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WEST PLAINS IPM UPDATE

News about Integrated Pest Management in Hockley, Cochran, and Lamb Counties from Kerry Siders

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Crop and Pest Situation

Cotton has caught a bit of fresh air this week with more moderate temperatures and some scattered rain showers. No doubt irrigation applications made more headway this week than probably all summer. This brings up an important point. We are nearing the end of the blooming cycle and creation of bolls. From this point forward it is all about retaining those bolls, achieving good size for yield and good quality. My concern lies in the fact that so many acres have

struggled all season and are in hard cutout with limited boll load and if that plant gets a big shot of water from either irrigation or rainfall it can take back off growing again. Always remember that we are dealing with a perennial plant in cotton. That late growth will not have time to contribute to yield and in fact will detract from what is already there. Also, a growth regulator cannot fix that situation. Along these lines, and to support what my point is here, is we are now seeing the adjustment in fruit load in most fields. This adjustment causes squares and young bolls, less than 5–7-day old, to be shed from the plant. This is a natural process which occurs (of course make sure it is not insect induced) when the holding capacity of the plant has been reached. *Continued pg. 2*

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That capacity is set by the plant which has been developed, soil nutrients, soil moisture, production of carbohydrates within the plant etc. Based on those parameters the plant can produce only so much, until something changes. When these changes, like a big influx of soil moisture (or late fertilization), occur late it can cause the plant to resume vegetative growth. This directs energy into creating additional nodes, stems, leaves, and subsequent squares. This late growth will run out of heat units before it can develop into good contributing mature bolls. So, be careful watering from here on out and keep watch on the forecast.
This change in weather has allowed survival of larva pest to become more of a concern in all crops. In cotton those acres which are not protected with a Bt technology need to be watched carefully over the next 7-14 days. Other crops which larva pests (corn earworm, loopers, armyworms, garden webworms) can be found include peanuts, grain sorghum, peas, and late corn. Scout!

For more information on managing cotton insects in Texas go to:

https://lubbock.tamu.edu/files/2022/07/managing-cotton-insects-in-texas.pdf

For more information on managing sorghum insects in Texas go to:

https://extensionentomology.tamu.edu/files/2019/02/Managing-Insect-and-Mite-Pests-of-Texas-Sorghum-ENTO-085-2018.pdf

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