

CROP MANAGEMENT REPORT

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

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tara.johnson@ag.tamu.edu
THANK YOU

GENERAL SITUATION

Once again May is quickly approaching and from a moisture standpoint, our soils are looking fairly decent right now. Of course we have been down this road the past couple of years and by the end of July it was a completely different story. If we can just have some rain in July. Folks are working hard to get fields ready to plant and recent rains have left several places a little wooly. Fortunately, cotton demand worldwide continues to prop prices up, pushing futures closer to 80 cents. Part of this is due to the fear that the U.S. may run out of cotton before the Valley begins harvest. The most recent export report showed that we sold another 237,000 bales last week plus 118,000 bales for next year. Over the past two months we have averaged nearly 500,000 bales per week with 334,000 to be delivered this year. This has a lot to do with the price holding despite the large planting projections. We simply need that much cotton.

COTTON

A fair amount of “yellow” herbicides are going out or have already gone out this year. Many producers have decided to take a more proactive approach to weed control this year. Of course with the high cost of all inputs, I have not heard of anyone putting pre-emergent down on all of their acres. Most are choosing weedier fields or higher producing fields. A recent article came out in [AGFAX](#) on a study conducted by Stanley Culpepper, weed scientist with University of Georgia Extension. He has spent the last 5 years gathering data on the sensitivity of specialty crops to the new auxin herbicides. In general, most crops showed the same sensitivity to both Dicamba, and 2,4-D with the exception of cotton being severely sensitive to Dicamba and extremely sensitive to 2,4-D. Furthermore, pecan is in the low sensitivity group for Dicamba and moderate sensitivity for 2,4-D. All of these sensitivity measurements were strictly visual and as many of you know the damage does not always correspond to the yield. I mention all of this not to scare you, but to emphasize the caution and care needed with these technologies.

ST. LAWRENCE PEST MANAGEMENT
BRAD EASTERLING
EA-IPM
GLASSCOCK, REAGAN, UPTON COUNTIES
PO Box 299
GARDEN CITY, TX 79739
432-354-2381 (o)
940-256-1524 (m)



MILO/CORN

Moisture has been good and milo and corn are getting off to a good start. Weed control is the primary concern and when using milo and corn in rotation with cotton, it is a great opportunity to get a handle on troublesome weeds such as bindweed and morning glory. I will keep everyone up to date on the progress of sugarcane aphid, but for those of you who want to keep track of movement yourself, you can keep up on txscan.blogspot.com. There is also quite a bit of sorghum and corn information from Texas and Kansas State on www.myfields.info. More extension information is being added all the time.

WHEAT

With the warm temperatures and windy days this wheat crop is moving along quickly. In general, we have a fairly decent looking crop at this point. After-all, when is the last time we made 3 straight wheat crops in St. Lawrence? So far no one has been able to tell me. The number one issue to date has been the abundance of white/blasted heads occurring in the field. White heads can be caused by a number of factors like insects, disease, and environmental. Freeze damage is generally the first thing folks think of when they see white heads. This year I do not think that is the case, actually I believe it is more the opposite. Drought stress combined with warm temps and winds will stress the plants and cause them to abort the heads much like a cotton plant shedding small bolls. With the majority of our acres following cotton, moisture and fertility is already on the low end unless you had good fall moisture. Dryland cotton generally does not have a great deal of residual fertilizer. As the crop left dormancy and began growing and using moisture and nutrients, we were warm, dry, and windy. The crop started aborting heads or parts of heads to compensate. This has in turn left us with scattered white heads in the field.

RESULT DEMONSTRATION

I still have a couple of trial locations available, both dryland and irrigated if anyone is interested in having one.