recent 'meet & greet' producer meeting, "When we looked at all of the candidates and started the process to fill Greg's spot, Blayne's resume came right to the top for everyone involved. His experience really stood out. We know he is qualified in the field and I hope this will be a long term posting."

Blayne is a native of the area and a multifaceted veteran of High-Plains agriculture. Growing up on a diverse farming / ranching operation northwest of Kress, Blayne cultivated the same unique zeal for agriculture in the area shared by many of the region's producers. Carrying this zeal into his education and career, Blayne received a bachelor's degree from Tarleton State University in Agriculture Services and Development with double minors in Agronomy and Entomology and a master's degree in Entomology from Texas Tech. Blayne's thesis work was conducted through the Texas A & M Agrilife Research Cotton Improvement Program at Lubbock, Halfway, and Pecos where he screened cotton genotypes for resistance to the cotton aphid. For the past thirteen years Blayne has owned and operated Reed Consulting, a private crop consulting firm that offered for hire entomological and agronomic scouting, and research services in the Tulia / Plainview area. In 2012, Blayne influenced almost 20,000 acres through his work in Reed Consulting and would normally conduct two to three independent research projects annually. During his tenure as an independent consultant, Blayne also served as HPACC (High Plains Association of Crop Consultants) Officer and President. As a volunteer, Blayne has coached the Swisher County 4-H Entomology team for over a decade, receiving a letter of appreciation from Texas A&M in 2011. In 2004, Blayne was awarded the Swisher County 4-H Alumni Recognition Award, and in 2012 Blayne and his wife Brandy were recognized as Swisher County 4-H Leaders of the Year for their help with multiple youth projects.

As of February 1, 2013 Blayne Reed has taken over for Greg Cronholm and the Hale / Swisher IPM program is officially operating at full capacity again.





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### *A Note From Blayne*

I am honored to have been chosen for the Hale / Swisher IPM Agent position and am looking forward to serving you in 2013. Working as a field scout for a private consultant in the area in the early 1990's, I was exposed to Greg and learned quite a bit from him and this IPM program. It was one of the major influences on my career path and choice. Later as a consultant, the program's help was invaluable. I speak from experience when I say Greg set the bar pretty high for IPM Agents State wide and helped most of us through some serious pest problems with sound IPM solutions.

Now we face a whole new set of problems in a growing world where we must produce more food and fiber over the next fifty years than we have in the previous ten-thousand. Not only that, but we must do so with less water, a more varied array of pest insect pressure, in a drought, with higher input costs, with rapidly changing technology, and we must do it better to boot. We need new solutions, and we need them now. As one of the world's leading 'breadbaskets,' a lot of people on this planet are looking to this region for results and answers, whether they realize it or not. This is where the rubber meets the proverbial road, not just for agriculture but horticulture and gardening too.

I commend Greg and our producer group for maintaining the scouting program, and possibly keeping an IPM position here. Field scouting and data dissemination from the field is the core of every solid IPM program. It is however, only one responsibility of many that could not be managed until an active agent filled the position.

In the first two weeks of February, we have already agreed to take part in or lead roughly six IPM research projects for this season, will be resuming normal summer pest population monitor traps, expanding our weekly newsletter, assist in master gardener programs and wheat field days, and re-starting Hale County's entomology team. We have a busy season before us and I am looking forward to working with you.

### *Glyphosate Resistant Weeds*

Regardless of what crops we decide to put in the field this summer season, we may want to give a little extra thought to weed control before the season gets underway. The issue of Glyphosate resistant pigweed in our area cotton is as common a topic as the drought.

While this problem seems to be a wild gorilla loose in the room with us, it is an issue we can tackle effectively. I felt the issue important enough to mention in our first newsletter. For detailed recommendations please refer to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Guidelines and weed control handbooks, but we will hit some points of interest here.

Dr. Peter Dotray, weed specialist with Texas A&M AgriLife Research - Lubbock and Texas Tech, has spoken on the subject of glyphosate resistance at several meetings recently, "If you have noticed pigweed surviving multiple over the top Roundup applications, you probably need to consider them as resistant. I suggest treating that field accordingly."

There are plenty of solid options when it comes to 'treating the field accordingly.' Unfortunately, most good options do not deal with the patch of six foot tall weeds already in your field August 1<sup>st</sup>, but rather planning ahead for those weed's offspring the next season, aka right now. The basics include rotating your herbicide mode of action (MOA) and maybe even altering your method of control (MOC) in more serious cases. That is a pretty common theme at most producer meetings lately. Here are some practical thoughts about it.

We have plenty of solid options for mixing and rotating your applied herbicide MOA in glyphosate tolerant cotton. If you have been using a glyphosate alone program in your cotton, making use of S-Metaclor (Dual Magnum), or Staple (check label for crop rotation restrictions) is good place to start. Either product may be tank mixed with glyphosate for over the top applications in either Flex or Glytol cotton varieties at or just before pinhead square stage and both have proven to be very economical for the amount of weed control provided. At full rates residual can carry you well into the fall.

In the past few years, I have noticed more and more weeds coming through this mix, mostly from weeds germinated prior to our early season application, but a few have begun pushing through and emerging late in the growing season as well. To stay ahead of the problem I began recommending the use of a preplant herbicide in addition to our early in season residual herbicide / glyphosate mix. In this way our cotton was protected with residual herbicide season long. Although these additional treatments required additional upfront costs, most producers found the benefits outweighed any additional costs, especially compared to some of the area's Roundup 'failures.'



For preplant there are multiple choices that include any of the "yellow" herbicides incorporated, Direx (Diuron), Cotoran, or even seen some of the Valor type herbicides work here too. All have proven to lower in season weed populations in cotton. Each product has its own distinct advantages and disadvantages depending on specific field situations. For example, Prowl H2O incorporates with irrigation well and does not require tillage, making the product a good choice for no-till producers. But Direx adds knockdown with residual. If that same no-till producer has existing winter weeds 3 weeks prior to planting, using Direx in a mix for burndown would be better, while still providing pre-plant residual control. Making use of several of the products in a year to year rotation might be the best long-term, integrated option.

Several producers have considered the Glytol / Liberty Link herbicide stacked traits in an attempt to stem glyphosate resistance in their fields. This system is already known for superior control of field bindweed, morningglory, and volunteer Flex cotton control. Remember, Ignite has its limitations in controlling weeds with over a few inches of vertical growth. If it is used for pigweed control primarily, and at least one residual herbicide is not added, you may be frustrated, if not disappointed. In addition, these two herbicides should never be tank mixed together, and depending upon target weed species, Roundup should be applied first followed within seven to ten days by Ignite.

One of the simplest ways of rotating your MOA is to target any field containing potential glyphosate resistant weeds for crop rotation, thus rotating MOA with the crop grown. Making this decision may involve several outside factors such as markets, insurance, or water availability. If you do choose the crop rotation option for this season, I recommend you utilize at least two differing and crop labeled MOA in the field to help thin the resistant weed population with some fresh chemistry. There are a large number of good sorghum and corn herbicides, but Atrazine remains the essential backbone for season long residual. I do not feel we can count on any knockdown from Atrazine, but its effectiveness on residual is notable. Any number of pre and post herbicide mixes including Atrazine will work well.



There has been quite a bit of resistance to MOC (method of control) changes in the area. In season tillage is not your only choice for changing your MOC. Some other examples could include utilizing hoeing on a regular basis, not just when a problem develops, or making use of a winter crop, so that the field in question can be exposed to both a rotating MOA and summer fallow tillage. This could be quite a long list depending upon how many options you can imagine. If you still have a problem after amending your MOA rotation, doing something about your MOC is the next step.

I will be very happy to answer any questions you may have about this or any other IPM related subject you have.

Thanks, *Blayne*