

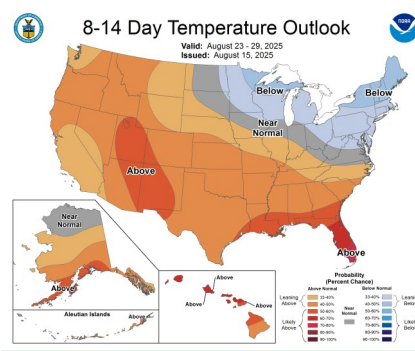
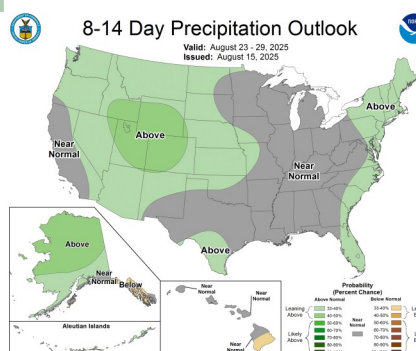
AUGUST 15, 2025

General Status

This last week seems to have been the peak week for fruit set and development for most of our summer row crop acres this year. Granted most corn was denting and on the downhill side of the curve while still filling grain, but the bulk of cotton and sorghum are between bloom and dough or around and below 5 NAWF and setting multiple bolls while filling more. We are still receiving high heat during this peak timeframe, but we did get something of a break and some much-needed rainfall this week. Amounts varied from a few hundredths to over an inch across the area, but all was appreciated with most fields, especially dryland, experiencing pressing needs for more as soon as possible. Most irrigation systems are pressing hard trying to keep up with just a few lucky fields that caught the most rainfall looking lush and unconcerned with the calendar date but not outside of manageable options. Meanwhile the pests refuse to ease with the next pests, and even a few diseases, in line steps right up for the next crop stage with high threat levels. Scouting and management remain field by field with several fields being found with economic levels that had to be treated. The next few weeks look as they could follow this season long trend.



Blooming silage sorghum and 5 NAWF cotton at peak water use this week.

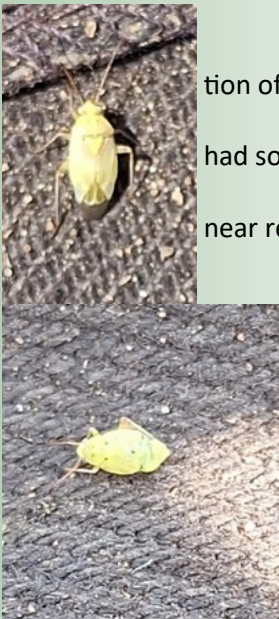


Cotton

Our Plains Pest Management scouting program cotton ranged in stage from 5.3 NAWF (nodes above white flower) and below 3.5 NAWF and absolute cut-out. There remain two groupings of cotton stages. One that will cut-out soon and those that are lush and still hovering around the 5 NAWF mark without much in between. With the average final successful bloom date for the Plainview area being August 24th, we can't really call any of these fields late this year. Most should be at the absolute cut-out stage, the load and stress-induced stage at which cotton plants shut down vegetative growth and new fruiting site development, before that date with the latest arriving there by that date. On the pest front, there remain multiple pest issues to scout for. Most of these have the potential to become, or already are, economic issues requiring treatments.



Examples of the two stages of cotton in the area this week. Both have decent loads with more to make yet.



We seen plenty of Lygus adult and nymphs this week.

Lygus were again our most serious issue this week with a large portion of our fields requiring treatment to stop harvestable fruit loss to this pest. Over 90% of our fields had some level of Lygus pressure but our largest issues were clumped. Often our Lygus issues were near recently maintained roadsides, pastures, or field margins. At many of these sites around the

region the pest's preferred host plants were destroyed forcing adults to move into fields with some level of existing Lygus populations. The resulting damage and potential for additional harvestable fruit damage forced treatments. There

were a few fields that developed threshold popu-

lations independently. These fields were a little more randomly distribut-

ed, apparently ensuring that no field in the region is really safe. The threshold for Lygus is shown in our Managing

Cotton Insects in Texas Lygus can damage bolls up to 350 heat units in development. Fields with high drought or other stress causing fruit loss that also hold high Lygus numbers may not be economical to treat if fruit would be lost at any rate to the stress factor.

Cotton stage	Drop cloth	Sweep net
1st 2 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 DD60s.
 *In West Texas, insecticide applications for lygus are rarely needed in pre-bloom cotton as lygus generally stay in roadside weeds and vegetation until cotton begins flowering.

Bollworms were a major focus of our scouting this week based upon last week's egg lay and continued high moth trap catch numbers. No economic issues were found in any of our fields this week. Beneficial insects and likely other mortality factors have thus far been able to reduce the amount of surviving worms in non-



Bollworm egg.

Bt fields. Only a few freshly hatched and sickly worms were found in Bt fields, particularly the VIP trait. Our highest bollworm pressure came in from a non-Bt field with about 2% harvestable fruit damage from the worms and/or around just under 7,000 mostly small and some medium worms per acre. Regardless of which threshold utilized, this field was below treatable levels so far. The

new and improved threshold holds at a subjective 6% harvestable fruit damage while the old threshold utilizes 8,000-10,000 small worms per acre and as low as 2,000 larger

worms per acre. This field was somewhat unique for our program this week and we will be watching this field very closely with expectations of treatment, but a very good predator population is present. This field was a standout as only around 35% of our fields were found with any detectable bollworm larvae or damage, all with populations just

under 1,000 small worms per acre and barely detectable fruit damage. We found some continued egg lay in over 60% of our fields with fields near maturing corn assured of some egg lay. Most fields had between 4,000 and 9,000 eggs per acre with a few exceptions around 16,000 per acre.

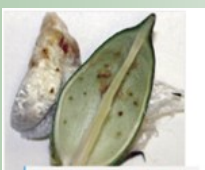


Figure 41. Boll wall warts.



Figure 42. External signs of stink bug feeding.



Figure 43. Lint staining caused by stink bug feeding.



Stink bug from central Swisher this week.

Stink bugs, of various species, are popping up in our drop cloths with some regularity this week. We found some stink bugs in about 50% of fields, usually with just one random specimen, but stink bug egg clusters and freshly hatched nymphs were found. From fields where notable stink bug pressure was found, bolls were sampled for damage.

For most fields, no damage that pierced the boll's inner walls could be found, but in one field 2% was recorded. Stink bug can be an issue in cotton almost right up to harvest.



Small bollworm from the Swisher, Floyd, Hale, and Briscoe county corners this week on non-Bt cotton.

Table 6. Dynamic boll injury threshold for stink bugs

Week of bloom	Threshold (% internal boll damage)
1	50%
2	30%
3	10%
4	10%
5	10%
6	20%
7	30%
8	50%

Cotton aphids continue to be found in many cotton fields, typically from a line across the counties from Kress south through Hale County with very few found to the north of that line. Only one field had a population above 1 per leaf with most fields only exhibiting 0.06 aphids per leaf or less. These aphids should be a consideration as a flaring secondary pest should any treatment for other



Hale county bollworm trap this week.

pests be needed and are a distraction from primary pests for beneficials. A few two-spotted spider mites can be found on isolated upper leaves in more mature fields in southern Hale and scattered whiteflies can be found periodically, especially north and east of Plainview. A few fall armyworm larvae were found feeding on cotton bolls this week. While rare, this is an alarming trend, especially with the fall armyworm and bollworm trap numbers recently.



FAW in central Hale cotton this week.

Corn

Of our grain crops, corn has the quietest pests. Our PPM corn ranged in stage from V8 to R5 with most fields clustered between R3 and R4. Corn leafhoppers can easily be found in the area and late crops pre-tassel and certainly younger than V8 is at high risk. So far, symptoms of the diseases these hoppers transmit has not been verified although some potential but very light and likely non-economic tissue with some symptoms have been sent in for detection.



Corn in NW Hale denting this week.

Spider mites, almost all still being Banks grass

mites, are steadily increasing in most fields but remain just below threshold. Many of these fields are scheduled for silage within the week. Southern rust is prominent in several fields but has not expanded in damage in a few weeks. Fall armyworms feeding in whorl, non-Bt refuge plants can be noted frequently but remains not economic. Our main issue in several of our PPM program fields is coming LSD (late season decline). This is a bacterial disease not related to the corn leafhopper in any way. Symptoms were diagnosed in our affected fields early in the season but did not seem to expand until



Our highest BGM hot spot has southern rust and LSD starting to express alongside the pest.

recently. It was the onset of the high heat days a few weeks ago that seemed to drop and desiccate plants, resembling drought stress around the old, discolored symptomology and on infected plants despite being in adequate soil moisture. As of this year, there are no treatments for this disease and the best advice is to harvest for silage as soon as possible once drying symptomology onsets. It is not known with certainty exactly what initiates this expression in corn during late season development but does not seem to be consistent.



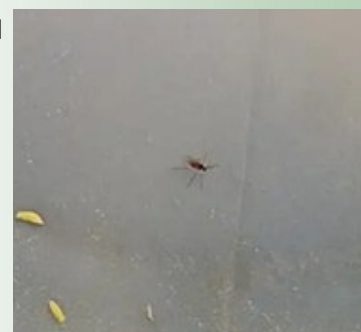
LSD starting to show the late season decline typical of its final expression .

Sorghum

Our PPM sorghum and silage sorghum ranged in stage from 30% bloom to dough. There was a range of potentially serious pests in these fields also. Sorghum midge was found at 56% and 32% heads with midge actively laying eggs in our two fields still in bloom, which is below threshold but deserves daily scouting. On a spot check request from outside our program, we found a sorghum field at 30% bloom with 1 midge per head or 100% infested, which is about the standard threshold for sorghum midge. Once field finish blooming, they are no longer at risk from midge. The



Youngest and oldest PPM sorghum this week.



Sorghum midge from SW Hale this week.

sorghum aphid reached threshold for another of our fields this week, holding to the trend of requiring treatment 2-3 weeks following detection for the aphid required treatment. We did have two other fields to break the trend by having beneficials reduce the populations slightly without treatment.



Sorghum aphids over ET in a new SW Swisher field this week.

Headworms were another focus of our PPM sorghum scouting this week. While we found more fields with some headworms, none were near threshold with our highest only coming in at 0.29 worms per head. Beneficials and other mortality factors seem to be helping with these worms in sorghum also, many having build on controlled SCA populations are moving to the head where they are greeting the worm population

worm population as they move out of maturing corn. Most of these headworms are bollworms but FAW are not uncommon. A few green bugs could be found in untreated fields as can YSCA and some corn leaf aphids. A few BGM have also been found in a minority of our fields on the lowest green leaves.



Small FAW from a NW Hale sorghum field this week.

Odd Alfalfa Issue Alert

For the past few weeks, we have been monitoring sub-threshold bollworms, fall armyworms and multiple foliar feeding caterpillars in our program's alfalfa field. These remained a sub-economic issue this week because we had an odd 'pest' of alfalfa turn up in troublesome numbers. Blister beetles, of the grey species (type) arrived and established in our field just as our next cutting neared. Blister beetles are rarely an issue for West Texas alfalfa production but it is not unheard of. Where the beetles are a more typical issue, they are usually an issue for the first or second cuttings of the spring and very early summer. The beetles do not actually damage the alfalfa. It is the 'blistering' agent in the insect's hemoglobin, designed to deter predators, that can be the issue if the beetles are present when the hay is cut. If the beetles go through the swather's crimper the beetle's body and into the hay, which a larger than expected portion of the normally docile and fearless beetle would be, they will be a major problem for the hay and its safety as feed. If in the mouth or anywhere else in the digestive tract of horses, cattle, and other mammals, the blistering agent will cause issues that if heavy enough can cause death. Control should be fairly cheap and they should be easily controlled but the label should be followed for preharvest intervals and the field will need to be checked shortly before swathing to make sure more beetles have not moved back in. It is suspected that this population developed in the large surrounding CRP fields and weeds but moved to the irrigated alfalfa, attracted by lush, blooming plants as opposed to desiccating vegetation during the recent heat and weather.



Blooming alfalfa and one of the many blister beetles found there in E Swisher this week

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service /
Texas Pest Management Association

225 Broadway, Suite 6
Plainview, TX 79072
Tel: 806.291.5267
Fax: 806.291.5266

E-mail: Blayne.Reed@ag.tamu.edu

We're ONLINE



Newsletters and IPM Reports

as well as out latest

High Plains Weekly IPM
"Radio" Podcast

at *Plains Pest*
Bugosphere

<https://halecountyipm.blogspot.com>

For text pest alerts to your
phone, register at:



PEST PATROL

BLAYNE REED
IPM Extension Agent
Texas A&M University



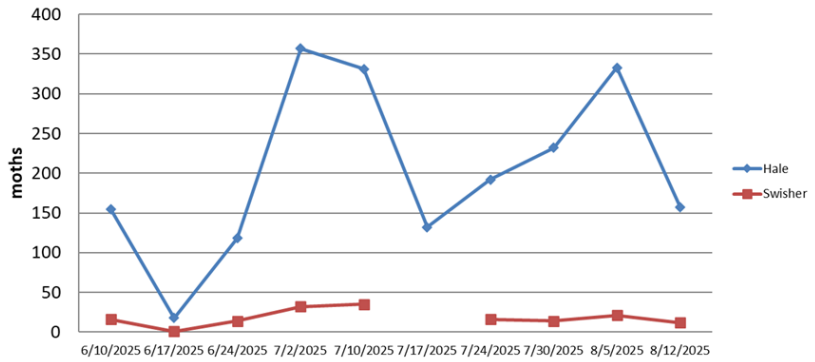
Sign up for alerts

syngenta.

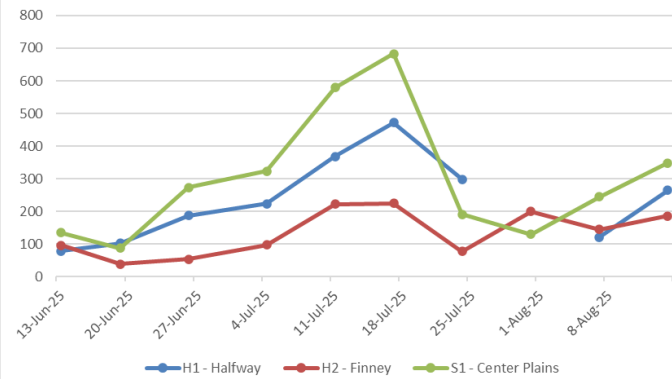


The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife. The information given herein is for educational purposes only. References to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is implied nor does it imply its approval to the exclusion of other products that also may be suitable.

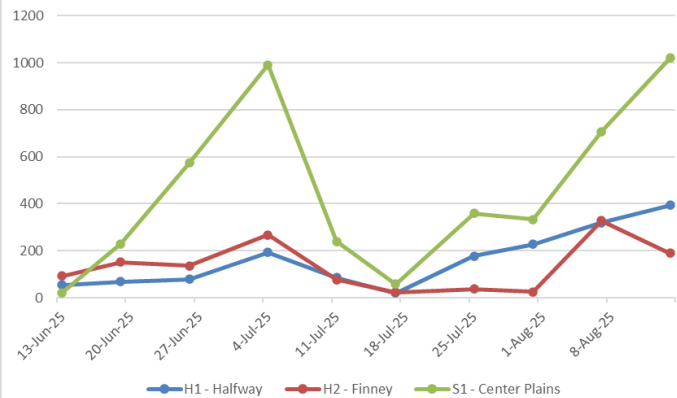
**2025 Adult Bollworm Moth Trap Catches
Set Locations**



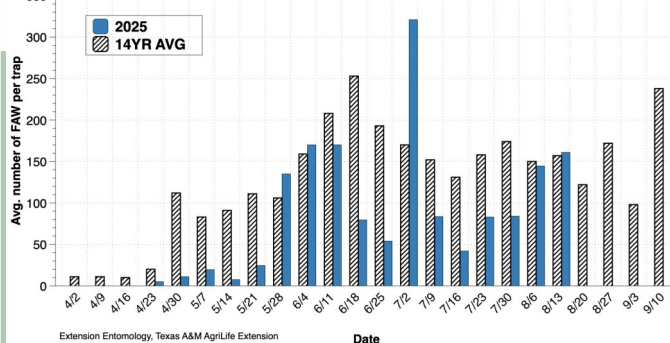
Corn Earworm 2025 Hale & Swisher Moth Traps



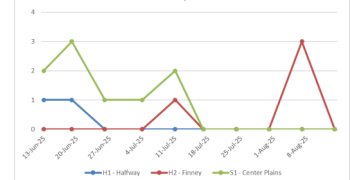
Fall Armyworms 2025 Hale & Swisher Moth Traps



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



Southwestern Corn Borer 2025 Hale & Swisher Moth Traps



Blayne Reed