AgriLIFE EXTENSION
Texas A&M System

Plains Pest Management News

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TEXAS IPM
Partners with Nature

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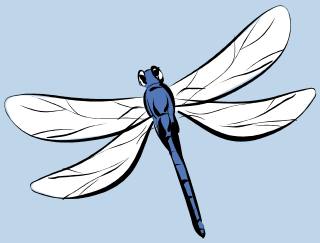
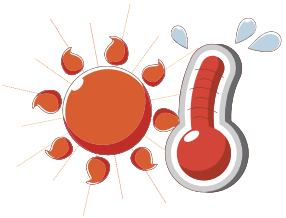


General

Since the last issue of this newsletter on June 14 we have had several more rainfall events. Halfway area reported 1.92 inches, while at my house in Plainview I had 1.85 inches. We are now in a hot, dry period with the next five days predicted to be around 100 degrees F. Irrigations will be applied to counter heat stress, especially in corn.



Cotton

Cotton is growing rapidly with many fields now in the early squaring stage. Some fields now have 4 to 8 squares per plant. Some of the later planted cotton now is in the 4 to 6 leaf growth stage.

Thrips generally remain light and so are cotton pests in general. A few beet armyworms continue to be found, but foliage damage has been light so far.

As most fields are now squaring, scouting efforts should be targeting the plant bug complex. Cotton fleahoppers usually move into the field at early square stage and can present a problem with square loss up to bloom.

Lygus bugs can be present early, but they generally migrate to cotton during early bloom. Using a beat sheet (42"x36") can be a very effective method for sampling for early infestations of cotton fleahopper nymphs and adults. Sweep nets can also be used for plant bug sampling.

Treatments for cotton fleahopper are usually based on percent square loss during the first four weeks of squaring and the presence of significant populations of cotton fleahoppers. Generally, a 90% square set is the standard for the first week of squaring, 85% the second week, 75% the third and fourth week.

Sunflowers

Fields range from bud to 100% bloom. The sunflower moth moves to sunflower at early bloom to oviposit on the head. The moth is buff gray, cigar shaped and 1/2 inch in length. They can be observed on the head in early morning or late evening. During the day they can be seen resting on leaves or moving in front of you as you scout the field. Pheromone traps are available to monitor this pest, but if not already in hand, one will have to order them for next years scouting.

Eggs usually hatch in two days and begin to feed on pollen on the head surface an

Texas AgriLife Extension Service

Hale County Office
225 Broadway, Suite 6
Plainview, Texas 79072

Tel. 806.291.5267
Fax 806.291.5266
E-Mail: gcronholm@ag.tamu.edu

Greg Cronholm, Retired
Extension Agent—IPM
Emeritus

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(Sunflower continued from page 1)

and on the tiny florets. After five to six days they burrow into the seed. Once below the surface, control becomes poor. Spray applications are targeted for 20% to 25% bloom. Sunflower reaches this stage rapidly. When one sees one five percent bloom, the next day 20% bloom is reached on some of our varieties. This means if one is going to be timely with an application for this pest, as soon as 1% to 5% bloom is reached an aerial applicator should be scheduled for treatment the next day. Under heavy sunflower moth flights, 2 to 3 applications may be required. Uniformity of bloom can influence how long your crop is susceptible to this pest.