

Issues in Agriculture

The Newsletter about Integrated Pest Management for the El Paso Valley

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Texas AgriLife Extension El Paso County: <http://elp.tamu.edu/> Pecan IPM Pipe: <http://pecan.ipmpipe.org/> TPMA www.tpma.org/

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- You can download this and other IPM newsletters, check updates, and view upcoming events at the El Paso Texas A&M AgriLife Extension IPM website: <http://elp.tamu.edu/integrated-pest-management/>
- The last opportunity to take the Texas Department of Agriculture **tests to obtain the pesticide applicator license**, in person, with Mario Saavedra will be tomorrow (May 29, 8:00 AM) at the Texas A&M Research Center 1380 A&M Circle, El Paso, TX 79927. After that, you will have to visit the local office of PSI Services LLC to take the exams online for all agricultural pesticide licensing. This test center is located at: 1155 Westmoreland, Suite 110 (The Atrium) El Paso TX 79925. For information on the procedures each agricultural licensee (Private, Commercial, Noncommercial, and Political Subdivision Noncommercial) to take their examination(s) go to: <http://elp.tamu.edu/files/2010/10/2014-Testing-Rollout-TAES5-9-2014.pdf>. To order the pesticide applicator training manuals visit: <http://agrilife.org/aes/manual-order-forms/>.
- **Gardening 101 Workshop Series:** All workshops are free of charge and will be held at the Multipurpose Center on 9301 Viscount. On June 6, from 4:00 PM to 5:30 PM, the topic of discussion will be bugs in your garden. Information: Denise Rodriguez Texas A&M AgriLife Extension (915) 860-2515.
- **Texas Pecan Growers Association Annual Conference & Trade Show:** July 13-16, 2014. Embassy Suites, San Marcos, TX. Contact TPGA, 979-846-3285 or pecans@tpga.org

COTTON:

After several cold spells that slowed down seed emergence or plant development, it looks like summer is here to stay. The immediate weather forecast calls for maximum daily temperatures in the mid to high 90s with our first 100°F, or above, announced for the weekend. Some late-planted cotton fields have seedlings that are at the cotyledon stage, while the earliest fields have plants at 6-true leaf stage. Many cotton fields have received their first cultivation.

The cotton plants in the **Upland and Pima variety trials** are looking great! The seedling emergence rate is good and plants are developing normally. These field trials have plants at the first-true leaf stage. Unfortunately, communication problems with one of the seed companies resulted in us not receiving several upland varieties on time to be included in our test. If you want to visit these cotton tests, please go to: <http://elp.tamu.edu/files/2010/10/1405121.pdf> for exact locations and plot maps. If you decide to visit the cotton tests, be aware that the variety trials

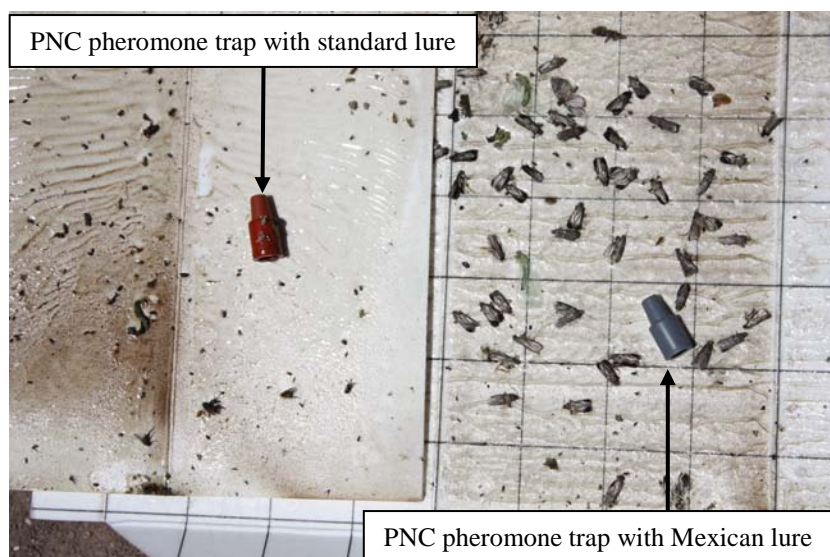
have 4-row plots, while the plant stand density test has 8-row plots. The Pima cotton variety trial includes the following five varieties: PHY805RF, DP348, DP340, DP357, and DP358. The Upland cotton variety trial includes the following 8 varieties: DP 1212 B2RF, DP 1321 B2RF, FM 2484 B2F, FM 2484 GLT, PHY 367 WRF, PHY 375 WRF, PHY 499 WRF, and ST 4946 GLB2.

On May 27, I sampled plant populations at our **Pima plant stand density trial** (at Mr. Ramon Tirres' Farm near Clint) and obtained the following average plant populations: The high plant stand density treatment has 86,249 plants per acre; the medium plant stand density treatment has 54,886 plants per acre; and the low plant stand density treatment has 45,738 plants per acre. Plant stand densities in El Paso cotton farms this year range from 47,460 to 96,725 plants per acre. Last year, some growers observed that fields with the highest plant stand densities produced lower yields than fields with lower stand counts. This suggests that substantial economic savings, without reducing yields, could be gained by using lower seeding rates than what most cotton growers traditionally use in El Paso and Huesped Counties. This is especially true if you consider the current prices of cotton seed with *Bt* and herbicide technologies. This year's data will reinforce or contradict these statements.

A field day will be conducted prior to harvest to tour these three demonstration plots. This will allow cotton farmers to make their own observations and draw their own conclusions.

PECAN:

After allowing pecan nut casebearer (PNC) moths to accumulate on some of my pheromone traps for two weeks (May 1-14) at four El Paso Lower Valley pecan commercial orchards, I found the following ratios of moths captured using the Mexican pheromone lures versus standard pheromone lures: 24/0, 52/0, 21/0, and 76/2. See attached photo. Last year, growers reported ratios as high as 15/1 in favor of the Mexican lures.



This year, I observed that using standard pheromone lures resulted in very few or no PNC moth captures. Most growers have also found greater numbers of moths in traps with Mexican lures, although in general their differences have not been as dramatic as mine. The abundance of PNC moths in El Paso Upper Valley has been much lower than in the Lower Valley and the moths showed up for the first time an average of 14 days later.

From early to mid May, we detected a tremendous PNC pressure east of Tornillo. There were instances where every terminal had an egg in it. Most growers made insecticide applications between May 13 to 18 and some applied as late as May 22. In general, people have used Lorsban® in aerial applications and Intrepid Edge® using ground sprayers. I found a wide range of PNC life stages in May. This wide distribution of PNC life stages may present a challenge to provide adequate PNC control with only one insecticide application.

Many Texas pecan producers have received a flyer in the mail advertising **Dimilin® 2L Insect Growth Regulator**. In it, there are graphics and statements about yield enhancement with the use of this product. Nut yield increments as high as 23%, compared to the untreated trees, are claimed to be the result of two applications of this product at a rate of 4 ounces per acre. Those data were obtained in the year 2010 in Georgia. If you applied this insecticide in

your orchard during the months of April and May, please let me know to evaluate any possible effects on nut yield, pests, or beneficial arthropods.

SALT CEDAR BIOCONTROL PROGRAM:

I have been searching for the beetles in El Paso and Hudspeth Counties, TX since early April without success. On May 20, I finally found a site south of Fort Hancock, next to the international border, with plants showing defoliation damage and with 1-5 adult beetles and 2-12 larvae (all three instars) per plant. I inspected a total of 20 plants. The saltcedar plants in the vicinity appeared green and healthy. Considering the fact that third-instar larvae were present, I believe that these beetles appeared not later than April 23-26. I did not find prepupae or pupae on the ground. I have inspected many locations in El Paso and Hudspeth Counties and this is the only area where I have found them so far. See attached photos showing plant damage at this location. I was expecting to find greater population levels of the Subtropical Tamarisk Beetle by now, but I suspect that the temperature fluctuations throughout the past winter and spring may have resulted in reduced beetle survival. I am still hoping to be mistaken and that soon we will find as many beetles as researchers have observed in Clark County, Kansas since April 10. They have a different saltcedar beetle species.



Dr. Christopher Ritzi, Chair and Associate Professor of Biology at the Department of Biology - Sul Ross State University, stated: *"I have only found pockets of beetles this year in the Big Bend area. The saltcedar is beginning to grow back with fresh, rich vegetation. I am curious to see if this is the beginning of a population cycling event, but only time and data will tell."*

Saltcedar damage by the Subtropical Tamarisk Beetle southwest of Fort Hancock, Texas. May 20, 2014.

The geographical coordinates for this location are the following:

31°16'55.37 N
105°51'45.22 W



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