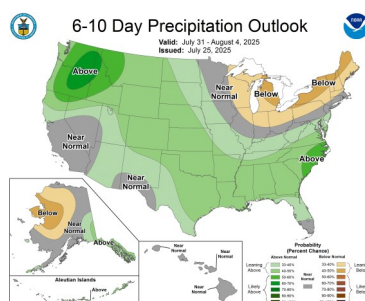
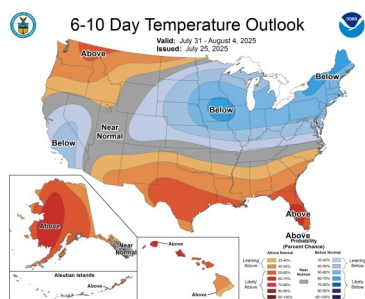


JULY 25, 2025

General Status

Our summer crops have progressed for another week, surprising rainfall keeps streaking across the region, but the pest pressure is remaining high on multiple fronts, and weeds continue to flush. While the rainfall has been mostly beneficial, it was again highly varied in amount, and this time I have reports of some pockets of wind damage and hail this week. Most irrigation systems are able to rest some, or at least not on full-out all summer. The producers I have the most interactions with that have active irrigation systems needed fertilizer applied, have a high water need crop, or missed the heavier rain amounts recently. Usually the active systems are likely to have more than one of those listed needs checked off. Still, I am unaware of any system that has had to



run fully yet. I do encourage producers to not overestimate rainfall impacts and let these fields fall behind, particularly if smaller amounts of moisture fell recently. We are nearing peak water use for our cotton and sorghum fields, while we are there or a bit passed on corn. Our optimum crop needs, during peak fruit set, are very likely to be higher than several areas rainfall sooner than we would like. On the other hand, it is fairly common so far to not be able to tell the difference between dryland and irrigated acres in many areas. While most of our scouting is conducted in irrigated crops, much of our recent research conducted through Cotton Incorporated these past 3-years, reaffirmed that pests will not differentiate between irrigated and dryland so long as the environmental niche remains the same or similar. I suggest these dryland fields not be ignored as they will are not likely to be able to make up any lost yield later due to moisture availability.

Cotton

Our Plains Pest Management cotton ranged in stage from $\frac{3}{4}$ grown square on a few late fields through 7.8 nodes above white flower (NAWF). While we had several fields just making first bloom, the vast majority of our fields were at stages that were far enough along to capture NAWF counts. Of these, most fields were between 8 and 9 NAWF with several even ranging up to 10.5 NAWF. It is very rare that cotton's first blooms in our High Plains environment with NAWF counts that high. This likely speaks volumes about the moisture from rainfall and the overall environment we have had thus far in the season with higher-than-normal humidity, and cooler temperatures. While our first bloom date is well within an average range, this high NAWF number might be something to watch, especially when the rainfall spigot gets turned off and high heat returns, which could result in excessive fruit shed if plants are not managed optimally. By the same token, we may need to watch this plant progression if rainfall and cool environment continues as



Cotton plant in SW Swisher with a high NAWF count this week.

plants would need to be managed completely differently to not overshoot a freeze date by going rank by fall.

As for our pests, Fleahoppers remained center stage and with heavy pressure.

Despite fields blooming enough to capture NAWF data, most of the fields we were forced to treat this week had a hefty supply of fleahopper nymphs right out of the egg. While Fleahoppers will typically move to feed on blooms to feed at this stage, no where near every plant had blooms on them yet. These tiny fleahopper nymphs are not mobile enough to search for blooms, especially when ample squares are nearby. We are also dealing with numbers of infestation rates between 40 and 70% or so being common in



Adult fleahopper (top) from last week and 4 fleahopper nymphs just emerged (below) this week.



2 recently blasted squares from fleahopper nymph feeding in the terminal this week in SW Swisher while plants have started blooming.

in these fields. We also had a sharp increase in fruit drop, particularly from newly developed squares. It was pretty clear that the plant bugs were causing this damage. For the 2025 season, there are only 2 PPM cotton fields that have not been treated for Fleahoppers thus far. The only two that have not been treated are the later fields yet to bloom. In these fields only adult Fleahoppers were found at sub threshold levels, which was where most of the fields we had to treat were last week. Thanks to our choice of long lasting residual products that are easier on beneficials, still building in field, we have not had to re-treat any field yet, even fields treated 3 weeks ago, are still below threshold but are now showing a rebuilding population of Fleahoppers. Hopefully, these fields will be truly passed fleahopper damage soon.

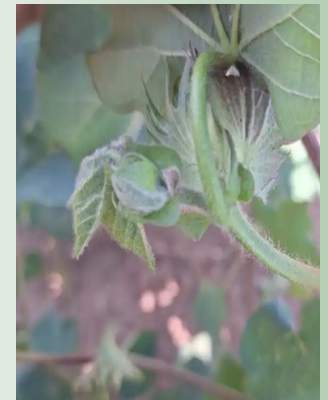


Lygus adult—Photo Dr. Pat Porter



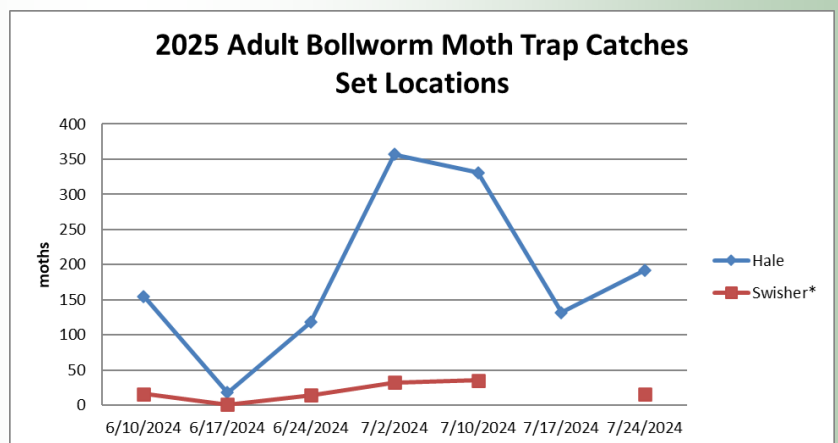
Adult Lygus and fleahopper nymph roughly caught in central Hale this week.

Lygus increased in severity again this week with us finding some level of pressure in most cotton fields. In a few cases, they made the decision to treat Fleahoppers easier by adding to the pressure, but in one field, the Lygus were high enough alone to warrant treatment at 1 Lygus per 4.5 row feet. For fields with a fleahopper issue alone, the length of residual for a given product might not be as serious as it was a few weeks ago, but if Lygus are in the mix I encourage the use of long residual products that still save beneficials. Most indicators look like the next set of pest species that can attack our upcoming stages of cotton could also be problematic. Our bollworm trap counts have slacked some but are still above recent year's averages and we are still approaching our average high moth flight date next month and stink bugs are being reported as potential issues nearby.



Fleahopper or Lygus blasted square from NW Hale this week.

Lygus are building and will be a threat for some time. We may need every beneficial predator we can get to save every dollar we can from an integrated standpoint now more than ever.



Corn

Our PPM corn ranged in stage from V5 through R3. Most of our fields are coming in around R2 and nearing a safe from the corn leafhopper stage. These corn leafhoppers are becoming a little easier to find this week, which includes some nymphs, which indicates reproduction has been going on while they were very hard to find. Late fields in Hale, Swisher, and Floyd in a pre V8 stage should be considered for treatment of this pest, even if they have not been found in that field.



Early R3 corn in SW Hale this week.

For the balance of our 'normal' corn pests there is not as much 'excitement.'

We are scouting hard for southwestern corn borer, during a window that would have been 2nd generation egg lay from



The largest BGM colony found in our PPM fields so far in SW Swisher this week at -3 leaf.

when they were a prominent pest in the region. It has been sometime since I have even seen any eggs, but a few have turned up in our Texas Corn Producers corn pest traps this year. We are watching hard for them because of resistance to Bt found in SW New Mexico that could move our way. We have not seen any so far, but there is a strong population just to our west. Spidermites were again our most notable corn pest with Banks grass mites slightly increasing in most fields but still not economic. We are also keeping tabs on the bollworm, or in this case, corn earworm but have not noted any excess feeding going



Image from central Hale showing tip feeding only from CEW on older ear this week.

beyond the tip. Bt Fields with the VIP trait look to be holding populations very well. Diseases have generally increased this week also, but also only slightly with common rust being the most noteworthy. Late season decline (LSD) can be seen in most fields but at very low levels in post tasseled fields. Our earlier, pre-tassel discovered LSD fields have not increased in seriousness greatly yet. Beneficials continue to increase, mostly working on mite colonies.

Sorghum

Our PPM sorghum ranges in stage from VX through 75% bloom. Most fields are currently in bloom and at risk from sorghum midge. I did find one in southwestern Hale this week, but no more were found. Scouting for sorghum midge is unique as plants are only susceptible while in bloom, but fields should be scouted daily. For details on how to scout for this pest, I suggest following this link to a how to scout for midge we made a few years ago:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K4Flf4AdeNw&t=13s>



Sorghum in S Swisher this week.

We did find a few headworms in our sorghum this week but most had none found with the heaviest coming in



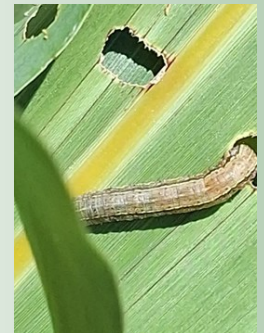
Image of an empty beat bucket this week with no worms found.

at 0.125 worms per head with most still being the bollworm but a few fall armyworms were found in the mix. The balance of panicle pests are right around the corner, and any post boot area field is already at risk for headworms, here is a how to scout video on them also:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Exki0Veiu9Y>

In our fields still in whorl stages, fall armyworm feeding remained very prominent but still below threshold. These worms are getting some age to them and should be watched. Both percent foliage loss and percent infested plants should be considered when evaluating FAW that can be found on the leaves in whorl stage sorghum. Here is the link to our most recent Insects of Texas Sorghum Guide: <https://>

extensionentomology.tamu.edu/resources/management-guides/sorghum/



FAW in SW Hale this week.



Large sorghum aphid colony in SW Hale this week.

Our most serious pest threat in sorghum this week was the sorghum aphid, the pest formerly known as the sugarcane aphid. This week we found several isolated hot spots in a few southwestern Hale County fields, but not many elsewhere. Our heaviest infested field had 20% of the plants with some level of aphid infestation and 1.69% with colonies larger than 50. The threshold for the sorghum aphid remains at 30% of plants infested with 50 or more aphids from flowering through dough stage. With this pest's reproductive capabilities, once established post boot, this might not take long.



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PEST PATROL

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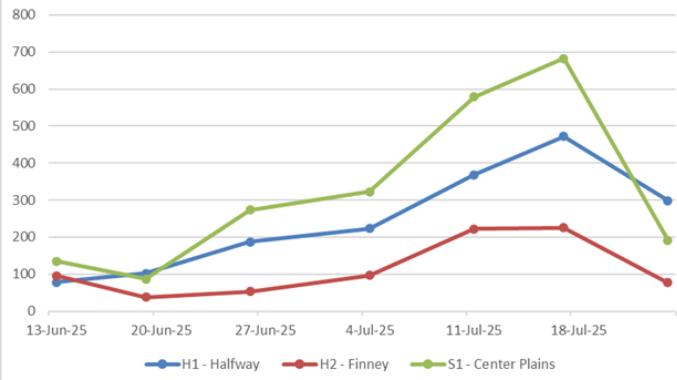
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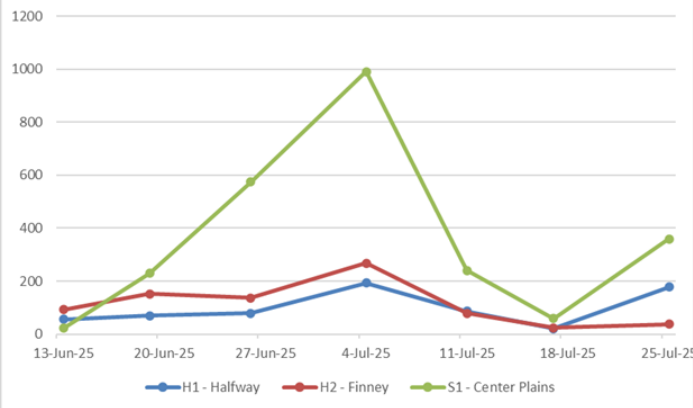


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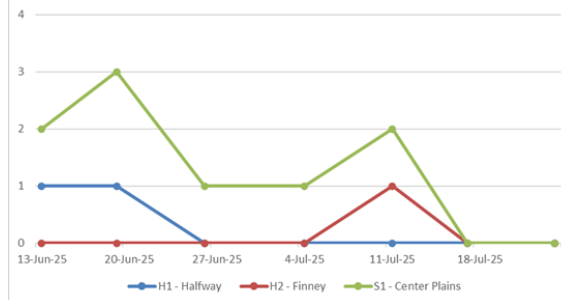
Corn Earworm 2025 Hale & Swisher Moth Traps



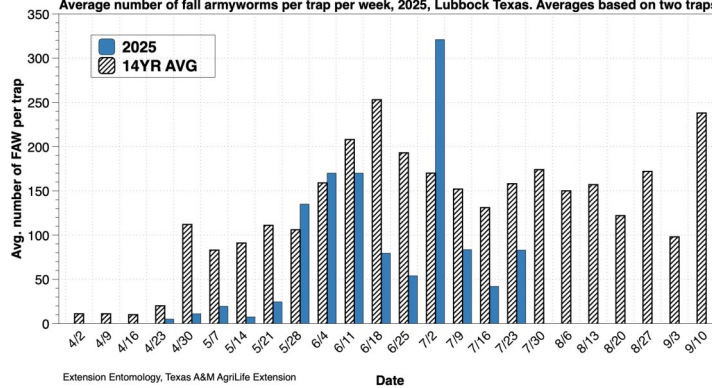
Fall Armyworms 2025 Hale & Swisher Moth Traps



Southwestern Corn Borer 2025 Hale & Swisher Moth Traps



Average number of fall armyworms per trap per week, 2025, Lubbock Texas. Averages based on two traps.



Blayne Reed

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