

Blacklands IPM Newsletter

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Status

Corn planting is wrapping up and some producers have moved on to sorghum. Planting sorghum as early as possible is a good practice to potentially escape sugarcane aphid damage. Some corn is already emerging.

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Weather

Another rain over the weekend brought on average about half an inch to most of the county. Low chances of more rain continue for the next ten days. Highs will be in the 80's and no freeze is expected for a while. The temperatures will aid leaf rust that persists in the wheat fields but will give a good start to the corn crop. Leaf rust has been benefitting from the extended hours of leaf wetness provided by the rain.



News and Articles

Check out these tips for [chinch bug control in corn](#) by IPM agent Stephen Biles.

Dr. Mark Welch, AgriLife extension economist, comments on the [rising prices of fuel](#) and all its possible impacts on a farm operation.

A corn-cotton strategy meeting will be held at the Birome Gin on March 29th. See the flyer in this e-mail for details. RSVP required.

Wheat

Leaf rust continues to spread in untreated fields. Thicker stands have powdery mildew, and some have complexes of both (picture right). Thankfully, it's been too warm for widespread stripe rust, which can cause a greater yield loss to wheat.

Remember, fields have excellent moisture and this could boost yields high enough to accommodate for losses to rust.

Wheat is still living life in the fast lane: a field in the scouting program is nearly 50% headed, and most other fields range from flag leaf emergence to boot. We are about two weeks ahead of schedule compared to last year.

A frost earlier this week could have had an impact on some fields in the more vulnerable stages, but it may take a week or more to notice the freeze damage.



Wheat: From the Field



The rapid growth of wheat and some very strong winds early last week may have resulted in lodging in portions of fields.



A few early heads in a field may be targeted by insects or birds.



Syrphid flies (hover flies) are now out and mating, soon to lay eggs that will hatch into aphid-eating machines.



I frequently check Johnsongrass at the edges of fields for sugarcane aphids. To my surprise, this colony was actually greenbugs. The wheat field close by was very clean of aphids.