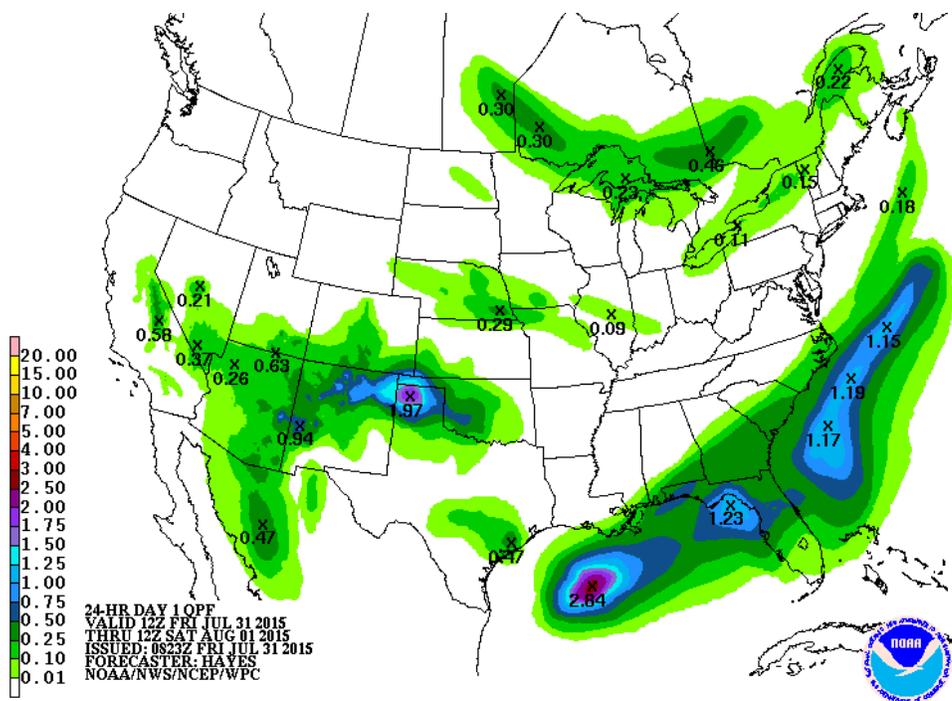


JULY 31, 2015

General Status

Some light rain has kept us from finishing up our scouting rounds in our northern area this week. Generally speaking there is nothing in the field we have found this week that is groundbreaking or hugely widespread. Rather there are a dozen impactful threats keeping us on alert and making treatment recommendations where needed. In cotton we are finishing the first full week of bloom for most fields while making plant growth regulator decisions and watching for Lygus movement toward our fields. In corn we are battling plant diseases across the southern part of our territory, watching these diseases increase in our northern areas while monitoring closely a



rapidly increasing spider mite population in all post tasseled fields. In sorghum the sugarcane aphid gets the news highlights while the thus far light population increases, meanwhile the yellow sugarcane aphid remains the largest economic threat and midge season gets underway. Of the fields that have not received any additional rainfall in two weeks are showing some stress while irrigation systems start to slip behind demand in those fields. Rainfall is again in the forecast and we all pray we will be blessed with gentle weather as it comes.

Cotton

This week our program cotton acres ranged in stage from 5 NAWF (nodes above white flower) down to $\frac{3}{4}$ grown square with most fields falling in between 7 and 9 NAWF. Fruit drop (or conversely retention) this week was much improved for all fields with past fleahopper treatments being effective and / or fields moving past the fleahopper threat. Our fruit drop range this week spread from 0% fruit loss for plants checked up to a fleahopper treated and improved 18.6% with most fields falling between 8 and 15%. There are still a very few fields that have not bloomed as of yet and we are concerned with fleahoppers there, but for the most part our scouting attention has turned toward our number one cotton pest of the area, Lygus.

The Lygus population in the area's alfalfa, weeds, CRP, and roadsides remains high but we have not noted any large scale movement of Lygus alone into our program fields. We did have some cotton fields over the past few weeks where Lygus had moved into a field with fleahoppers and jointly formed a treatable problem. We remain expectant for localized Lygus issues where cotton is adjacent to disturbed, cut, plowed, or treated primary host plants for every field we enter this time of the growing season when cotton, a secondary host for Lygus, is its most attractive for Lygus. This is also a time when Lygus can do the most economic damage. For me to recommend treatment on Lygus in cotton at this stage I suggest the need to see 1 Lygus per 2.5 row feet with a plant bug proven (not drought stress) increase and fruit drop.



The term Lygus loosely refers to several very similar plant bug pest species all within a genus of insects in the Miridae family.

Our biggest concern in cotton this week has been making PGR (plant growth regulator) decisions on our slightly late crop that, up until now, has had ample rainfall and fertilizer to take advantage of. All of our program cotton has had some amount of PGR applied with the majority of fields already receiving 2 or more shots. Now that we can gage cotton plant stage by NAWF we are taking plant height and average top five internode length measurements and put a little more science to the guess work of PGRs. I have found that the average of the top five internode length measurements to be an excellent indicator of how much the plants in that field are about to grow over the next week. Most of our program fields are still indicating a need for additional PGR through these measurements but with boll load, heat, and drought stress also become factors that must be taken into consideration I am a little more cautious about making a blanket treatment for all fields and must seriously evaluate each field upon these multiple factors. This week I recommended treatment for some fields, and held off on others due to these additional factors.

Corn

Our program's corn remains scattered in stage from V5 to dent. We have three groupings of corn maturity with the oldest ranging from dough to dent, the middle grouping ranging from tassel to green silk, and a very young group ranging from V5 to VX. Our oldest group of corn has the majority of the "excitement" this week.

Our oldest grouping of corn is what many professionals would say is right on with a 'typical' season's pest issues and cur-

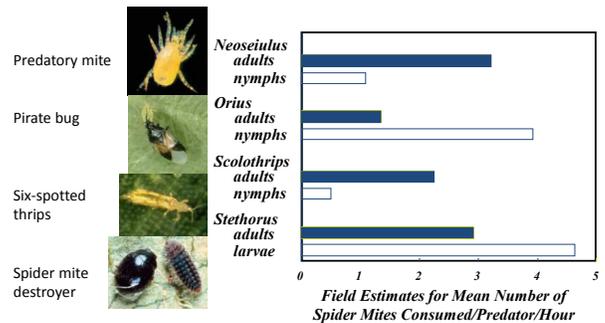


Photo of pyrethroid flared mite colony from our product efficacy trial this season. I counted 948 mites on this ear leaf.

rently has the focus of pest with the addition of disease issues. Spider mites are currently ballooning across the area in all corn stages with the heat and despite the high humidity. Several older corn fields in Floyd have already been treated, older fields in our Hale County program area very close to ET (economic threshold), with Swisher's older corn very close behind. Texas A&M has developed a 0-9 rating system for spider mites in corn where 0 indicates no mites found, 9 indicates a dead plant and a 3-4 representing an action threshold.

Most of our older corn program fields currently have a 2-3 mite rating and we are expecting to make treatments if the rapid increases in mite populations are not stopped soon. Mites are one pest that beneficial arthropods and pathogens can affect rapidly and will often save a treatment at the last moment (or ruin several efficacy trials). This places the entomologist on a very tight ropewalk for mite recommendations. This forms a very fine line between knocking the mites back prematurely, unnecessarily, and expensively and letting them get too far gone to ever successfully pull back below ET. I have suggested to our program producers with fields nearing the action level for mite treatment this week to hold off over the weekend and let a now noted and rapidly increasing beneficial population and a potentially wet (and pathogen stimulating) weather forecast have a few days chance at the mites before we treat the fields we have been scouting. Each field with mites issues must be evaluated individually for treatment needs.

Biological Control of Mites: Our Primary Defense



L. T. Wilson, T. Archer et al.

Neozygites infection

Mites appear fuzzy, waxy or discolored

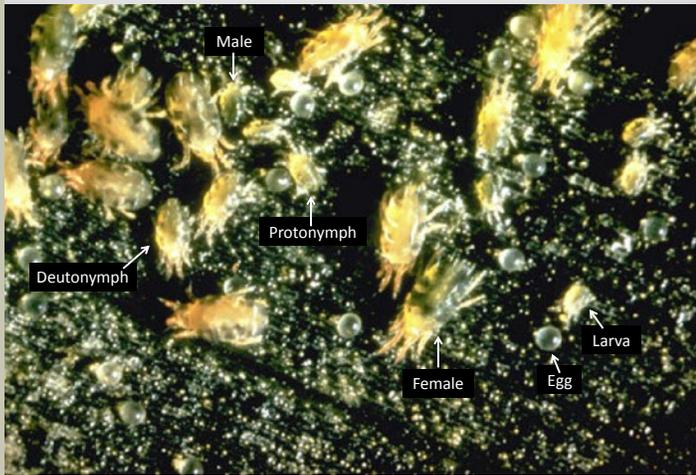


Photo: Karin Westrum



Photo: T. Klubertanz

Banks grass mite life stages



Miticide Products

Company	Trade Name	Chemical Name	Beneficial Impact	IRAC Class	Days PHI Silage	Days PHI Grain
Chemtura AgroSolutions	Comite II	Propargite	soft	12C	30	30
Bayer Crop Science	Oberon 45C	Spiromesifen	soft	23	5	30
Gowan	Onager 1E	Hexythiazox	soft	10A	45	30
Nichino America	Portal	Fenpyroximate	soft	21A	14	14
Valent U.S.A.	Zeal	Etoxazole	soft	10B	No restriction	21
FMC	Brigade 2EC	Bifenthrin	hard	3A	30	30
FMC	Hero	Zeta-Cypermethrin Bifenthrin	hard	3A	30	30
Winfield Solutions	Dimate 4E	Dimethoate	hard	1B	14 forage	28

The corn diseases continue to be an issue for post-tassel corn fields with Southern Rust being our primary concern. This pressure seems to be higher in our southern area of Hale County than in our northern area of scouting in Swisher with the majority of Swisher corn being younger and in the middle maturity group. Several of our older fields in Hale County are under consideration for a second fungicide treatment while most of Swisher fields will be watched for their first.

As the situation stands today, it is very likely that several of older corn fields in our program will be at threshold for mites and diseases. These two types of products should mix very well for a combination treatment the only product exception I am aware of being Tilt, which will need to be applied alone if that is your fungicide of choice. Please check labels for any other restrictions.

Sorghum

While I see much of our area sorghum starting to enter soft dough stage, our oldest scouting program sorghum is in its first week of bloom and the youngest has just been planted. Surprise new additions to our scouting program aside, the vast bulk of our program sorghum ranges from VX to 20% bloom with most fields at flag to boot. To date, we have had no sorghum field in our program reach ET for any pest. Our primary concern this week has been the population of yellow sugarcane aphids that remains very close to ET in several fields.

We are only finding the (apparently more news worthy) sugarcane aphid in about 35% of our program fields at this time. This is an increase but the populations of sugarcane aphids we are finding are only running about 1-2 per leaf and well below ET when



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[http://
hale.agrilife.org](http://hale.agrilife.org)

For quicker pest alerts-

*Plains Pest
Bugshere:*

[http://](http://halecountyipm.blogspot.com/)

halecountyipm.blogspot.com/

*Pest Patrol Hotline,
registration at:*

www.syngentapestpatrol.com

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We're on the air...

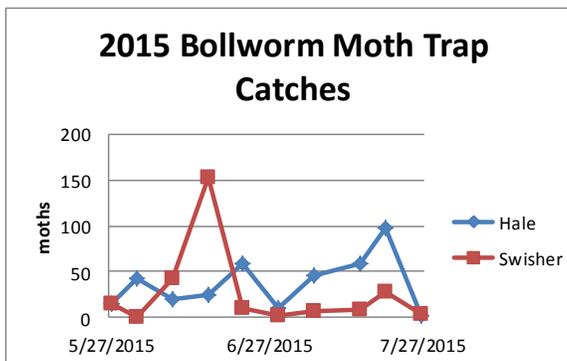
*"Tuesday's with Blayne"
from 6:30—7:00 AM
on the HPRN on
1090 AM KVOP-
Plainview.*

*"IPM Wednesdays" from
1:00-2:30 PM on The
Fox Talk 950 Ag
Show. Fox Talk 950
AM - Lubbock.*

averaged across the field. We expect an additional increase in sugarcane aphids post-boot for most fields if the higher temperatures hold out as has happened across Floyd and other areas. In Floyd only a handful of fields have been treated for the sugarcane aphid specifically so far. It is my impression from conversations with several of the independent crop consultants that work east of Plainview and across Floyd that several of their sorghum fields have been treated for the yellow sugarcane aphid and that the suggested sugarcane aphid products were utilized (per AgriLife SA IPM recommendations) because the sugarcane aphid was present in-field at a sub-ET level also. All of the reports I have today indicate control for the yellow sugarcane aphid, sugarcane aphid, and an even lighter population of greenbugs in the fields treated has been very good to excellent.

I also have reports of increased spider mite activity in sorghum east of Plainview and across Floyd that is very similar to the mite increases we are seeing in corn. We are yet to find any spider mites in our program's sorghum fields in Hale & Swisher. It should be noted that newer products proven for sugarcane aphid control that are looking good on yellow sugarcane aphid and green bug control so far should have no impact on spider mite populations as they are beneficial 'soft' but have no activity on mites that we are aware of. Older products that are labeled for greenbug or yellow sugarcane aphid control are likely to flare mites and sugarcane aphids.

As we march into early midge season, I can state that we have not found any midge in our sorghum fields by this week. I spoke with Greg Cronholm, independent crop consultant and former IPM Agent Hale & Swisher, earlier this week. Greg indicated that he did have just a few sorghum midge in blooming fields east of Plainview but they were very far below ET. I recommend watching our blooming sorghums daily (between 11am and 3pm) for midge while in bloom.



Fall armyworm trap catches for both Hale and Lubbock are very low this week also, Hale with less than 5 moths per trap.

Blayne Reed