

# Blacklands IPM Newsletter

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## Status

Producers in the Blacklands are praying for rain this week, hoping that these showers won't miss us again. Most of the county hasn't had any rain in about 3 weeks or longer. Wheat harvest is wrapping up and cotton is being treated for thrips.

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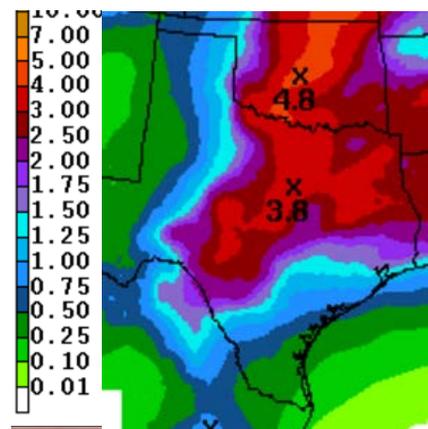
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## Weather

According to the National Weather Service, we could be in for over 3" of rain in the next seven days. This is great news for our crops that are struggling from too little moisture, and bad news for our fields that still need to be harvested or treated for weeds and insect pests. Some wheat still needs to be combined, corn could really use the water, and cotton falls into both of those categories as sprays for thrips continue. We are also experiencing high winds, which could harm the cotton seedlings, but may help fields dry out faster.



Fri 05/19	Sat 05/20	Sun 05/21	Mon 05/22	Tue 05/23	Wed 05/24	Thu 05/25
89°   68°	79°   60°	82°   63°	80°   66°	83°   59°	79°   58°	84°   67°
Chance of a Thunderstorm	Thunderstorm	Chance of a Thunderstorm	Thunderstorm	Chance of Rain	Clear	Clear
0.54 in	0.68 in	0.02 in	0.45 in	0.04 in	0 in	0 in

Forecast from WeatherUnderground.com.

## Corn



Many fields of corn are tasseled and at silk this week (stage VT to R1). If the corn is stressed during silking, we could have problems with pollination and kernel set. If the silks are too dry from lack of moisture, they may not be able to transmit the pollen to the cob correctly. Some fields are still obviously drought stressed, others seem to be doing well. If the storms we are supposed to get bring hail this weekend, the tassels could be damaged, which will affect pollen shed. Water demands of the corn plant are at their peak during silking.

Some corn plants, particularly non-Bt varieties, are showing some shot-hole damage (picture above) from early whorl feeding by either corn earworms or fall armyworms. If the worms are causing damage to more than 30% of the leaf area, or damaging the growing point, they become a cause for concern at this stage. Otherwise, plants usually recover from this type of light damage with no effect on yield.



Fall armyworm

## Cotton

Despite lack of moisture, most cotton fields have decent stands. If your stand is poor, there is still a chance that rain could help more seed germinate and emerge. Cotton can compensate for skips in rows up to 12", but frequent gaps over that length can cause lower yields.

Before deciding to replant due to poor stands, consider that some seed may still be viable in the ground. Checking on the viability of the seed that hasn't yet emerged is fairly simple. See the guide below to determine if a timely rain could help your fields fill out:

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.

Credit to Blayne Reed, EA-IPM for contributing to the development of this chart.

## Sorghum

Sugarcane aphids (pictured below) have been found on sorghum. This warm and dry weather may be beneficial to their population growth, so be sure to scout at least once a week. Our working thresholds are on average 50-125 aphids per leaf.



Also watch for *yellow* sugarcane aphids (different species), which can cause lower leaves to rapidly die off due to the toxin they inject while feeding.

Yellow SCA (right) do not have the black feet, antennae, and cornicles like the SCA do. Even just one or two of them can kill a small sorghum leaf, turning it a pale yellow color.



## From the Field



It's always fun to watch the crop dusters flying. The last few weeks corn was being sidedressed and the planes were out in force. Thank you to Gerik Ag for their continued support of our local producers and this newsletter!