

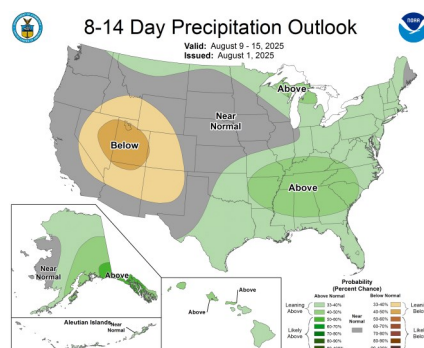
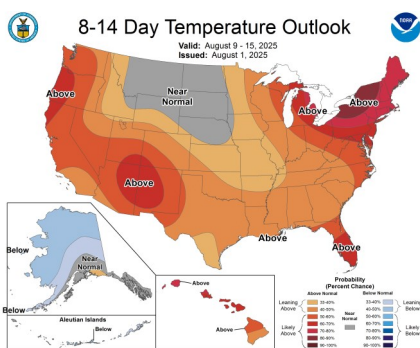
AUGUST 1, 2025

General Status

Streaky rain showers have continued to move through the area this week with amounts ranging from we caught the wind to around 1.5-inches as best I can calculate. As our summer crops progress, many of them nearing or around peak water use, the amounts of rainfall for most fields are less than crop is using. For the first time this summer, established dryland started to fall behind irrigated in development. Irrigation systems are firing up a bit more regularly for thirsty crops in need of a drink and those with naturally high-water needs. Paradoxically, there are plenty of fields, particularly in cotton where rainfall amounts were higher over the last few weeks, that are getting a bit growthy and in need of heat and possibly plant growth regulators. We did not have to treat as many fields for pests this week, but this is not because the population eased, but had recent control measures still holding or crops developed passed particular pest's damage window. Without missing a beat, the pest for the next pest window seem to be building. There remains plenty of need to scout field by field this summer.



Various crops from the PPM scouting program this week showing their progress. Cotton from NW Floyd, corn from NW Hale, Sorghum from S Swisher, and alfalfa from E Swisher.



Cotton

Our Plains Pest Management scouting program cotton ranged in stage from 9 nodes above white flower from a few late fields through 4 nodes above white flower (NAWF) from some stressed fields with most fields coming in between 5 and 8 NAWF. Not counting the late fields in the first week of bloom at 9 NAWF, we are starting to see two extreme cotton stage groupings. Without much difference in planting date, pest pressure (up to this point) or thus far irrigation levels, the largest difference in these two extreme ranges of in developmental stage between 8 and 4 NAWF is primarily available moisture from rainfall. Fruit and boll set for most fields are pretty good for both situations with similar numbers of bolls set thus far per plant with some of these bolls being thumb size or larger with multiple smaller bolls under development. The higher moisture fields are still putting a lot of energy into farther vegetative development and fruiting sites with possible needs for PGR applications at 7 or higher NAWF. Those with less moisture available moisture are slowing down vegetative growth substantially at 5 or less NAWF counts and our plant measurement data indicating future fruit shed without supplemental moisture soon. Fields under either of these situations need careful management but of differing sorts. A few of these fields are entering what I call “crunch time” and peak water use at 5 NAWF a bit early with most right on track for a first or second week of August “crunch time.”



Both of these fields are in S Swisher, the upper field is at 4.3 NAWF, the lower field is at 7.75 NAWF and have a similar boll load today, but different futures.

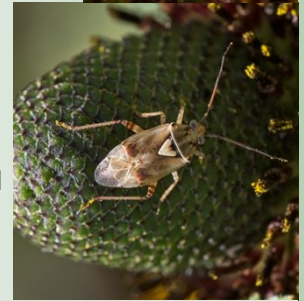
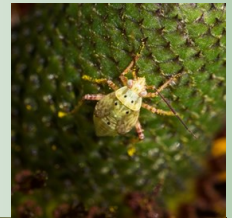


Fleahoppers remained a common find into blooming cotton and a risk for late fields.

For the first week in several weeks we did not have to recommend treatment for any cotton pest this week. For the most part, we have finally put the ridiculously high fleahopper population behind us. Not because the Fleahoppers went anywhere. They are rebuilding behind past treatments with the highest populations this week being in the fields that were treated 3 or more weeks ago. Most of our fields have finally developed passed this pest’s damage with white flowers common enough that the Fleahoppers are moving to feed on them harmlessly instead of the small squares

where they cause damage and shed. Our latest fields could still be at risk for another week until blooms become common enough for the small nymphs to find them with limited effort. We have noted steady fleahopper caused drop reduce automatically when fields reached this level of maturity. For those fields, this high fleahopper population should actually aid in bollworm control as they will feed on small worms and eggs as they find them.

Lygus were our next largest pest find and threat this week. While we have had several fields where the Lygus alone were at threshold levels alongside fleahoppers earlier this year, none were thicker than 1 Lygus per 5 row feet or so and were not causing significant damage and fruit drop. Lygus were present in 80% of our fields at some level will be a threat to cotton until the last harvest-



Lygus nymph (top) and adult (bottom)—photos by Dr Pat

Table 7. Lygus action threshold

Cotton stage	Sampling method	
	Drop cloth	Sweep net
1st two weeks of squaring*	1-2 per 6 ft-row with unacceptable square set	8 per 100 sweeps with unacceptable square set
3rd week of squaring to 1st bloom	2-3 per 6 ft-row with unacceptable square set	15 per 100 sweeps with unacceptable square set
After peak bloom	4-6 per 6 ft-row with unacceptable fruit set the first 4-5 weeks	15-20 per 100 sweeps with unacceptable fruit set the first 4-5 weeks

Sweep net: Standard 15-inch net, sample 1 row at a time, taking 15-25 sweeps. Recommended before peak bloom.

Drop cloth: Black recommended, 3-foot sampling area, sample 2 rows. Recommended after peak bloom. Stop sampling and treating when NAWF = 5 + 350 DD60's.

*In West Texas, insecticide applications for lygus are rarely needed in prebloom cotton as lygus generally stay in roadside weeds and vegetation until cotton begins flowering.

ble boll reaches 350 heat units in development. These would be almost full-grown bolls.

Bollworms increased in our cotton scouting finds this week also. All remained well below threshold with thus far with all worms being small with a lone exception at medium but was alarming nonetheless as these represent a large population that is only spilling over



Two types of stink bugs found in our fields this week

from their preferred host of corn. These spill over worm populations were in the range below 800 worms per acre and shown less than 1% fruit damage to the worms. We continue to find several species of foliage feeding caterpillars, mostly loopers and true armyworms in our non-Bt fields, but all below 2,000 worms per



Bollworm egg from C Hale this week.

acre and hardly any notable leaf damage. We also starting picking up some stink bugs of various species in our data sets with about 15% of fields having some population present so far. These pests are of great concern to the High Plains as they are not among our 'usual'

pests and can be a threat almost until bolls open before harvest. For full details about how to manage stink bugs, or

any pest in cotton, please take advantage of our Managing Cotton Insects in Texas Guide : <https://>

extensionentomology.tamu.edu/resources/management-guides/managing-cotton-insects-in-texas/

Corn



Corn ear in SW Hale this week.

Our PPM corn ranged in stage between V6 and R4 with most fields between R2 and R3. Pests were relatively quiet in corn again this week with the exception of the corn leafhopper, which became much easier to find now that populations seem to have established. We have found a few nymphs in our older fields and we now have captures on our monitoring sticky cards fairly regularly. We are yet to see any symptoms of the diseases these hoppers transmit, but any late field younger than V8 is in serious risk and younger than tassel likely risk and R2 possible risk.

Corn earworms were our most common pest to find this week with such a high population in the area but we did not find any situation where their feeding was beyond the tip of the ear, and thus non-economic, aside from food corn on the cob production fields. Our largest threat came from populations of Banks grass mite again. Fields scouted earlier in the week to the south shown populations in decline from predation and disease but fields scouted later in the week shown a slight increase in colony size and movement up the plant in a minority of fields. The mite specific beneficials of six-spotted thrips and mite destroyer beetles were markedly absent from the expanding fields. Common diseases such as rust and southern rust shown another increase this week, particularly in fields with irrigation splash on the lower portions of plants, but 'newer' diseases such as LSD shown no major increase.



Rust in SW Hale this week.

Sorghum

Our PPM sorghum ranged in stage from a long season silage line in VX through early dough this week. Sorghum aphids, the pest formerly known as sugarcane aphid, was our largest issue in sorghum this week regardless of location. Some level of pressure is in all of our fields, but the aphids were only over the economic level in one field where we first detected them 2 weeks ago. They are building in all remaining fields with varied success, beneficial population depending. Threshold for post boot sorghum for the sorghum aphid remains at 30% of plants infested with 50 or more aphids. Headworms are a growing concern in sorghum, and we did note an increase in percent infested fields but no field registered



SCA in a colony size that should be considered an issue this week in SW Hale.



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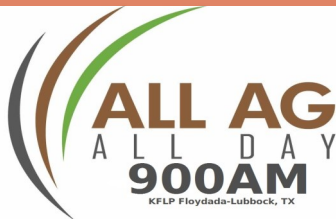
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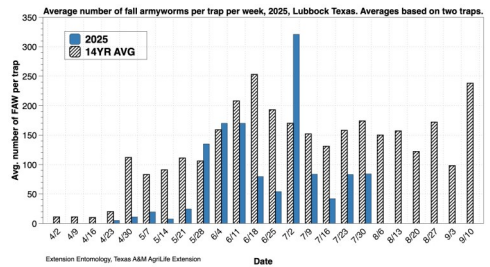
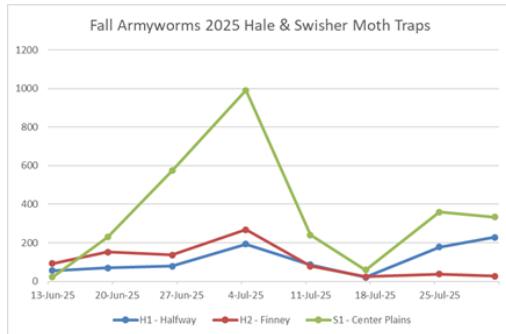
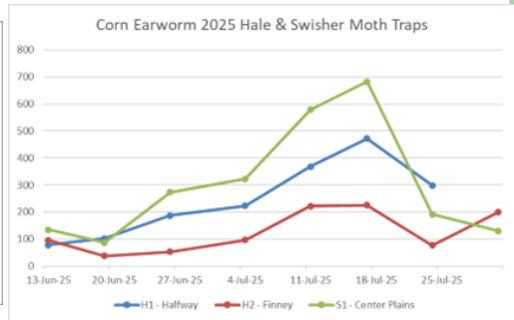
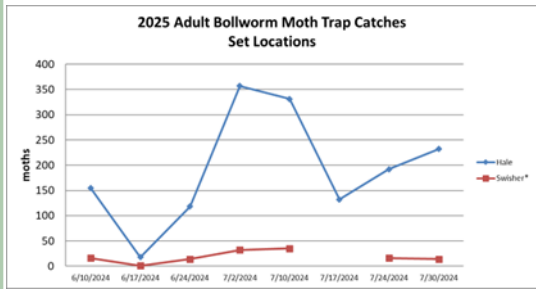
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at higher than .02 small worms per head with most headworms being bollworms.

The few fall armyworms found this week were late instars feeding on straggling and late plants still in whorls. A few Lygus and stink bugs of varying species were also found this week with the highest levels below 0.25 per head. Lygus thresholds should be near 12 per head and stink bugs around 5-6 per head, stage depending. Banks grass mites and yellow sugarcane aphids were common finds in most fields but none of ours were near threshold levels.



Our SWCB trap numbers remained at 0 for all locations this week and we are yet to capture any WBCW this year.

Blayne Reed