AgriLIFE EXTENSION
Texas A&M System

AGRICULTURAL NEWS FOR HALE COUNTY
BROUGHT TO YOU BY
TEXAS AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE
June, 2012

AROUND THE COUNTY

The Hale County Ag Committee will meet on Thursday, June 21st at Noon at the Hale County Extension office. Lunch will be provided.

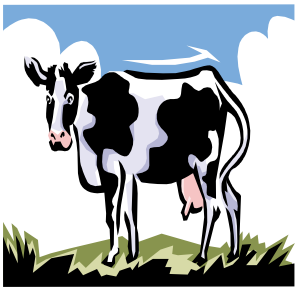
Heavy thrips pressure has been observed in area cotton which did not have a preventative thrips treatment applied. Untreated plants have been observed with five times the recommended action threshold. Thrips are slender, straw colored insects about 1/15 inch long, with rasping and sucking mouthparts. Adults are winged but are not strong fliers but can drift long distances in the wind. Cotton should be monitored closely to prevent excessive damage. Once adults begin to infest emerging unprotected cotton it can be quickly overwhelmed. Local research on foliar only thrips management strategies indicate that the most important insecticide application is very early, at emergence and the week following. Late applications may provide some personal satisfaction (revenge treatment) but may not provide an economic return. If infestation is assessed by visual plant damage you will be late.

Fields with no preventative treatment (soil applied or seed treatment insecticide) for thrips will likely require at least one and probably two foliar insecticide applications to keep thrips suppressed. Under extreme thrips pressure and poor growing conditions a third insecticide application may be justified. Foliar applications of acephate are very effective but residual activity lasts less than a week.

Do not assume that a preventative treatment is working, close inspection of plant leaves and terminals for adult and immature thrips will tell the tale. The presence of immature thrips is an indication that the preventative treatment is longer preventing colonization.

I cannot stress enough the need to make timely insecticide applications especially when a purely foliar thrips management strategy is employed. Well established and rapidly growing plants can tolerate more thrips pressure. The established action threshold for thrips is one thrips per true leaf but should be reduced to 1/2 per true leaf in slow developing cotton.

Red, White and Moo Milk Fest on Saturday, June 30 in Plainview at the Ollie Liner Center.



AgriLIFE EXTENSION
Texas A&M System

Irrigation Meeting

June 21, 2012

9:00 a.m.—11:00 a.m.

Glen Schur's Barn

Bring your lawn chair!!

- Latest innovation in irrigation technologies
- See John Deere CropSense and/or Agua Spy soil moisture monitoring probes
- Evapo -Transporation (E.T.)
- Water requirements of various crops

Directions: In Plainview-from the intersection of E. 24th and FM 400 (United Farm Industries) follow FM 400 East 1 1/2 miles, continue on FM 400 as it curves north for another 1 mile to CR 70. Go east on CR 70 for 2 1/4 miles. Barn is on the south side of the county road

Partnering with TAWC

CONTACT : Gary Cross, CEA-AG/NR
Hale County Extension Service
225 Broadway, Suite 6
Plainview, Texas 79072
806.291.5267
hale.agrilife.org

FITTING CATTLE TO THE ENVIRONMENT

Dr. David Riley, Texas A&M University

Riley stated that Bos indicus-type cattle are better adapted to subtropical production conditions, as in the U. S. South and Southwest, accounting for the fact that about 40% of the nations' cow herd has some Bos indicus genetics. Due to a combination of adaptability and heterosis, the Bos indicus-Bos taurus F1 crossbred cow has been shown to be most productive and efficient in the subtropics. However, the majority of cattle feedyards are in the Texas High Plains and northward. Half-Bos indicus cattle can be stressed in these feedyards during winter, but quarter-bloods generally perform acceptably. Consequently, many part-Bos indicus cowherds in the subtropical U. S. use Bos Taurus sires, resulting in an adapted cow producing a calf that is adapted to the areas where most feedyards are located.

Size, Efficiency, and Complementarity

By Stephen Hammack, Texas AgriLife, Texas A&M System

Hammack traced the variation of cattle size over the last 200 years, from large to small and then, starting in the 1960's, back to large. At that time producers began selecting larger cattle and this continues. Today, the U. S. Meat Animal Research Center calculates that all breeds are continuing to increase in size, as estimated by genetic evaluation of yearling weight, and all of the major breeds are now similar. But research also has showed no biological advantage in efficiency due to larger size.

Emphasis on bigger cattle has been largely due to emphasizing performance of individuals as opposed to that of the total herd. (Larger cows can potentially wean heavier calves, but fewer larger cows can be maintained on the fixed forage resource of most herds.) Improved herd efficiency is possible through what is termed complementarity; this can be accomplished by breeding relatively smaller cows to larger sires, resulting in more calf weight relative to cow weight. Similarity in size among major breeds has reduced the opportunity to exploit complementarity due to size. However, complementarity due to differences in type will probably continue in the South and Southwest by using B. taurus sires on B. indicus crossbred cows.

(The following articles are from the South Plains Focus on Agriculture)

Cotton Agronomy

Overview of the Season

Planting of the 2012 crop is well underway. Some much needed rainfall was received this month and allowed some producers to plant into moisture even under dryland production systems. To date, the annual total of rainfall for Lubbock is 3.65 inches according to the National Weather Service. Even with this rainfall, the subsoil moisture in some areas is still lacking. Furthermore, winds and recent high temperatures have depleted what little upper profile moisture that may have been available for planting dryland in areas east of Lubbock. Many fields (dryland and irrigated) in the region may require additional rainfall to ensure good stand establishment. Temperatures in early May were above average; however, a cool spell was experienced beginning on the 7th that continued until the 15th with temperatures rebounding nicely in recent days.
Cotton planted prior to the cool spell, for the most part, emerged quickly; however, the cooler temperatures slowed development substantially, and those crops are just now starting to regain vigor. For some of the cotton crops planted just prior to the cool and wet spell, emergence issues have been observed. One issue that has been reported from some producers is crusting of the surface and delayed emergence. There have also been some reports of "big shanking" which is a result of cotton being unable to push through the soil surface. In the most severe instances, replanting may need to be considered (see below for more details on making replant decisions). With temperatures rebounding nicely, and where planting moisture is available, producers in the Texas High Plains are rigorously returning to the fields to continue planting. With weather forecasters predicting a slight chance of showers and thunderstorms this coming weekend, producers may get another round of beneficial rainfall.

Based on the most recent crop reports from Texas AgriLife County Extension Agricultural agents, those reporting estimated an overall average of 80% of cotton acres are planted. As compared to the planting progress for the last several years for this same time period, we are probably slightly below average. However, with all of the producer activity this week, and generally good conditions, I suspect that we are likely headed for a timely completion of planting of irrigated acres across most of the region. With final planting dates fast approaching, dryland producers continue to hold on in hopes of receiving more precipitation.

Making Replant Decisions

With a chance of thunderstorms in the forecast and the ever present threat of associated significant hail damage as well as assorted emergence problems, producers may be facing a difficult decision of whether or not to replant. Although we have yet to receive any substantial storm damage, there have been some issues with early planted crop emergence. Because of this it is important to inspect fields to determine the amount of damage incurred. Replanting decisions vary from producer to producer and many times county to county. Many times it is important to get a handle on the root health of the plants, stem bruising, etc. In 2007, Drs. Randy Boman and Robert Lemon developed a departmental publication concerning the difficult replant decision making process. Making Replant Decisions in Cotton -2007 is available on the Lubbock website at http://lubbock.tamu.edu/files/2011/10/makingreplantdecisions07.pdf , or on the Cotton Resource DVD at http://cotton.tamu.edu/cottonDVD/content/cottondvd/General

TANK CLEANOUT CONCERNS

This time of year, producers may request personnel from Texas AgriLife Extension or Research to make field inspections concerning hormone-type herbicide damage on cotton. Typical phenoxy herbicide symptomology includes "strapping of leaves." Based on field research conducted by Dr. Wayne Keeling, the severity of yield decrease is related to the actual dose and the crop stage. Severe damage incurred when the crop begins to fruit is more likely to reduce yield than when the crop is younger with less severe damage. Doses of sufficient level to continue "strapping" of newer leaves for weeks after application will probably significantly negatively impact yield.

Producers should be aware, especially in light of the "tank and hose cleaning ability" of some of the newer herbicides, that phenoxy residue in sprayers can be a real problem. ***My suggestion for our growers is that tanks, hoses, and sprayers which are used for applying phenoxy type herbicides be dedicated SOLELY to that purpose.*** If producers are unable to purchase separate tanks, hoses and/or sprayers, then it is imperative that several issues be addressed. Do not leave herbicides in tanks for an extended period of time. It is best to use "chemical resistant" hoses. ***Replace hoses when changing out tanks or using a large sprayer which has been spraying any other products besides those labeled for cotton.*** The last thing a cotton field needs is for a phenoxy material (even at low concentrations) to get "pulled from the tank or hoses" and get sprayed on cotton – especially those fields with high yield potential (i.e. subsurface drip or high capacity pivots). If multiple herbicides are used in the sprayer, then I suggest that producers purchase various tank cleaning agents from their dealers and follow the directions, including cleaner concentration, religiously. If a tank/sprayer is to be used on cotton, I suggest that the tank be flushed out with clean water and the appropriate tank cleaner be mixed at the appropriate concentration. The producer should then spray the cleaning solution through the booms and nozzles. Leave the booms in a horizontal position and let the cleaning solution sit in the tank at least overnight. ***Replace hoses when changing out tanks or using a large sprayer which has been spraying any other products besides those labeled for cotton.*** This might help reduce some anxiety over phenoxy damage later. It doesn't take very many lost bales of production to pay for an additional tank and hoses or smaller sprayer.

An excellent publication on tank cleanout can be found at http://extension.missouri.edu/explorepdf/agguides/crops/g04852.pdf. This publication has good information concerning herbicides, recommended cleaning solutions and sensitive crops.

FORAGE SORGHUM & SORGHUM SUDAN HYBRID SUMMARIES

Texas AgriLife has posted 2011 results from both the forage sorghum hybrid trials (including a four-year summary), as well as sorghum/sudan results.

Both sets of data are organized to compare conventional, brown midrib (BMR), and photoperiod sensitive forages. Grain yield is also reported on the forage sorghums as an indication of their grain producing ability, which is important to some dairies. The BMR trait as a class still has some yield drag (~10%) associated with both forage classes, however, individual BMR hybrids yield as well as most conventionals. Furthermore, the forage quality of BMR hybrids remains improved over conventional or non-BMR forages.

Hybrid Availability: Having noted forage results, the availability of individual hybrids for 2012 planting is low to none in some cases. Contact your preferred seed dealer immediately to see what may still be available.

IRRIGATED GRAIN SORGHUM SEEDING RATE SUGGESTIONS

Deciding on an appropriate yield goal and realistically evaluating irrigation capacity impacts grain sorghum seeding rates. Grain sorghum hybrids typically range from about 13,000 to 16,000 seeds per lb., and this differential is a major reason why we do not recommend basing seeding rate on lbs. per acre, especially when you likely have an air vacuum planter.

• *For limited irrigation sorghum* (6-8", typical of many producers in the South Plains & Texas Panhandle) with low soil profile moisture conditions—and there is essentially no profile moisture in most areas in 2012 unless you have pre-watered—target 40,000-45,000 seeds/A, but if soil moisture is good, consider 50,000-55,000 seeds/A.

• *For full irrigation sorghum* (12-16"), target 68,000-80,000 seeds/A if soil profile moisture is good, but reduce for dry soil. Cap seeding rates at 80,000 seeds/A in just about any high irrigation scenario, though by late June/early July consider up to 90,000-100,000 seeds/A for non-tillering hybrids or when the development of tillers may cause difficulty with lack of uniform maturity across the field which causes problems at harvest time. High Plains producers report they regularly achieve 10,000 lbs./A grain sorghum with seed drops of 55,000-60,000 seeds per acre. "I have learned that is all I need," notes one Bailey Co. grower.

Do you have a copy of the United Sorghum Checkoff Program grain sorghum pocket production guide? If not, contact the USCP office in Lubbock at 806.687.8727, or info@sorghumcheckoff.com, for your free copy. You may review these pocket guides online at http://www.sorghumcheckoff.com/sorghum-production-handbooks.

Different editions cover the Texas South Plains as well as the Texas Panhandle.

Like us on Facebook! (Texas Agrilife Extension Hale County Ag)
Visit our website: http://hale.agrilife.org
We are now on Twitter and have a phone app.

Gary Cross, CEA-Ag/NR
225 Broadway, Suite 6
Plainview, TX. 79072
806.291.5267
Gary.cross@ag.tamu.edu
http://hale.agrilife.org