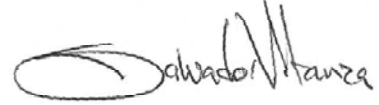


Issues in Agriculture

The Newsletter about Integrated Pest Management for the El Paso Valley

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Announcements

- **2013 Pecan Pest Management Workshop** at the Texas AgriLife Research Center, 1380 A&M Circle, El Paso, TX 79927 on Thursday, June 20, from 8:30 AM to noon. Topics: pecan nut casebearer forecast and control and insecticide efficacy trials for pecan aphids (Dr. Mark Muegge), hickory shuck worm, saltcedar beetle biocontrol program, and kissing bugs (Dr. Salvador Vitanza), squirrel damage and root rot in pecans (Dr. Jaime Iglesias). For more information call 915-860-2515. Three continuing education units will be provided to licensed pesticide applicators. Cost: \$10.00. I hope to see you there!
- The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at El Paso will honor its volunteers on Friday, June 21st at the Texas AgriLife Research Center. The **Volunteer Recognition Program** will start at 2:00 PM. This event serves to show appreciation for the contribution that volunteers make to enhance the value and impact of AgriLife Extension programs.
- **Texas Pecan Growers Annual Conference and Trade Show.** July 14-17. College Station, TX. To be followed by ASHS sponsored International Pecan Symposium (July 14-20). Contact TPGA for more information, 979-846-3285 or pecans@tpga.org
- **Tri State Arkansas-Louisiana-Mississippi Pecan Trade Show and Convention.** The Tristate Pecan Convention and Trade Show will be in Vicksburg, Mississippi on June. 20-21. For further information, contact Stephen Norman 318-448-3139 or pecans@rosaliepecans.com
- **NMSU Ag Field Day.** August 14. This event is open to the public. Registration begins at 8:00 A.M. The day will include field tours and presentations. Address: 1036 Miller Rd, Los Lunas, NM 87031. Contact Information: Phone: 505-865-7340. Email: mplace@nmsu.edu

GENERAL SITUATION:

This prolonged drought has resulted in many more fallow fields than in previous years. Farmers have made substantial investments in wells to supplement the limited surface water allocations. Maximum daily temperatures have been lower than at this time last year. However, the forecast starting this Saturday (6/7/2013) predicts maximum daily temperatures in the triple digits for the next seven days.

COTTON:

There is a wide gap in plant development between the first and last planted fields. Some plants have nine true leaves while others have just set the first true leaf. It is nice to see that plant emergence was excellent and plant development has also been good so far. I noticed relatively minor thrips damage, a few "skips", and some weedy patches, but almost no other problems. There are a few plants that present a bit of wind damage, but in general the crop is looking good.

The **upland variety trial**, with Dr. Harvey Hilley as Cooperator, is located on Alameda Avenue directly across Clint High School. This test was planted on May 17 using 38 inches between rows. It has 4 replications and includes the following 16 varieties: DP 164 B2RF, DP 1044 B2RF, DP 1212 B2RF, DP 1321 B2RF, FM 1944 GLB2, FM 2484 B2F, FM 2989 GLB2, FM 9160 B2F, FM 9170 B2F, PHY 499 WRF, PHY 585 WRF, ST 4946 GLB2, ST 6448 GLB2, EDGE B2RF, EPIC RF, and DG 2570 B2RF.

Acreage: Mr. Saul Cortes, *Field Unit Manager at the El Paso/Trans Pecos Zone* of the **Texas Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation, Inc.** (TBWEF) reports that a total of 7,355.3, acres were planted to cotton in El Paso County. Of those, 2,518.9 acres were planted using *Bt* varieties and 4,836.4 acres using non-*Bt* varieties. This is a slight increase compared to last year when 7,165 acres were planted. In Hudspeth County, a total of 4,379.4 acres were planted to cotton (6,340.9 acres the previous year). Of this amount, 1,434.3 acres correspond to *Bt* cultivars and 2,945.1 acres to non-*Bt*. The combined cotton acreage for El Paso and Hudspeth Counties planted this year is **11,734.7 acres**. This represents a reduction of 1,771.2 acres compared to last year, when the combined cotton crop in both counties was 13,505.9 acres. This was a surprise to me because I had heard, from several sources, that approximately 6,000 acres would be planted in El Paso and Hudspeth Counties this year due to reduced irrigation water availability.

The Texas Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation, Inc. has placed the **boll weevil** and the **pink bollworm** in the status of ERADICATED. No cotton grower will shed a tear to see these major pests go. Last year, a few pink bollworm moths captured in the traps had to be evaluated more closely, but finally were determined to be sterile. In 2012, TBWEF placed 1 trap every 10 acres in non-Bt fields, but this year they have reduced this rate in half (1 trap/20 acres). The rate for non-Bt fields continues to be 1 trap per field regardless its size. Last year, the program released almost 15 million sterile moths (14,833,784 to be exact). No releases of sterile pink bollworm moths are planned for this year.

ALFALFA:

The **American Serpentine Leafminer** (ASL), *Liriomyza trifolii* damaged approximately 40 acres near Fabens in mid May, but this field did not receive insecticide treatments; instead, the alfalfa was harvested early. Also, there was substantial **cutworm** damage in some fields. Permethrin was used to control this outbreak. In case of cutworms, flood irrigations are usually more effective than early harvests. **Lygus bugs** have been increasing in alfalfa fields, but growers should not be concerned about this pest unless they are raising alfalfa for seed. The population level of **beneficial arthropods** is impressive; especially of lady beetles, nabid or damsel bugs, green lacewings, and spiders.

PECAN:

The first generation of the **pecan nut casebearer** (PNC) was highly variable. Depending on the area, the first moths were captured between April 30 and May 1. PNC moth captures near Tornillo, using the pheromone traps, were very high; sometimes up to 49 per trap. On the other hand, PNC moths were much less abundant near Clint. There was also much variation between the efficacy of the standard and the Mexican pheromone lures. The PNC first generation was definitely spotty in our region: some growers could not find a single PNC egg and decided to forego insecticide applications to treat the first generation, while others found eggs in as many as 15 to 20 percent of the nut clusters examined. Ground and aerial applications to treat PNC were made in mid May, being Lorsban one of the most commonly used insecticides. Some pecan orchards were sprayed by airplane because of recent flood irrigations. Now is the time to replace lures and glue boards to monitor second generation PNC. I was expecting PNC moths to appear around June 20 (in a couple of weeks), but I have been told about a few PNC moths captured on June 4. Let's hope those are stragglers and not the result of a major shift from what our models predict.

Aphids are hard to find at this moment and the leaves are free of honeydew. In a few weeks, we will need to monitor orchards for aphid levels; especially where Lorsban was applied because this insecticide is known for resulting in aphid outbreaks due to its impact on aphid natural enemies.

Mr. Kevin Giraud, Manager of Helena Chemical Company in Tornillo, placed two pheromone traps for **hickory shuckworm** (HSW) south of Fabens, near the Rio Grande, on June 3. Just three days later, he had collected 41 HSW moths. In previous years, I have found minimal amounts of HSW larvae and nut damage. This year, I did not set up HSW pheromone traps, but I have done so in the past with little success. Although in other regions HSW is considered a serious pest, pecan growers in El Paso generally do not monitor for HSW. This pecan pest has received little attention and might have been under the radar. Based on these recent captures, I am afraid that HSW populations might be increasing in El Paso region. It is hard to interpret what these captures mean in regards to affecting pecan nut yield and quality. When asked about this subject, Bill Ree commented: "*HSW pheromone seems to catch adults early in the season, a few during the summer, then more in the late summer or fall*". He added "*We (pecan entomologists) just don't know what the trap catches are telling us so treatments are based on the fact that there was a problem last season and kernel development has reached the half shell stage.*" It is not time to panic, but a good moment to monitor the development of this pest. If past events are good indicators of the future, we should find comfort in the fact that this pest has caused only a minor damage in pecan production during recent years. Fortunately, insecticide applications for second generation PNC, in case they are needed, may also reduce HSW population levels.



The Texas AgriLife El Paso IPM Program is partially supported by the following organizations:

Ag Market Resources
El Paso Pest Management Association
Texas Pest Management Association
Valley Gin Company, Tornillo
West Texas Pecan Association