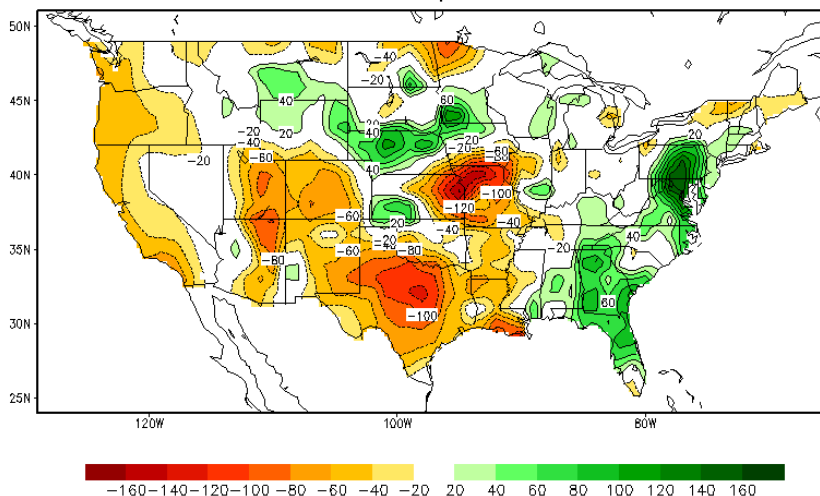



AUGUST 3, 2018

## General Status

Still desperately dry with more and more cotton fields reaching an early absolute cut-out daily. Some areas in the western edges of our counties might have received some moisture this week, at least more than a trace or morning dew from passing clouds. If a field did get some moisture from that group of storms there is a good chance it came with some hail or other damaging weather. Some spotty areas in southeastern Swisher, eastern Hale, and Western Floyd did get some measurable and beneficial moisture early in the week but by mid-afternoon of that day it was tough to tell. Despite the drought situation and early cotton cut-outs, boll retention remains good for most field situations. What varies between fields is the size of the plants and how many potential harvestable bolls fields can set with the moisture available. Fields at cut-out will not be able to produce any more squares this year. They can only set what is already on the plant, if they get enough moisture over the next few days. Fields not yet in cut-out yet still have the potential to keep putting on new squares but will need additional moisture to put off cut-out and their 'last boll hurrah' for as long as possible. I doubt many fields will zip past our average last effective bloom date and target cut-out date of August 24<sup>th</sup> this year.

Calculated Soil Moisture Anomaly (mm)  
 AUG 02, 2018





**Cumulative Heat Unit Calculator**

<b>Corn Start Date</b>	<b>Corn End Date</b>
4/24/2018	9/18/2018
<b>Corn Total Heat Units</b>	<b>2661.90</b>

<b>Cotton Start Date</b>	<b>Cotton End Date</b>
5/16/2018	11/5/2018
<b>Cotton Total Heat Units</b>	<b>1481.20</b>

Updated Monday weekly

As for the insects, it is remarkable the amount of activity we have had in our fields this summer that set us on continued alerts for multiple pests versus the comparatively light amount we have had to treat for economic issues. If we must be inundated by the majority of known pest species for our major crops we hope, at least, this is a trend that continues. Predator counts have remained very high for most types of fields that could be described as lush. Of particular note have been the types of predators that favor bollworms or similar larvae and aphids. That has been pretty handy while in the

midst of a large and extended fall armyworm and bollworm moth flight and egg lay. So far, there have only been a handful of fields that were too heavy with pests and required treatment. Hopefully everyone has been able to identify these problem fields from the many at risk fields that did not reach economic levels. Mites in corn can be described as heavier with few mite specific predators and drought situations. It is my opinion that most corn of 'normalish' maturity and 'typical' planting date have been or will need to be treated for mites. In a few weeks we might be saying similar issues for our few sorghum fields and the sugarcane aphid. Even that pest has been slowed this year by the predators and improved IPM techniques.



Two weeks ago, this southern Hale field was at 6.4NAWF and could be considered 'lush.' Today the field is at absolute cut-out capping yield potential. Boll set is better than expected for this rapid drop off and amount of applied heat stress.



Field recently reached absolute cut-out but still has many bolls to set and fill.

## Cotton

Our program cotton ranges in stage from a how is this field this late  $\frac{3}{4}$  grown square to absolute cut-out of less than 3.5 NAWF. The majority of fields are between 5 NAWF and cut-out with more than half our fields in cut-out. Few fields, even those that have been in cut-out over a week, have drop higher than a drought induced 30% yet with most still able to get just enough irrigation to set small bolls. This can change rapidly without moisture help quickly. I would not consider a boll set until it is at least the size of a quarter or larger. Until that level

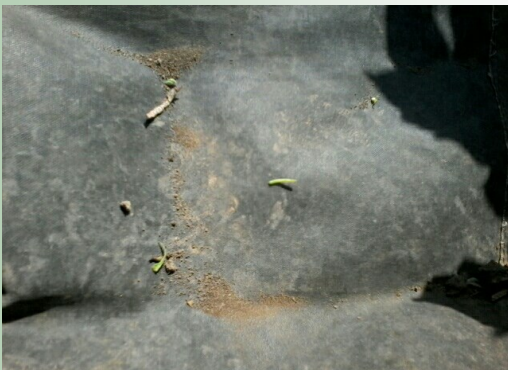
of boll development, plants can and do quickly abscise bolls it does not feel it has moisture to fill them.

Insect activity does seem to be dropping off as fields enter absolute cut-out greatly. Still we had 67% of our fields found with bollworm eggs this week. With a number of factors impacting this cotton egg lay ranging from predation to heat sterilization, very few bollworms were found with the highest population being 2,903 small worms per acre. We are finding the most bollworm and beneficial activity in the lushest fields in those hot spot bollworm areas. The bollworm moth flight might be starting to spread away from the hot spots noted over the past few weeks

across more areas. This might just be a wealth of bollworms starting to move from the few area maturing corn fields where they had a very 'happy' home. They might not be finding very many suitable hosts and could settle on even drought stressed and cut-out cotton unless we can turn the last of the squares in to large bolls quickly. With only large bolls available, worms will have a hard time establishing. As rapidly as cotton is 'progressing' this is a real good possibility resulting from a tough reality. We are still picking up stink bugs at a sub-ET rate in about 25% of our cotton fields and we have noted a small amount of stink bug boll feeding dropping on our drop cloths near these sightings. Spider mites can still be found on cotton the southern areas of Hale and Floyd but are still far from economic today. While FAW numbers are up



A once 'lush' central Swisher field this week at cut-out but with good boll load on a larger plant with a more squares to bloom soon.

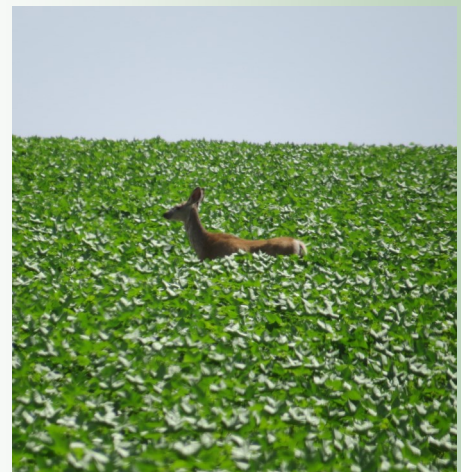


Cabbage loopers are foliage feeders and require very high numbers to reach ET. A few are turning up in our non-Bt fields this year at sub-ET levels.

in the area and on other crops, we have not noted any in cotton.



Bollworm egg in a central Swisher Strider image of one of our data sets this week.



Even the local wildlife is surviving on irrigation only this week in a Southwestern Hale cotton field.

## Corn

Our program corn fields were in late dough to very early dent this week. Both fields reached ET for spider mites last week. This week the mites remained the primary pest of note, but seemed pretty well 'corralled' for the first 6 DAT or less with no increases in population or infested leaf area. After the 10 DAT mark, populations should drop rapidly if our control products work properly. Bollworms, or CEW if you prefer, were vacating ears as corn starts becoming unattractive for egg lay and too ears tough for that species to feed on. FAW could still be found and should still be an economic concern, but were primarily only found at the ear tip. Diseases remain very light.



'Corralled' mites this week did not increase once treated. Populations should start dropping quickly about 7-10 DAT.

## Sorghum

Our program sorghum and seed milo fields ranged in stage from VX to early dough. For once the SCA is not the primary pest of concern in area sorghum. It appears that the FAW is, at least for late planted sorghum fields still in whorl stages. ET for whorl stage sorghum is about 30% foliage lost. I have not seen any field at that level ever. This treatment level has come into question recently, but even trimming by half, the heaviest I have noted this season was about 12%. This 12% loss field was overestimated by the producer to be 70%. This level is very unsightly and easily overestimated without a solid visual guide in your hand. Still, 12% should not be economic unless some head feeding is accumulating deep within the whorl or near flag and boot stage. Higher value seed sorghums might have a lower ET for foliage feeding based upon grain value. Otherwise, I have viewed this recent attraction to whorl sorghum by the FAW as a nice sink for a very bad pest to go where they can do limited damage. The next generation of worms that emerges during grain fill, or for fields with heads exposed now, should be more of a concern with direct yield feeding a issue. To find the exact ET for your sorghum field, here is a link to our sorghum headworm calculator: <https://agrilife.org/extensionento/sorghum-headworm-calculator/> Headworms, of both CEW and FAW on our sorghum heads are running between 0 and 0.47 per head this week.



Blooming seed milo in northwestern Hale this week.



225 Broadway, Suite 6  
Plainview, TX 79072

Tel: 806.291.5267  
Fax: 806.291.5266

E-mail: [Blayne.Reed@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:Blayne.Reed@ag.tamu.edu)

WEB

<http://hale.agrilife.org>

For quicker pest alerts-

*Plains Pest  
Bugshere:*

<http://halecountyipm.blogspot.com/>

*Pest Patrol Hotline,  
registration at:*

[www.syngentapestpatrol.com](http://www.syngentapestpatrol.com)

Educational programs by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, religion, sex, disability or national origin. The information given herein is for educational purposes only. References to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is implied nor does it imply its approval to the exclusion of other products that

*We're on the air...*

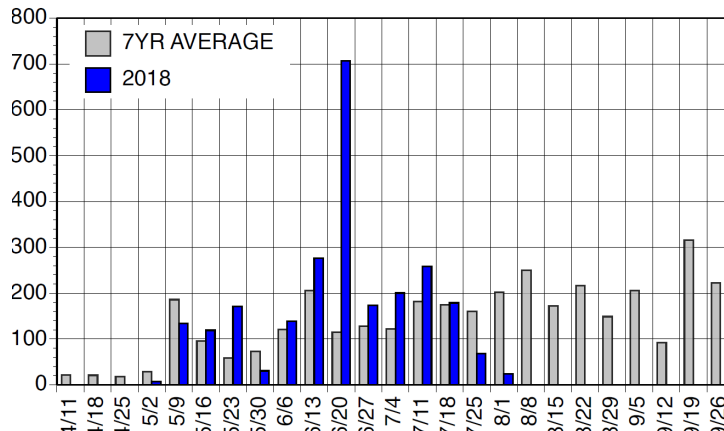
*"All Ag, All Day"*

Check out our bi-weekly IPM update with the crew from All Ag, All Day—900 AM KFLP or 800 AM KDDD



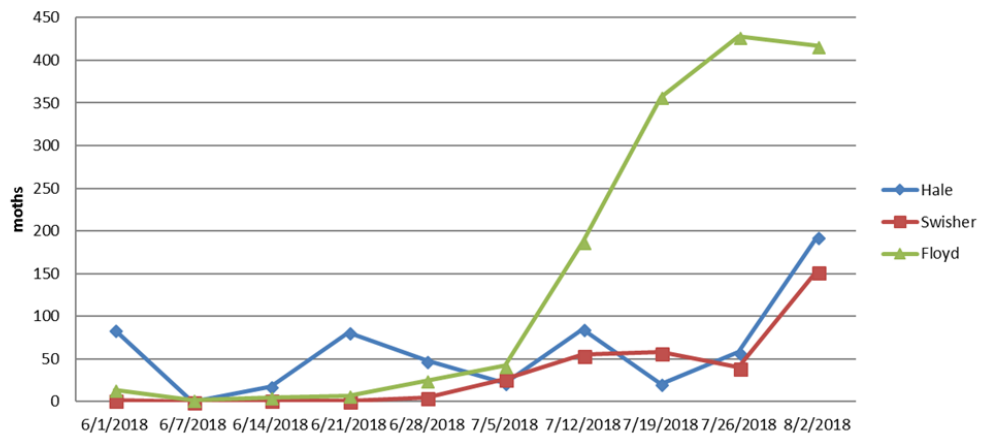
The SCA in our sorghum fields remain just below ET but creeping upward daily with very heavily infested hot spots surrounded by large areas of very few infested plants with small, hard to find colonies. The aphid expansion continues this week, but remains slower than previous seasons and thus not at ET yet. Other area fields have reached ET and needed prompt treatment. We are also finding midge around 0.05 to 0.2 per head, but still primarily along field margins.

Average number of fall armyworm moths per trap per week, Lubbock, Texas, 2018. Averages are based on two traps.



This week's FAW for Lubbock, and our Hale trap, are underperforming due to a faulty pheromone issue. This week's catches (sh) could be at least 4-5X what is shown above.

2018 Adult Bollworm Moth Trap Catches



Blayne Reed