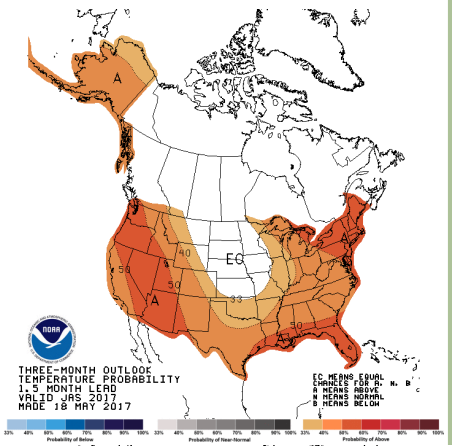
TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

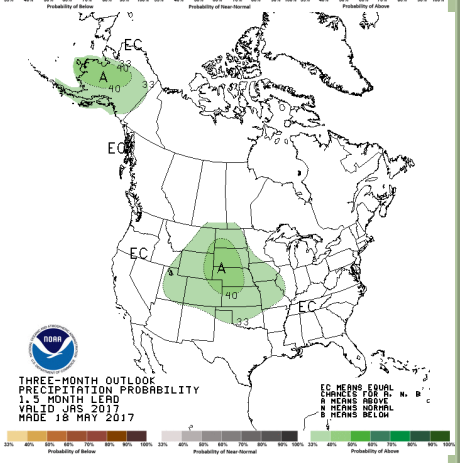
Plains Pest Management News

MAY 23, 2017

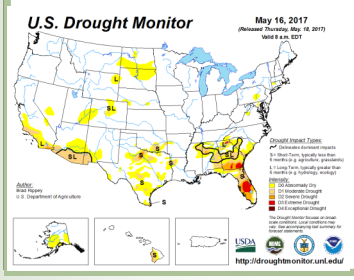
General Status

For the third straight year, cotton planting season for the Texas High Plains has been quirkily cool for extended periods bookended by shorter periods of the customary flash of summer heat. We rarely turn down a rain event in West Texas, but I have not spoken to any producer or crop consultant who has received what they "ordered" this season. From a soil moisture standpoint, we have certainly been in worse shape. Most fields are showing good deep moisture. There are plenty of fields missing or only catching the edge of the spotty but numerous rain showers that have crisscrossed the region leaving them short on planting moisture in the seed zone. With more rain in the forecast, and while experiencing lingering cool days, planters are hesitant to go too deep chasing after the moisture. Other fields have received hail studded and wind whipping rains nearing floods shortly following planting leaving an impenetrable crust for cotton seedlings slowed by cool soil temps to push through.





I could go on from extreme condition to extreme condition that are all out there this week but it just goes to show there are no "experts" in cotton planting. Rather there are a series of events, spot decisions, and conditions overseen by hardworking people putting in long days and short nights doing what they feel best on the fly that total up to either be correct at that moment that establish a cotton stand or prove to be wrong later and a swing to plan B. The month of May rolls along with decisions on cotton planting, replanting, and the war on weeds. Hopefully, conditions will 'right' soon in whatever direction your fields need to go while cotton planting season lasts. From today, May 23rd, I still consider 7 more days locally before I



start to consider irrigated cotton 'late' for the 'average' calendar year and 15 before I consider dryland 'late.' I cannot speak for replanting needs fully yet, but I feel we are somewhere between 55 and 75% of the way through planting the massive amount of our intended cotton planting acres so far. The few corn and very few sorghum acres planted are again fairing the cooler weather in better stride, progressing well with little to discuss yet.

Cotton

Despite the cool and variable planting conditions, I do not feel that cotton is in too bad shape. Undoubtedly, some fields out there will fail to establish and more hail stones are unfortunately yet to fall. Still, with just a touch of moisture and / or a touch of heat are really all most fields need to grow off quick or plant well. We have not noted too much disease on the very young and emerging seedlings yet despite the predominantly cool conditions. Our Plains Pest Management scouting program cotton ranges in stage from seed in the barn to a very slow developing 1st true leaf stage with the majority pushing in variable conditions that do not yet spell disaster for most fields.

2017 Swisher cotton field planted in early May, emerged quickly, but developing slowly in cool conditions and with heavy thrips pressure.

Thrips

Our thrips pressure has ranged from off the chart high in Swisher and northwestern Floyd to above 'average' in Hale and southern Floyd. Our oldest cotton field in Southern Swisher held 12.7 thrips per true leaf stage this week while most emerged fields in Hale only held 2-3 thrips per plant on cotyledon stage cotton. Both are over the proven economic threshold of 1 thrips per true leaf stage and will require a rescue treatment as soon as possible. Remarkably, these thrips found in our fields were adults, meaning that the seed treatments are holding up well, killing off thrips before they can reproduce. The thrips movement from wheat is just that high now, with an overwhelming number finding cotton in an interim time before other hosts become available or acceptable to the thrips. With wheat staging running a few weeks early this year, hopefully the thrips population movement will not last long

2017 Hale cotton coming up slowly but successfully.

long and this high pressure will not become the normal our seedling cotton.

If you are interested in the finer details of thrips scouting in West Texas Cotton, check out the video we shot last summer at https://youtu.be/uD2dIDQmRb0. Dr. Suhas Vyavhare, District 2 Cotton Entomologist, and Dr. David Kerns, State IPM Coordinator, have also released a new thrips fact sheet http://lubbock.tamu.edu/files/2017/05/Thrips_ENTO-069.pdf

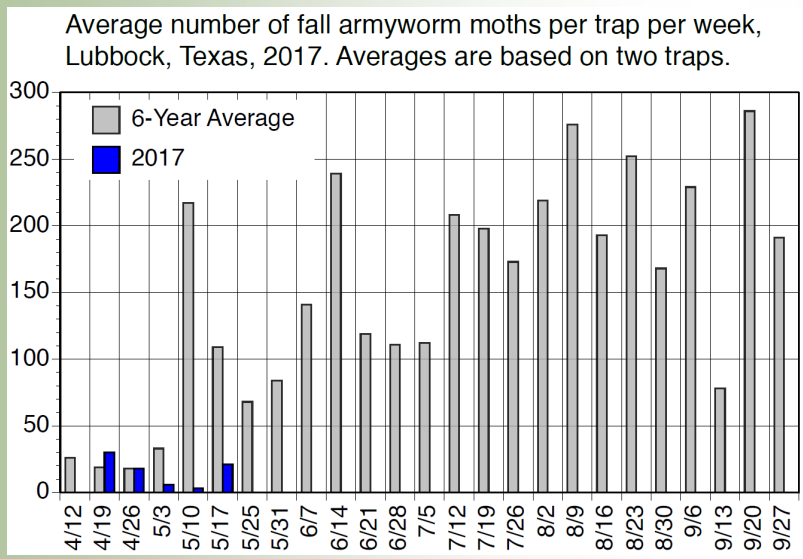
Wireworms

We are finding limited wireworm pressure so far, this season. These nuisances have become infamous for being the nail that sneaks in to finish cotton with delayed emergence for any other reason, which we have plenty of currently. I urge producers to scout seedlings 2-7 days behind the planter and before emergence to identify any wireworm issues as quickly as possible while successful replanting is still an option.

A surviving weed in a hopeful no-till Hale cotton field, just starting to emerge this week.

Sunflower beetle. Photo—Dr. Pat Porter

Dr. Pat Porter sent this note to area entomologists about a potential **sunflower pest** he discovered in the area: We have some volunteer sunflower here on the station (Lubbock) that has 1-2 sunflower beetles per plant, which would exceed the threshold in our guide at http://www.texasinsects.org/uploads/4/9/3/0/49304017/sunflower_pests_e_579.pdf if my plants were seedlings, which they are not.



We hope to have the pharamone in for our Hale, Swisher, & Floyd PPM bollworm moth traps in soon!

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For quicker pest alerts-

Plains Pest Bugoshere:
http://
halecountyipm.blogspot.com/

Pest Patrol Hotline, registration at:
www.syngentapestpatrol.com

We're on the air…

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

"IPM Wednesdays" from 1:00-2:30 PM on The FoxTalk 950 Ag Show.

If you have a field that requires a replant decision due to drying out, etc. from natural causes, you are not alone. It seems to have been interesting down State too. Xandra Morris, EA-IPM in Hillsbro, developed a handy guide to help you decide whether or not the field has a chance to establish into a profitable stand.

Cotton Seed Viability

Blayne Reed and Xandra Morris, EAs-IPM

Drought stress may cause poor stands in dryland cotton. Making the decision to replant is dependent on multiple factors, one of which is the viability of the seeds that have yet to emerge. The following is a guide that can be used to determine if a stand has the potential to fill out in the event of a good rain.

Description	Appearance	Viability	Explanation
Hard		Good	The seed hasn't germinated yet and is waiting for moisture.
Soft		Poor	The seed has taken in some moisture but has not developed. Most likely it cannot recover.
Squishy		None	The seed has taken in some moisture and rotted.
Sprouted		Probably None	The seed began growing but ran out of moisture. If it gets more water very soon it may still be viable, but most likely cannot recover.
Sprouted and Shriveled		None	The seed is dead and cannot recover.

Blayne Reed