

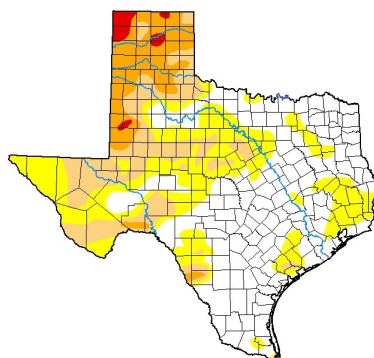
JUNE 19, 2020

General Status

The area is still significantly dry and windy despite some passing showers again this week. Rainfall amounts were highly variable, but seemed to range from high wind only up to about 1-inch with most totals coming in at less than 0.3-inch. The higher amounts of rain were accompanied by hail again. We have not had time to evaluate all potential damage from this storm, but early

U.S. Drought Monitor
 Texas

June 16, 2020
 (Released Thursday, Jun. 18, 2020)
 Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Intensity:
 None
 D0 Abnormally Dry
 D1 Moderate Drought
 D2 Severe Drought
 D3 Extreme Drought
 D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

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indications are light to isolated in damage severity. With any large measurable benefits in our area crops, pastures, or soil moisture from these sparse rains hard to note, many of us are starting to question how far behind the situation the official drought monitor is to the actual situation.

Plainview Heat Unit Calculator

Cumulative Heat Unit Calculator		
Start Date	Corn	End Date
4/20/2020		9/21/2020
Total Heat Units		1186.35
Start Date	Cotton	End Date
5/17/2020		10/10/2020
Total Heat Units		423.95
Calculate		

Despite the conditions, our crops continue to develop doggedly.

Doubly so for the weed situation while several pests continue to offer isolated situations reminiscent of X-Files. Grasshoppers, false chinch bugs, and others continue to make serious nuisance of themselves to

isolated fields in

the area. By now, most of these issues can be explained as the infrequent pests are just seeking anything with moisture available and attacking in mass. These are easy to spot but can evolve quickly requiring diligence. It is much better to address some of these 'odd' issues with an edge treatment rather than

with the loss of a field, which is quite possible. Our 'normal' pests were not asleep this week either, keeping us on our scouting toes with each step through the fields.



Roughed up, but still developing, this southern Hale field is sporting pinhead squares this week.

Cotton

This week our scouting program cotton ranged in stage from 1st true leaf stage up to large pinhead square with most fields just starting to put their first squares on. Plants seem to be moving into reproductive mode somewhere around the 7th to 9th true leaf node this year. For most fields this is a bit behind in both calendar date and node stage, but well inside a 'normal' window so far. Our square set looked outstanding with very few fields losing any squares so early with the only loss being physical and weather related.



Cotton sporting squares in southern Swisher this week.



Thrips have been tailing off from a very high point a few weeks ago. This week we still had fields at risk for thrips damage and a few of those well over the threshold of 1 thrips per true leaf stage. Of our thrips susceptible fields, our populations ranged from 0.02 thrips per true leaf up to 2.4 thrips per true leaf. The highest thrips fields that required additional treatment

this week were in heavy wheat areas and either had not been treated in the last 10 days or at all. Only a handful of fields in our program escaped the need for thrips treatments this year with over 75% needing at least 2 treatments.



With plants moving into reproductive stages, we immediately turn our main pest attention away from thrips to the plant bugs. This is partly because reproductive cotton plants can now tolerate the thrips damage, partly because our first fruiting sites are so important to High Plains yields, and partly because we are, or the situation is, often inadvertently chasing these fleahoppers and Lygus from their preferred host plants. Fleahoppers vastly prefer silverleaf nightshade (and a few other weeds) to cotton while Lygus love alfalfa and clover. As these weeds are controlled or dry down, hay cut, or margins mowed, these plant bugs are more than happy to jump onto the now last resort of cotton. Here their damage can mount quickly if we are not attentive.



Its time to go on alert for Lygus and fleahoppers and the damage they can cause.

The economic thresholds for these plant bugs are twofold. First, the pest must be in-field at population levels that can be damaging. Otherwise, beneficials could be containing the issue or the pests could just be passing through. Secondly, we must see some proven plant bug damage before treatments will return economically. The amount of fruit that can be lost without economic loss increases with time as plants can and will naturally compensate for some early loss, but not an infinite amount that continues at a rate higher than the compensation rate. The gradual increase in acceptable / compensable loss factored into our Texas A&M thresholds has proven through years of trials to hold this balance between compensable loss and excessive loss well.

Early in the reproductive stages the fleahopper population threshold is around 30% terminals infested. For Lygus, this is around 12%. As plants grow and develop, we often adopt different scouting strategies that give us the most bang for the effort. By about ¼ grown square stage, plants are generally large enough to make use of drop cloths or sweep nets to use in conjunction with whole plant inspections. In this way, hundreds of plants can be scouted in place of a few for the same scouting effort. Using these methods, the population threshold becomes 1 fleahopper per 1.5-2 row feet and 1 Lygus per 2.5-3 row feet. For both pests, the square shed during the first few weeks of squaring should not be allowed to exceed 8-12%. This will gradient up until just before bloom and acceptable loss level could be as high as 25%.

Table 4. Cotton fleahopper action thresholds

Region	Fleahoppers	Cotton growth stage	
Blacklands	10–15 per 100 terminals (terminal inspection)	During squaring	
Coastal Bend	15–25 per 100 terminals (terminal sampling)		
Winter Garden	In development: 20–40 adults and nymphs per		
Lower Rio Grande Valley	100 plants (beat bucket sampling)		
Panhandle		Week of squaring	Square set
South Plains		1st week	< 90%
Permian Basin	25–30 per 100 terminals (terminal inspection)	2nd week	< 85%
Rolling Plains		3rd week	< 75%
Trans Pecos		After 1st bloom, treatment is rarely justified.	

Table 5. Cotton Fleahopper

Product name/ trade name	Insecticide active ingredient/s	Formulated rate (fl oz or oz/acre)	lb active ingredient/acre	Acres treated per gallon/lb
Vydate	Oxamyl	8–32	0.125–0.5	16–4
Orthene 97	Acephate*	4	0.244	4
Acephate 90	Acephate	4.4	0.248	3.64
Intruder Max 70/Strafer Max	Acetamiprid	0.6–1.1	0.025–0.05	26.67–14.55
Carbine 50	Flonicamid	1.7–2.8	0.053–0.089	9.41–5.71
Centric 40	Thiamethoxam	1.25–2.5	0.0313–0.0625	12.8–6.4
Admire Pro	Imidacloprid*	0.9–1.7	0.032–0.061	142.2–75.3
Alias 4	Imidacloprid	1–2	0.0313–0.0625	128–64
Dimethoate 400	Dimethoate*	8	0.25	16
Bidrin 8 / Dicromax 8	Dicrotophos*	4.0–8.0	0.25–0.5	32–16

*Various generics/brands available

This week we did note 3 of our program fields with fleahoppers found during whole plant inspections. The highest of these populations was 30% infested terminals. No square loss was noted to the ‘newly’ arriving fleahoppers. No Lygus were noted in our cotton fields, but high populations have been noted in our alfalfa fields, CRP fields, and roadsides where they are of no concern yet.



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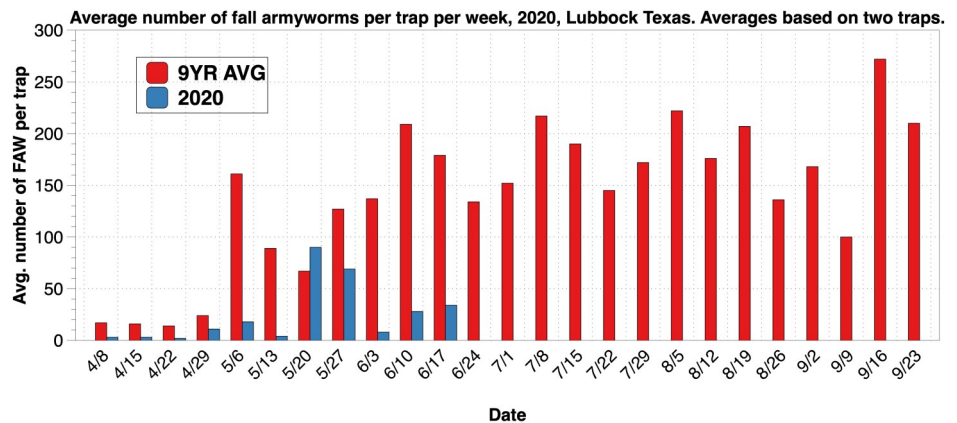
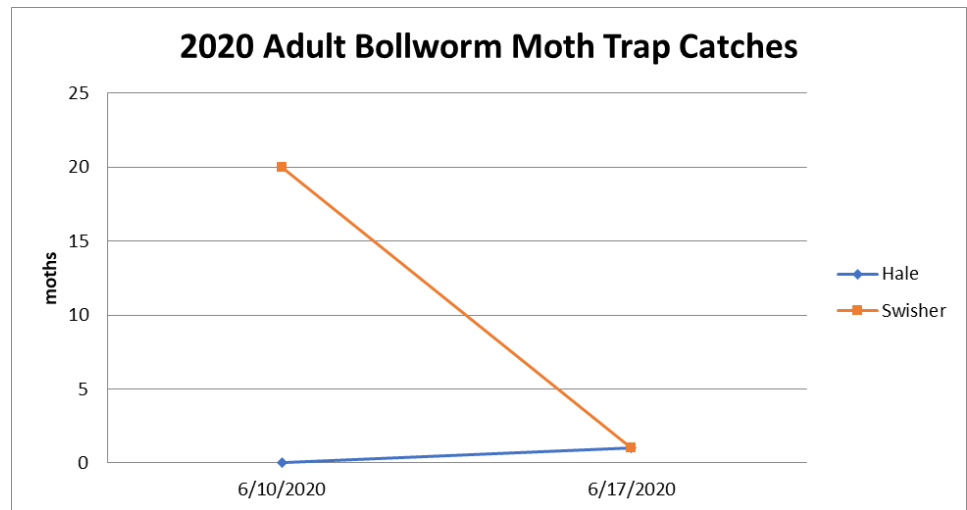
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Corn and Sorghum

We still have several program sorghum fields to be planted yet, and in many cases, 2nd crop planted. Our oldest grain stage fields are around V10, but we have all active field stages down to germination. These fields are establishing and developing well with supplemental irrigations. We are still not noting any pest populations at this time. Diseases can be found in most fields, but at low levels. Dr. Pat Porter noted this week a sharp increase in fall armyworm moths caught in Lubbock after his weekly graph was released. We should start to find whorl feeding from these moths soon, likely in sorghum first followed by non-Bt corn. Establishing spidermite populations have been noted in corn in nearby counties, but high thrips populations have likely prevented notable populations from building in our program corn so far. Our bollworm moth trap numbers have been very light so far.



Blayne Reed