



T-Y IPM News

Terry - Yoakum Pest Management Association

Volume 12, Issue 6



Current Situation: To say the least , it isn't pretty. Beyond the drought and heat we are seeing more and more of *Kurtomathrips morilli* in cotton fields. Several fields in Terry County have required treatment. In the Terry and Yoakum Counties IPM Blog I provide a discussion of the situation, insect identification and treatment considerations (included later in this newsletter). Most cotton is cutout and has shed small bolls and squares. Many fields will need another week to ten days of irrigation.

In peanuts, pests have been quiet. In a very few fields there has been some pod rot, these fields have a history of significant pod rot. Peanuts will continue to be at a high level of water use (easily 0.35 inches of water per day) as they mature pods which are set. This time of pod filling is very sensitive to drought stress. A lack of water can lead to "pops" where one portion of the pod does not fill with a kernel due to a lack of moisture and calcium absorption by the hull.

Unusual Thrips Species Damages Area Cotton

In mid-July, Gaines County Extension Agent- IPM, Manda Anderson, reported a field infested with *Kurtomathrips morrilli*. This infestation was killing the cotton plants where high numbers of the thrips occurred. With additional research it was learned that

this thrips species is native to the southwest United States and reports of it infesting cotton date back to the 1920s, however, little is known about the damage potential and control measures for this thrips species. (Continued on pg. 2)

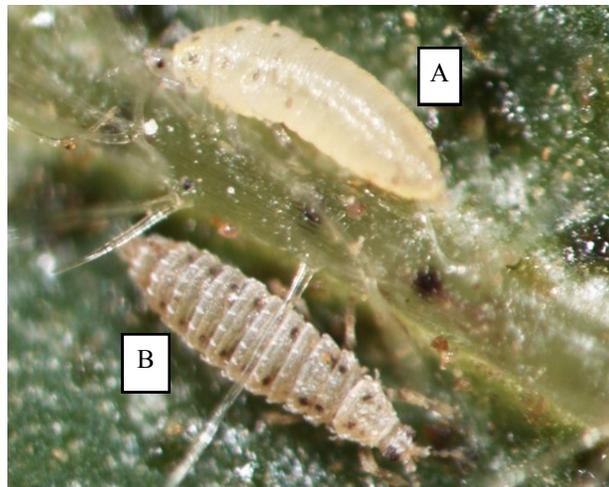


Figure 1. *Kurtomathrips morrilli*; immature (A.) and wingless adult (B).

Agriculture and IPM on the radio:

Brownfield Town Talk, The Ag Update, Wednesdays, 9:30 AM on Radio AM1300

South Plains IPM Agents Show on Ag Talk with Eddie Griffis, 12:30 PM, Wednesdays on Radio AM950

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Unusual Thrips Species Damages Area Cotton continued

The insect is very tiny (similar in size to a spider mite) therefore a hand lens is useful in diagnosing the infestation. They appear to first infest the underside of leaves and as the population grows move to the upper surface. They feed with rasping mouthparts, sucking carbohydrates from the leaf cells. This results in a silver/gray-green appearance to the damaged foliage. Immature Kurtomathrips are cream colored and wingless, while adults are tan to amber colored and may have wings. Both immature and adults thrips tend to not move much and slowly when they do (unlike our usually thrips species). It appears these pests prefer feeding along the leaf veins. The damage caused by their feed may resemble mite damage or water stress. Heavily infested leaves turn a gray to silver-green color and the edges tend to curl upward. As feeding continues and the population grows defoliation of the host plants will occur. This defoliation can result in shedding of bolls and immature bolls not being finished out by the plant. Therefore there is a real danger of reduced yield and quality due to these infestations.

Most infestations noted thus far have been heaviest in water stressed cotton where the stand may be thin or spotty. I have been made aware of an infestation in a more lush/growthy and not stressed cotton field. There have been reports of infestations in Gaines, Terry, Yoakum, Lubbock and Hail Counties at this time. Infestations increase in number very rapidly and the resulting damage/defoliation can be significant. If these thrips are in high numbers, and left untreated there will be no leaves remaining on the cotton plants.

Dr. David Kerns and Manda Anderson established a chemical control test in a Gaines County field. Pre-treatment counts of thrips numbered from 500 to 850 thrips per five leaves of cotton. Below is a table which indicate the average number of Kurtomathrips per five leaves five days after treatments were applied (Table 1).

Making the decision to treat. Some points to consider in making the decision to treat include:

1. What is the yield potential of the field? Low yielding fields (less than 500 lbs/ac) may not recover the economic input of an insecticide application. Also consider other inputs up to this point plus harvest costs. The chemical costs range from \$2.00 to \$6.00 per acre, then application costs must be counted. The yield protected must cover this cost.
2. What is the stage of growth of the cotton? If bolls are mature (cutting the boll open and seeds have well defined cotyledons and seed coat versus those which are watery seeds) they may not be significantly damaged by the defoliation. If there are numerous bolls to mature, treatment may be justified. These immature bolls should yield enough to cover treatment costs (as in #1 above).
3. Will you utilize harvest aids or not? If you are planning to see harvest aids, you'll need some leaf surface area present to absorb the materials.

Visit the Terry and Yoakum Counties IPM Blog for more photos of Kurtomathrips and their damage on cotton: <http://agrilife.org/yoakumterryipm/>.

Signup there for e-mail notification of updates to the blog.

Terry - Yoakum Pest Management Assoc.

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Editor: Scott A. Russell, Extension Agent - IPM, Terry & Yoakum Counties
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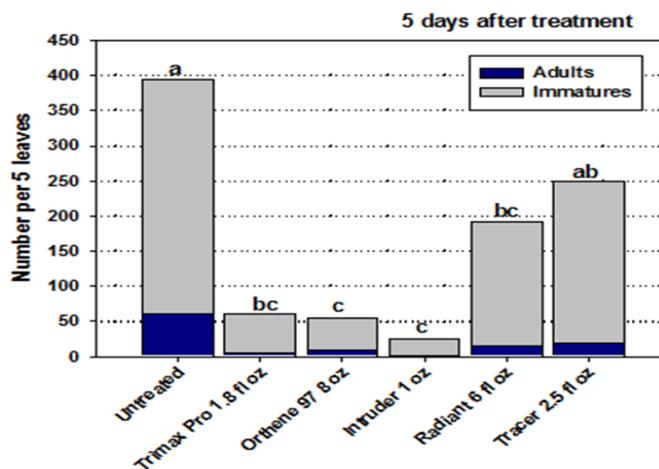
Scott A. Russell

209 South Fifth Street
Brownfield, Texas 79316
Phone: 806-637-4060
Fax: 806-637-2588
Mobile: 806-893-1041
Email: sarussel@tamu.edu

IPM Websites:

- lubbock.tamu.edu/ipm
- www.tpma.org
- terry-tx.tamu.edu
- ipm.tamu.edu
- peanut.tamu.edu
- insects.tamu.edu
- plantpathology.tamu.edu/

Table 1.
Numbers of Kurtomathrips five days after treatment, averages of five leaves



Turnrow Meeting

Wednesday, August 24, 2011

10:00 AM – 10:30 AM

CR 108 and Hwy 62/385 Intersection

(approximately 3 miles north of Seminole)

Field on the south side of Wallach Concrete

***Quick* meeting to help you identify and manage *Kurtomathrips*. This is a very destructive thrips that is being found in cotton throughout Gaines County and the Southern High Plains.**

How to scout for this pest...

How to identify this pest...

Plant Symptoms...

Management Options....

Speakers:

David Kerns, Extension Entomologist

Manda Anderson, Extension Agent - IPM

Come and ask Questions or just listen!

Further information: Please contact Manda Anderson at (432)788-0800 or mganderson@ag.tamu.edu

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