

JUNE 30, 2023

### General Status

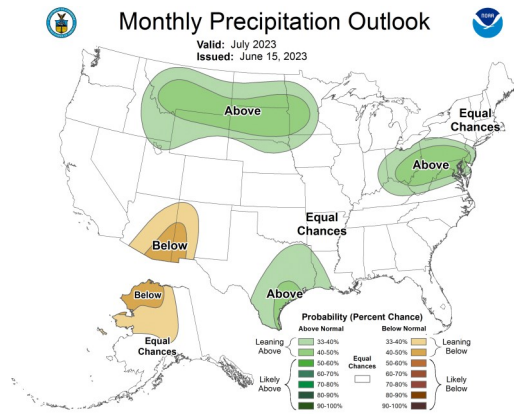
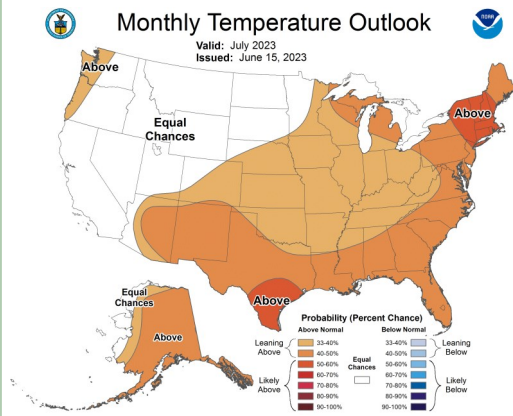
After a very hot week, and a general drying of the environment, some pests are starting to show or move into our area fields. Nothing that we have found in our program is near economic levels, but we have reports from within our region from our friends and neighbors of a few fields needing treatments for these same pests. At the same time, we received a warning from down state of a very high population of bollworms doing serious damage that could head our way later this year. In the meantime, we are still zipping through our generally late fields, rapidly attacking our management duties while we look and hope for the next rain event, praying it will bring moisture without destruction.



Images from our most mature corn, cotton and sorghum this week.

#### Extended Forecast for Plainview TX

This Afternoon	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
Increasing Clouds	70% Severe Thunderstorms then Mostly Cloudy	30% Chance T-storms	30% Chance T-storms	20% Slight Chance T-storms then Sunny	30% Chance T-storms	Mostly Sunny	Slight Chance T-storms	Sunny
High: 89 °F	Low: 62 °F	High: 84 °F	Low: 63 °F	High: 87 °F	Low: 63 °F	High: 88 °F	Low: 64 °F	High: 91 °F



## Cotton

Our Plains Pest Management scouting program cotton ranged in stage from germination through matchhead square stage with most fields starting to sport their first squares. Thrips, even for the youngest fields still at risk of thrips damage, are very light or not causing much damage. Fleahoppers and other plant bugs, mostly Lygus, are our main insect focus for cotton. Late in the



Adult fleahopper found in central Swisher this week.

week fleahoppers, and even a few Lygus started showing in our fields with some regularity. All of our found plant bugs were adults, indicating that these pests are moving about the area, looking for the most suitable host location. Our higher counts for either pest came in at 10% terminals infested with more than half the fields having no plant bugs found. Square retention remained high with what drop was found looking to mostly be caused by environmental factors. In the fields where plant bugs were found, drop only once moved above 8%. By next week our oldest cotton fields should be old

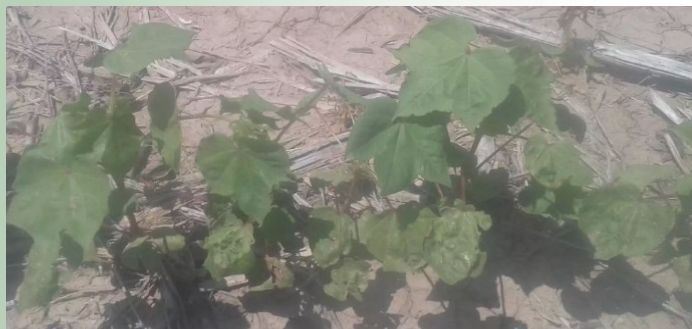
enough to be scouted with both drop cloths or sweep nets in addition to our standard whole plant inspections. This will vastly increase our scouted sample size of plants per field without slowing us down.

*Mozena obtuse* and a few other stink bugs continue to be noted in the area, but no damage was noted to their feeding this early. We have found a few pockets of true armyworms, beet armyworms, cabbage loopers, and a few other foliar feeders in a notable minority of fields. The caterpillars were actually larger than they should be if they had been feeding on cotton with most being 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> instars. The noted damage from these Lepidopterans was light so far, and any Bt trait should still offer outstanding control in cotton. It is suspected that these larvae had developed on recently controlled weeds and were only now moving to the cotton. Hopefully the Bt will control these pests, but it is one more thing we should be scouting our young cotton for next week. The ET for these foliar feeders is about



True armyworm from southern Swisher this week.

50,000 per acre for foliar feeding only or 6% of harvestable fruit damage but this threshold is based around more developed cotton,



NE Hale field showing old thrips and environmental damage with new growth and sporting squares and a healthier look.

likely in bloom stages or at least late square stages. I would suggest a lower threshold for cotton if an issue arises at matchhead square stage or less. Always consult our Managing Cotton Insects of Texas for specific management guidelines:

<https://extensionentomology.tamu.edu/files/2018/03/>

ENTO075.pdf



## Corn & Sorghum



Most of our V stage corn has ragged and torn leaves suspected to be from wind in the heat, but few pests yet.

Our youngest sorghum and corn are still going in the soil this week while our oldest fields are about V9 to 10 stages. All pests remain below ET this week, but pest population were noted in more than half the fields and the majority of older fields this week. In corn we were finding Banks grass mites in very small establishment colonies on the lowest of leaves. It was noted that predation on the mites up until now seems to have been high, but not from the typical mite predator species, but from the general thrips population, who feeds on leaves indiscriminately on corn leaves without injury, killing mites as the feed. We do not know if this trend will continue or if we can expect the more traditional species of mite predators to respond.

In our older sorghum fields we noted

yellow sugarcane aphid (YSCA) feeding damage periodically on many of the lowest leaves indicating that a population was establishing. I need to note that the YSCA is of no relation to the sorghum aphid (formerly called the sugarcane aphid). YSCA are not nearly as prolific reproducers as the sorghum aphid, but they do inject toxin into the leaves killing them. This is similar to greenbugs, but the damage per aphid is much worse, killing whole leaves rapidly. In most seasons, we do lose a lower leaf or two to this



Our youngest sorghum is just starting out.

aphid, which would eventually be inconsequential. In the absence of high predator numbers and in hot and dry conditions, the aphid has proven on many occasions over the years to easily move up the plant and damage much more substantial leaves, even post boot stage. In Texas we currently do not have a formal economic threshold for this species. However, I have always had good luck adopting the research proven greenbug leaf damage rating system to this species. This can be found in our sorghum guide: <https://extensionentomology.tamu.edu/files/2019/02/Managing-Insect-and-Mite-Pests-of-Texas-Sorghum-ENTO-085-2018.pdf>. A brand newly revised sorghum guide should be available online shortly...

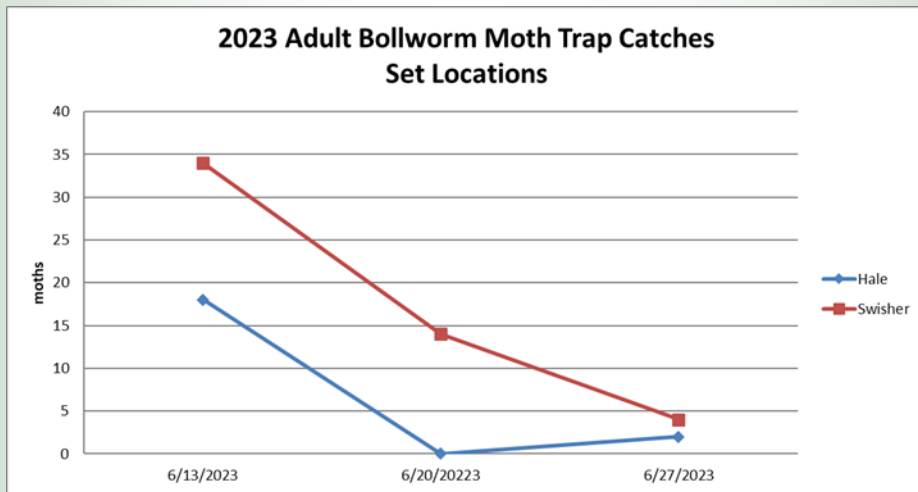
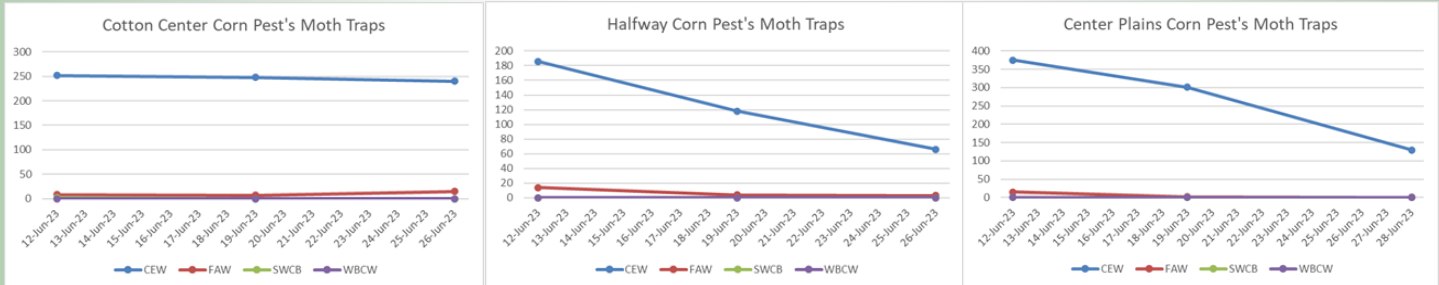


Yellow sugarcane aphid damage in north Hale this week is easily missed or miss identified and nutrient deficiency.

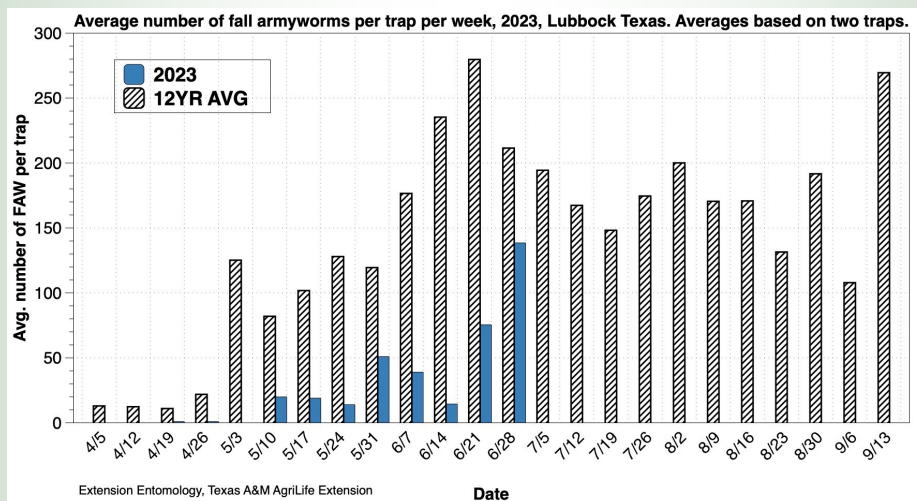
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## PPM 2023 Moth Trapping

Despite our Texas Corn Producers moth traps running high corn earworm numbers (bollworm) we are not seeing any whorl feeding in any field, Bt or not. Our standard and location set bollworm (CEW) moth trap numbers (not stationed near corn fields) numbers remain remarkably low. However, The Texas IPM Team received an urgent alert from Dr. David Kerns this week.



Meanwhile, Dr. Pat Porter's FAW numbers from Lubbock are running low too, but higher than our FAW numbers near corn and starting to increase.





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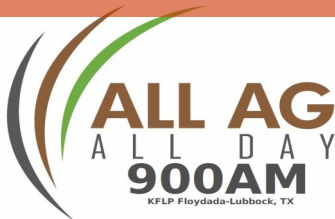
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### Bollworm Alert from Dr. David Kerns in College Station:

This week Dr. Kerns indicated that in his College Station cotton fields and research plots they are experiencing 30%-60% harvestable fruit damage to non-Bt cotton while Bollgard II and Widestrike 3 fields are over the 6% harvestable fruit damage threshold and requiring treatment too. At the time of this alert, Dr. Kerns had not been able to test these populations in his lab for Bt resistance. It is not known if this population is resistant to the Bt traits or just large enough to cause economic damage before consuming enough of the Bt toxin to kill the young larva. It is also not known if the survivors of that population of bollworms (corn earworms & sorghum



Bollworm on 2021 Hale cotton

headworms) will migrate here. We do know that in our high bollworm years, at least 75% of the problematic worms migrate here from these areas farther south where they experience the issue annually. I can expect with our late fields, of all crops, we should be bracing for economic bollworm, headworms, and even corn earworm (name depending on location) in a worse case scenario.

For example, we already know that in corn earworms are not usually economic, but recently the worms have proven that corn with only 2 Lepidopteran Bt traits lose their cannibalistic tendencies of keeping 1 worm per ear and will not move to find each other resulting in multiple worms feeding much farther down the ear than we can tolerate. I can also expect with our higher than normal volume of late planted sorghum and corn will be very attractive to these worms, should they migrate here. I suggest we prepare to



Multiple CEW on 2 Trait Bt corn in Hale 2022.

managing these general fruit feeders if they arrive. All fields need to be scouted at the time arises and in today's product shortage environment, choosing a product to store today could avoid disaster.

*Blayne Reed*

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