

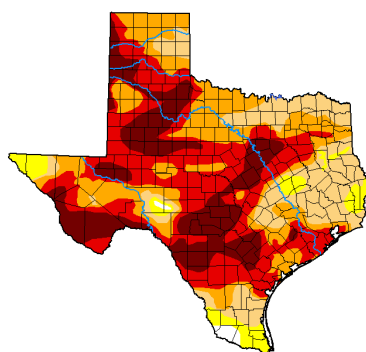
JULY 15, 2022

General Status

Progress, or at least movement, continues through the summer with little change in the extreme situations. Much fewer convective showers were able to pop through the heat dome this week. While most of those did not offer much more than a few hours' worth of moisture to plants burn through quickly, they gave short some respite in the intense heat and pressure our surviving crops and animals are under. Without even that limited help, limited irrigation systems have fallen even farther behind. There are some good-looking fields of all summer crops thriving out there but with each passing heat unit without rainfall help I am seeing more and more of these good-looking fields become overtaken by the extreme situation and slip into drought stress. In many cases, this drought stress goes from measurable to extremely serious in a matter of days despite irrigation systems already working at max capacity. On the plus side, I have seen some amazing weed control this year with a few fields as exceptions. I think this morning I scouted a field and recorded no weeds found. I do not think I have done that in over 10 years at least. That being said, we now

U.S. Drought Monitor  
 Texas

July 12, 2022  
 (Released Thursday, Jul. 14, 2022)  
 Valid 8 a.m. EDT



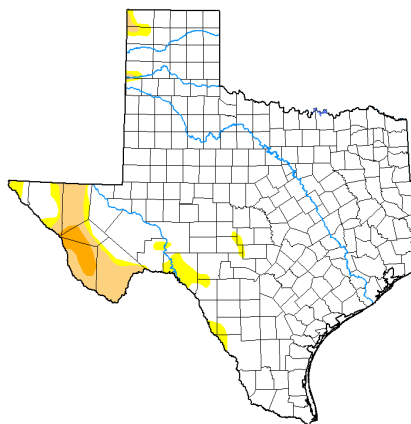
**Intensity:**  
 None  
 D0 Abnormally Dry  
 D1 Moderate Drought  
 D2 Severe Drought  
 D3 Extreme Drought  
 D4 Exceptional Drought

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

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USDA NDMC NWS  
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July 13, 2021



My probes shown much less deep moisture than this chart from last year shows. I maintain we might be drier than shown this year too.

have several fields reach economic levels for fleahoppers this week with pockets of high and low pressure scattered across both Hale and Swisher. Apparently not wanting to miss the party just in case our fields desiccate before the summer ends, bollworms have started showing up in several of our cotton fields with viable eggs and hungry worms. While neither are in all fields, we must maintain a solid scouting presence in every field less these pests rob what yield potential endures through tremendous effort so far.

## Cotton

Our youngest Plains Pest Management scouting program cotton was a very late 5<sup>th</sup> true leaf stage while our most advanced came in at a drought stressed 5.3 NAWF (nodes above white flower). Only about 15% of our fields could be measured by NAWF yet. We had half or four surviving fields coming into first bloom this week with fist bloom occurring anywhere between 5-9 NAWF. In this bloom stage entry point, there was no or very little middle ground. If fields were stressed, they exhibited 5-6



Older plant bug caused square drop in western Swisher this week.

NAWF, if they were not, they shown 1<sup>st</sup> bloom at 8-9 NAWF. The other half of our cotton fields are between 1/2 grown square and 9/10 grown square stage.



Fleahopper, stunned still on drop-cloth

Until this week, we had seen very few fleahopper nymphs found among the high number of fields that were infested with some level of fleahoppers with almost all of these pests being adults. This 3-week streak ended when the nymphs finally turned up in many area fields alongside the adults in force and increasing square drop to unacceptable levels. Not every field reached ET but high population pockets range across both counties and conversely there are areas without any pressure at all. Our fleahopper pressure ranged from none found up to the equivalent of 55% terminals infested. Our square drop jumped where this level of fleahoppers were with loss ranging between 16.9% up to 28% but generally remained below 10% if fleahoppers were either absent or below ET.



Lygus found on a drop-cloth by Brenden Adams, PPM field scout, this week.

Fleahoppers will remain a threat pest until fields reach a consistent bloom stage when fleahoppers can easily find the blooms, at which point they will start moving to the blooms to feed on pollen where they will do no economic damage. One by

**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	Dicrctophos*	4.0-8.0	0.25-0.5	32-16

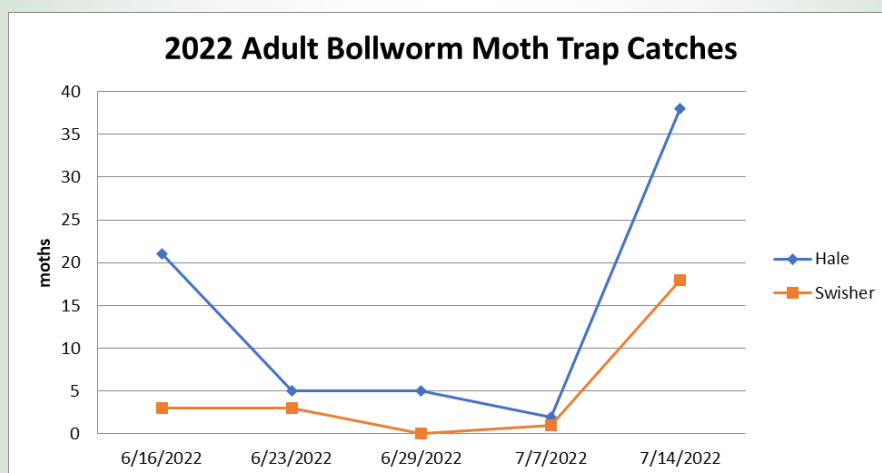
\*Various generics/brands available

fields should start moving past economic fleahopper concerns soon. However, this can be a very dangerous time. While a field might be blooming, blooms might not be easily found by the less mobile fleahopper nymphs until just about every plant blooms and damage to small square could continue to accumulate for a time past 1<sup>st</sup> bloom. Lygus will remain a threat pest until the last harvestable bolls reach 350 heat units or basically through to a week after absolute cut-out much later this season.

Bollworms have begun moving on our cotton in force this week. We have found none at treatable levels yet, but it does appear that most if not all of the eggs we are seeing this week are viable. We are still only finding them when corn is not in the general vicinity, but many more fields have had eggs laid in them than was expected with almost 20% of our fields with some level of pressure. Our highest field held 5,346 bollworm eggs per acre while our highest worm population came in at 2,224 worms per acre with a corresponding 2.1% harvestable boll damage. This infestation is early for the High Plains to be infested with bollworms by any metric used and it remains unclear if these worms are migratory or a surviving overwintered population that benefited from the lack of tillage this last winter. Either way, the drought reduced corn acres in the area is experiencing heavy pressure as a sink crop and there remains plenty of worms left over to move on the only other green crop around. With very few bolls in field yet, the smaller and less nutritious for the worms squares could be doubly at risk. It should not take as many worms per acre to reach ET this early, but the 6% harvestable fruit damage metric threshold should be a solid decision tool.



One of the larger bollworms in cotton that PPM field scout Brenden Adams found this week.



With a change in the pheromone source, our traditional bollworm moth traps began picking up a higher population of moths too. These are near cotton only with no corn in the general vicinity. This likely represents the tail end of the moth bell curve and not the high.

## Corn & Sorghum

Our oldest sorghum is in boot stage this week while our youngest is still emerging-V1. Our only corn field was in tassel to green silk stage this week. We still do not have any sorghum aphids, formerly known as sugarcane aphids, in our sorghum. We do have good independent crop consultants and entomologists in the area that are reporting economic populations that built fairly quickly to our east, south, and west. We just have not detected any in our field yet. Some light yellow sugarcane aphid pressure can still be



PPM corn and sorghum this week.

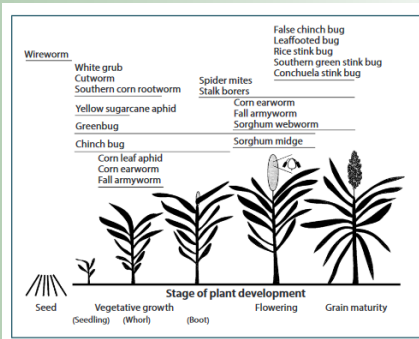


Figure 1. Sorghum insect pest occurrence

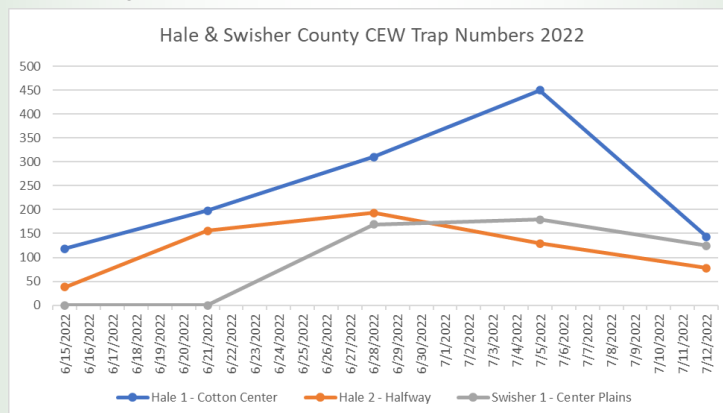
found in our sorghum. Spider mites (all BGM for

now) have built in both our sorghum and corn. In our sorghum they reached a damage rating of 2.5 this week with 3.5-4 on the 0-10 damage rating scale being ET. In our corn, the mite specific predators were able to hold the mites steady at the 1-1.5 damage rating this week. Without available moisture to fuel the mites fungal diseases, I do not expect the predators to holdout much longer alone. No other major pest issues were noted in either

crop, with the noted exception of the bollworm (corn earworm) in corn where we are still only noting minor and non-economic tip feeding. With our sorghum entering bloom stage soon, it will be susceptible to sorghum midge. While August 4<sup>th</sup> is the average arrival date for the migrating sorghum midge, all sorghum in bloom should be scouted multiple times per while the field remains in bloom. Corn in silking stages through pollination will be susceptible to corn rootworm damage to the silks, which can be devastating to pollination if the adults are present. While we had no rootworms found, there are area fields that are planted continuously and/or annually in the same vicinity, which puts corn at a higher rootworm risk.



Corn rootworm photo



Our Texas Corn Producers corn earworm moth trap numbers are still high, but dropping this week.



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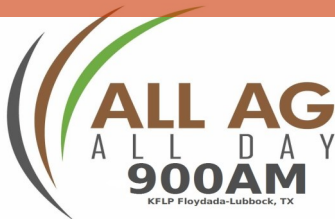
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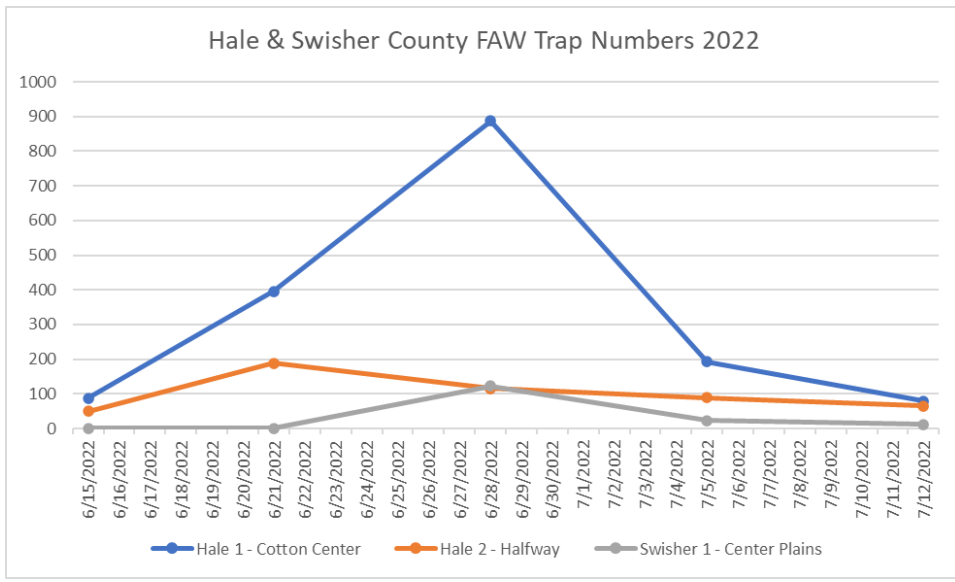
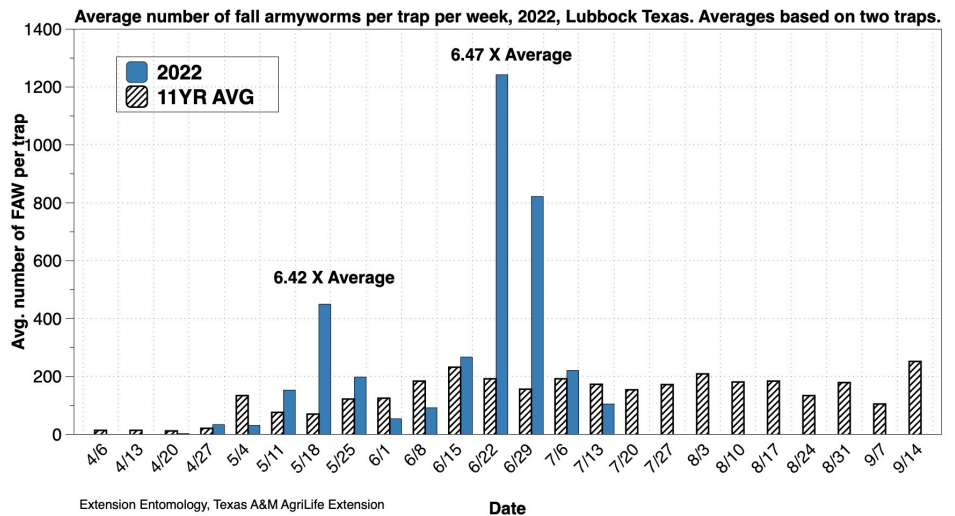
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Both the Dr. Porter's FAW and our corn pest FAW trap numbers are down again this week. We never noted just where or if all of these moths laid their eggs. We had a small percentage of whorl damaged sorghum plants and noted FAW eggs in whorl stage Bt corn several weeks ago and can only assume the whorl stage Bt corn controlled the resulting larva.

*Blayne Reed*