

## Far West Texas Agriculture IPM

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If you would like to be added to or removed from the email or mailing list, please contact Eva Rivera at (915) 771-2354 or by email at [eva.rivera@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:eva.rivera@ag.tamu.edu).

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### COVID-19

As the outbreak of COVID-19 continues they're a lot of question that still remain unanswered about the virus. One frequently asked question is if it can be transmitted by mosquitoes. The World Health Organization released a statement stating that there is no information or evidence that mosquitos can be a vector of the virus. The virus is a respiratory virus that spreads through droplets of saliva or nasal discharges from an infected person. The World Health Organization has also stated that to protect yourself from the virus you should regularly clean you hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, or with soap and water. Also, avoid any person who is showing symptoms of the virus. Mosquitoes are vector of many other virus such as Zika, West Nile, and many others. Mosquito repellants should be used when you are outside during the early morning and evenings when they are the most active. For information about COVID-19 can be found at <https://texashelp.tamu.edu/coronavirus-information-resources/>

### Introduction

Hello, my name is Joel Arce, and I became the integrated pest management agent since August 2019. While I have had the opportunity to meet many of you, I look forward to meeting everybody that I have not met yet. My family and I would like to thank you the many of you who have helped with my transition into this position and helped us become a part of your community. I look forward to working with everyone and helping in any way I can. If anybody has any questions related to pest don't hesitate to call me any time of day or night.

### Insect Scouting Program

There has been some interest from some producers about scouting crops this coming growing season. I am currently trying to find some potential scouts for the summer. As of this release, we have not come up with a price per acre yet. The price will be reasonable, but I don't want to undercut any private scouts or consultants. If anybody is interested, please contact Eva Rivera at the El Paso County Extension office (915) 771-2354.

### Cotton

Orlando and I have received the data from the 2019 Cotton Variety Trials, and it was sent out and will be on the El Paso County Extension website. More acreage of cotton maybe planted this year due to the full water allotment. This may cause insect pressure to be higher because of the abundance of food sources. There are new rules regarding applying auxins and paraquat. This information can be found in this newsletter. If you plan on applying auxins or paraquat; and need certification or have any question you can contact Eva Rivera or myself. Also, the AgriLife Extension Cotton Kickoff program is being postponed until further notice.

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### Pecans

I attended the Western Pecan Growers Association Conference at the beginning of March and learned valuable information from the presenters. Also, many of you know that I recently submitted a proposal for a TDA Specialty Crop Block Grant, working on keeping the pecan weevil out of the El Paso area. I know that pruning is about to be over if y'all are not already done and are waiting for bud break. I am new to the pecan world but have thrown myself headfirst into it and looking forward to educating myself with the crop even more. The pecan kickoff program will be postponed until further notice.

### Alfalfa

Last year there were reports of alfalfa weevils in the area. The alfalfa weevil is the most important pest of alfalfa. They are less than a quarter inch long and the color maybe brown to almost black. The weevil can reduce stands and often causes the loss of at least on cutting. Both the larva and the adult feed on alfalfa foliage and buds. The feeding causes the plants to be stunted and heavy populations can completely defoliate spots in the field. The larvae develop in the spring and feed for 30 to 60 days and pupate after 10 days into adult weevils. There are some insecticides that control the weevil and have a reasonable preharvest interval, but most of them are extremely hazardous to bees, so use caution and good stewardship practices if you decide to spray. We have also been recommending to just mow the infested field early.



Figure 1 .Adult Alfalfa Weevil  
Lateral Vies



Figure 2: Adult Alfalfa  
Weevil Dorsal View



Figure 3: Alfalfa Weevil Larva

## PARAQUAT TRAINING

The EPA is now requiring anyone who mixes, loads, or applies paraquat (paraquat dichloride) to be a certified applicator and to take an EPA-approved online training. This training was developed by the manufacturers of

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paraquat. Texas A&M AgriLife cannot give this training like we provide the auxin trainings. These trainings are only provided online through the Extension website, which is part of the Federal Cooperative eXtension System. This training is only required once every three years unlike the auxin trainings. For more information on the paraquat training you can visit: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-worker-safety/paraquat-dichloride-training-certified-applicators>.

## AUXIN TRAINING

If you are planning to apply any auxins (2,4-D and dicamba) you will be required to take an auxin training. I will be planning training this spring around the beginning of April. This training is required every year and if you are applying dicamba you must be a certified applicator and cannot spray under some-one else's license. Unlike the previous training, which was two hours long, the new training is only one hour long.