

SEPTEMBER 3, 2021

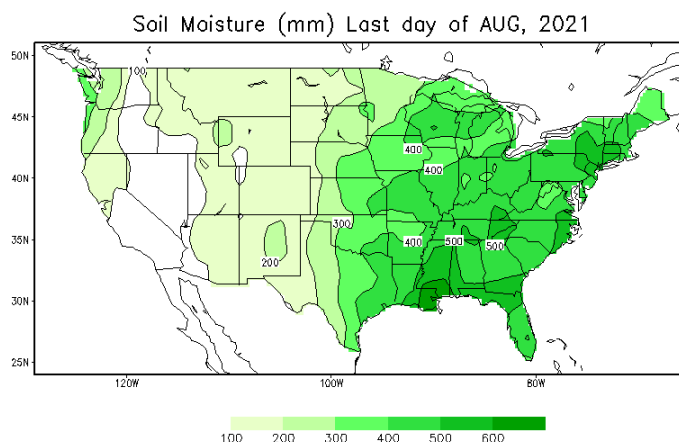
General Status

For field scouting, this week is typically a week of winding down and making sure the pests were not a threat to all but the latest fields and starting a more focused effort on just those fields. This year, the late fields are the normal and it seems the pests are happy to remain on the offensive. It is only the odd field that is sporting the open boll or starting its dry down for harvest. Whether it is a chicken or the egg situation as to which comes first, it really does not matter. We still have healthy pest populations that can cause economic damage to most fields while most fields are still susceptible. While we should be very mindful this upcoming week about pest treatments and just how much realistic yield we are protecting this late, particularly in cotton, we are still finding fields that we strongly felt were justified in receiving treatment. While speaking this week to one of our region's outstanding independent crop consultants, he exhaustingly called this year, "The never-ending pest season."



With multiple in-season PGR applications, 2 weeks without irrigation, and solid late fall heat, several area cotton fields are still not at cut-out.

Cumulative Heat Unit Calculator			
Start Date	Corn	End Date	
4/19/2021		10/1/2021	
Total Heat Units			3097.70
Start Date	Cotton	End Date	
5/24/2021		11/1/2021	
Total Heat Units			1634.80
Calculate			



Cotton

Despite our concerns over the late crop, we do have a minority of fields that are 'past' economic insect damage. Meaning these fields have no fruit left except large bolls from top to bottom that our typical primary pests such as Lygus or bollworms could not impact even in high numbers. While we generally refer to these fields as past economic pest damage, they should still be periodically checked for secondary pests such as cotton aphids, and especially this year, stink bugs (as they have been unusually high this year while not economic yet) as they can mass and cause damage to much older bolls. In our scouting program, less than

10% are in this stage this week, or will be next week. Most are in their first or second week post absolute cut-out and still have blooms visible. There is very little if any chance these very late blooms can make, they can provide a starting source for bollworm populations to start on and develop into worms large enough to threaten larger fruit that will make. They also remain very attractive to Lygus and other plant bug populations allowing them to gather and possibly feed indiscriminately between fruit that has no chance and fruit that can make, at least up to a 750-heat unit boll.



Example of a field 'past' economic insect damage from southern Hale this week.

We are still finding bollworms and egg lay in-field from an active moth population. Moths remain more attracted to late corn, where they are of little to no economic importance and our cotton population remains light but potentially dangerous. We did



Bollworm popped from a boll in western Hale this week.

find a non-Bt field at 6,948 small and medium worms per acre this week feeding on fruit with good chances of making and recommended treatment. Our next highest population was below 3,000 worms and eggs were hard to find this week. Lygus pressure remains high and seems to be concentrating on lush cotton or sorghum in dough or late dough stages. We did recommend treatment for another Lygus infested cotton field again. This field held 1 Lygus per 1.12 row feet and were causing drop

of large bolls and small fruit alike. These were our only two fields requiring treatment this week, but I urge producers not to go lax on pest situations now. By my estimations, both of these pest situations were causing between \$80-\$175 damage per acre with current cotton lint prices, certainly enough to cover a late treatment if needed.

Verticillium Wilt



This week is the perfect time to evaluate your Verticillium Wilt pressure in your cotton. While there is little that has been proven to be effective once symptoms show, management such as crop rotation or resistant variety selection changes for next year could be in order if the pressure is high enough.

Aphid populations in our fields crashed under beneficial pressure this week with no field holding more than 1 aphid per leaf. Stink bugs remain common but sub-economic in most cotton fields. It would not be unprecedented to the area for this pest to mass in select fields early in our harvest aid evaluation season and cause severe boll rot to hard lock damage.



Lygus on our drop cloth from the field we had to treat this week with nymphs of all sizes and adults alike.



While late and often rankish, the cotton crop has plenty of potential and is manageable for maturity with continued heat-unit accumulation through September.

Corn



From a field with treatable levels of southern rust near Tulia (top) to a field increasing with southern rust near Cotton Center (bottom), this disease is increasing in most fields.

Our oldest corn field is drying for harvest while our youngest is in blister stage. Most of our fields can be considered late which is not really an economic concern for these fields the way it is in cotton. Fields are developing well and would be 'safe' from weather save a mid-September freeze. Southern rust was our largest concern this week with several fields reaching treatable levels and most fields experiencing more disease increases. Farther increases can be expected for this disease as cool-dewy mornings and high humidity or water splash will increase the disease's spread. Banks grass mites continue to be found in most of our data sets, but levels have dropped this week with plenty of mite specific predators such as six-spotted thrips and predacious mite populations in-

creasing rapidly. Surprisingly, mite diseases have not increased with the increase in heavy dewy mornings. We remain on the lookout for fall armyworm, corn borers and western bean cutworms in our fields but are finding little if any evidence so far.



Yield potential for our late corn looks solid to above average and all corn earworm (bollworm) activity seems limited to the tip with FAW hard to find in corn.

Sorghum

Our oldest sorghum is entering late dough stages while our youngest is just sending up flag leaves. Our largest grouping of sorghum fields is starting to show color. Sugarcane aphids remain tuned to the same station again this week, with a few more fields moving above ET and requiring treatment almost in order and on schedule as fields reach soft dough. We did however witness a population from two fields near each other that had the aphid population almost completely crash this week before they reached ET. This is certainly noteworthy, and it is nearing a 'typical' time (if anything can be said to be typical about this aphid yet)

for the population to crash as they have done in recent years. So far, this is not area wide, so we remain watchful in fields not yet treated. We noted an increase in sorghum midge in our blooming fields this week that still remained sub-economic. Our heaviest populations for all of our fields were edge plants where heads began averaging 1 to 3 midge per head but quickly leveled off once we moved deeper into fields to about 0.25 midge per head for an overall average that remained below ET and not harsh enough to trigger an edge treatment. During bloom, midge should be scouted for daily, typically between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Here is a link to a how to scout for midge video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K4Flf4AdeNw>

Here is a link to a very handy sorghum midge threshold calculator: <https://extensionentomology.tamu.edu/sorghum-midge-calculator/>



One of our younger sorghum fields still hosting FAW below ET feeding in the whorl as flags start to show.

Our highest population was about 4.8 Lygus per head with most fields sporting less than 1 per head. The best hint we currently have for an economic level of Lygus in High Plains sorghum indicates that it should take about 12 Lygus per head before economic damage occurs. This might decrease for sorghum at soft dough stage but the Lygus seem more attracted to more developed heads. Stink bugs were also more of a common find in sorghum this week but were also well below ET.



Seed milo maturing well in NW Hale this week.

Headworms remain almost unchanged from last week with no populations becoming economic and predators remaining common in our heads. The populations were mostly bollworm again from Plainview north but shifted to mostly FAW from Plainview south this week. Lygus populations were certainly on the increase in our sorghum, especially as sorghum heads began showing color and forming solid



FAW damage remains common in whorl stages, but the head remains unaffected.



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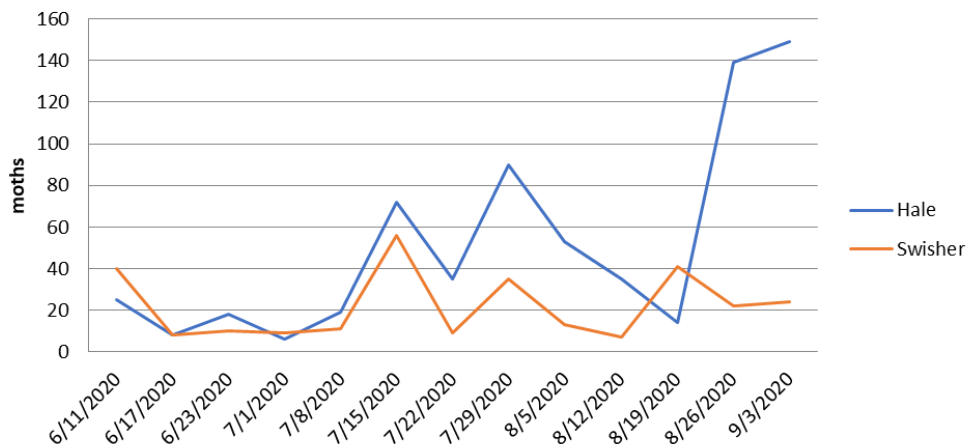
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2021 Adult Bollworm Moth Trap Catches



Keep your eyes open for information on our Hale, Swisher, and Floyd Cotton Field Day!!!! We will be mobile from Variety Trial to Research Plot in the Counties.

September 22, 2021

Blayne Reed