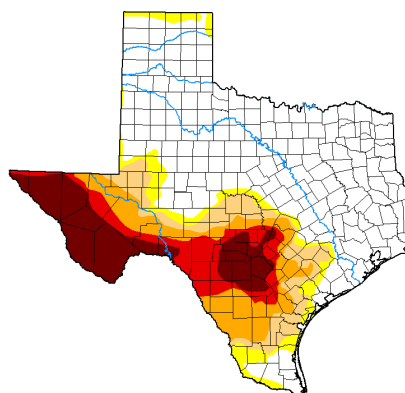


JUNE 6, 2025

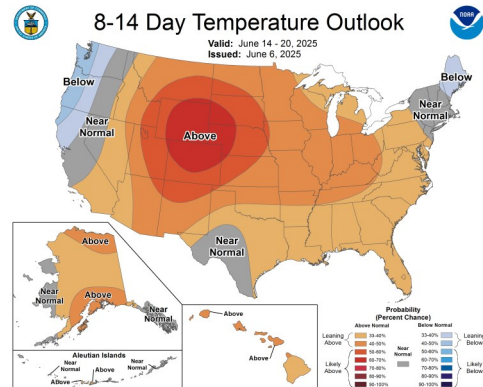
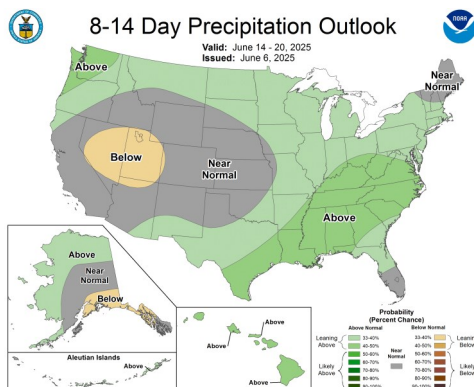
General Status

The 2025 growing season is off and well underway. With commodity prices and cost of production there does not seem to be much excitement in the region but at least we have had some rainfall to help the situation. While the rains have been highly variable in volume, most fields are in better shape for soil moisture than they have been in some time. Our long-stressed fields are sucking up the moisture fast but are still far from capacity. We have an increase in grain crop acres this year, and most are in decent shape, including most wheat. While this wheat is probably far from a bumper crop, it is more consistent across Hale & Swisher than it has been in recent years.

Although most of our still sizable cotton crop was planted later than some would like, we did experience a moist to wet early May that improved planting conditions for mid and late May that allowed most fields to start well. Our usual pest and weed hurdles are not sleeping this year, with several impacting a tight financial situation this year.

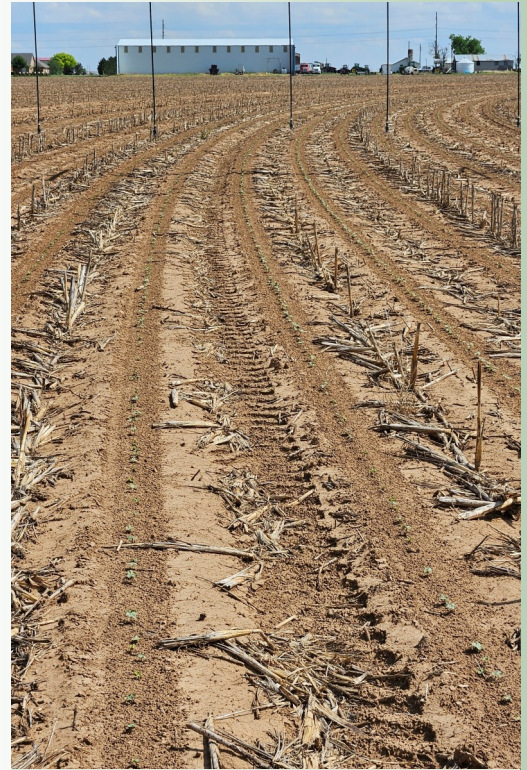


This current drought monitor map shows us in the clear from drought. I take some issue with this. I have found plenty of fields that did not get the 'high' amount of rainfall this is crediting us with across the region.



Cotton

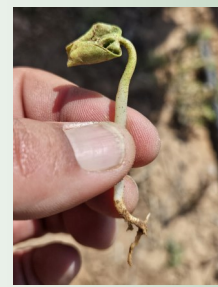
The rains of late this week stopped our field scouting cold, so we have not been able to make it to all of our Plains Pest Management fields yet. So far, we have cotton stages from dry seed in the ground up to 2nd true leaf with most fields hovering at cotyledon to 2nd leaf. The early season pests are cutting us no slack this year. Wireworm pressure is higher area wide than we have had in a few years. We have 3 active efficacy trials ongoing involving wireworm control. This year we are seeing about 95% or more of all seedings in this 'hot wireworm field' with some bites while last year this was closer to 35%. We are also seeing differences in treatments better this year under the higher pressure with effective treatments limiting the amount of damage to the preemergent seedlings by either repelling them or, hopefully in the case of some of the experimental treatments, killing them. As to why we are seeing more wireworms this year is debatable and hypothetical. The leading hypotheses are that it could be the pest's life cycle related, spring weed pressure (food source) related, weather and moisture availability, or even input cost reduction related. Our district researchers are just starting to study this pest issue in cotton more thoroughly as the problem expands. The more we are able to study and evaluate this pest, the better we will be able to control it economically. Today, I can state that if wireworms are in your fields, I can clearly tell if you utilized an insecticidal seed treatment this year.



A Southern Swisher field last week showing untreated cotton seed planted on the left and insecticide treated cotton seed planted on the right. The differences in plant stand are from wireworm damage.



Visuals from a 2025 Wireworm Efficacy Trial



The two images on the left are from untreated check plots of one of our efficacy trials. The image on the right is from a promising experimental in-furrow treatment. Note, all seedlings have wireworm damage on them, but the untreated damage is much more severe. The farthest left seedling might not have emerged while the other seedling would develop slowly with disease and developmental issues. The seedling on the right is not without any damage, but is much less severe and probably not set back much.

Thrips are also a bit more widespread this year, likely following the increase in wheat acres where they develop during the winter and spring. They are higher in the northern, more traditional high wheat production area but as wheat increased in acres farther south this year, the thrips population is higher farther south than usual this year also. Our highest populations so far this week were to the north near Tulia with a high of 2.59 thrips per true leaf but no field we have checked north of Plainview was below threshold of 1 thrips per true leaf. We did have some cotton near Hale Center stay below threshold so far that represent our low count numbers with several fields just averaging 0.5 thrips per true leaf but we also had fields in the same area near wheat with counts of 1.5 thrips per true leaf. All of our over threshold for thrips fields are either scheduled to have insecticide added to our first over the top herbicide treatment that are either starting soon or occurring now with a few fields in dire enough situations airplane applications were recommended.



Moderate to severe thrips damage this week between Claytonville and Providence.

The cooler, wetter May and some of June has led to an increase in seedling disease ratings in our program, but not to a point we are losing seedlings so far. We have not been able to evaluate any fields behind the rains and storms yet. To my knowledge, we have not lost any fields but will be surprised if that stands (or is even true).

Corn & Sorghum

The cooler temperatures have not slowed corn or sorghum yet with both crops doing well and experiencing few issues. Our corn ranged from V3 to V6 stage while our sorghum ranged from germinating to V6. We did note a few Banks grass mite colonies in a few corn fields and what was likely some corn earworm feeding in a few whorls but these were hard to find. To date, we have not found any corn leafhoppers in our program fields or extra monitoring fields this year. For the latest update on the state-wide monitoring of the corn leafhopper, please follow this link: <https://on.soundcloud.com/VokhlfpnzpfVrBKgJ>



SW Hale corn this week.



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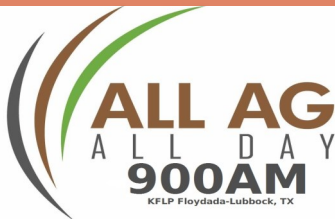
<https://halecountyipm.blogspot.com>

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phone, register at:*

PEST PATROL
BLAYNE REED
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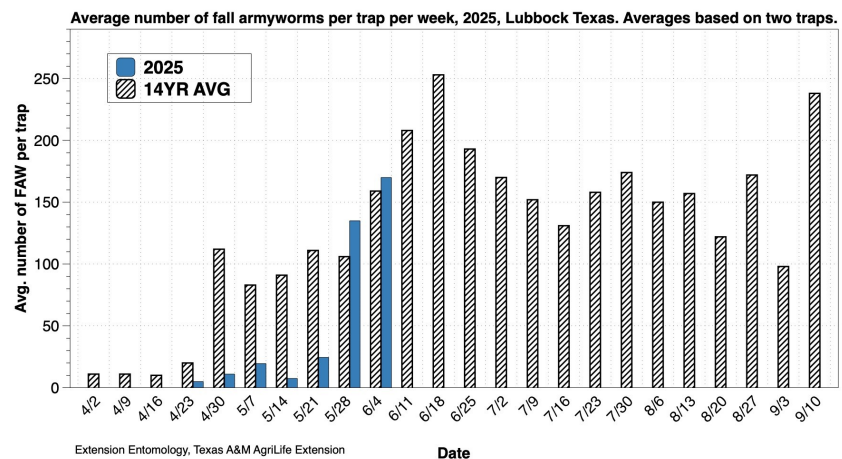
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General Pest Radar Alert

As I have gone about my usual duties near fields, pastures, and yards, I have noted another huge grasshopper hatch. For the past few years, some ridiculously high grasshoppers have tormented several pockets in the region. We have had to treat the edges of cotton, corn and sorghum fields and several horticulture and garden sites had to be treated repeatedly. The old textbook states that wet springs and early summers should lessen the grasshopper population and or impact. For one, many small nymphs and soil lain eggs should drown, two, predators could be more numerous feeding on the young nymphs, three, if their preferred food stays green, to do not leave it to congregate on irrigated 'garden' spots. So, I have been very surprised to see hundreds of tiny, recently hatched grasshoppers every time I kneel or glance down around native grass and pasture. I dare say, this population might be larger than last year, but this was noted before the most recent rains.



All of our bollworm and corn pest traps were placed this week. We should have the first week's of data available next week.

Blayne Reed