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Cotton Turn-Row Meetings

To better serve the cotton producers in Williamson and Milam Counties, I will be holding cotton turn-row meetings periodically throughout the growing season. I am planning to have these meetings every other week. For those who are interested, I would like your input on a location and days of the week that would work best to accommodate you. Please, either call me at (512) 943-3300 or email your suggestions to me at jwripple@ag.tamu.edu.

At these meetings, I will provide updates on what pests I am finding in cotton and any other issues that come up. These meetings will also give me an opportunity to visit with you, the producers, about issues that need to be addressed.

<http://jared-ipm.blogspot.com>

IPM blog



2010 COTTON VARIETY TRIAL RESULTS

One of the most important management decisions that a cotton grower will make is variety selection. Although most producers have already selected their varieties and purchased seed, I thought that I would include the results from last year's Williamson County Cotton Variety Trial. It is worth noting that there were no significant

differences in lint yield or lint value for any of the varieties tested. This table only includes the results for the Williamson County trial. If you would like to see how these and other varieties performed across the state, you can check out the Extension Crop Testing website at <http://croptesting.tamu.edu>.

Variety	Yield (lbs/acre)	Turnout %	Micronaire	Length (inches)	Strength (g/tex)	Uniformity	Loan Value (¢/lbs)	Lint Value (\$/Ac)
PHY 565 B2RF	1028	43.9	3.9	1.11	29.5	83.5	53.65	552
ST 5327 B2RF	1017	44.3	3.9	1.11	28.2	83.4	53.42	543
CG 3220 B2RF	991	43.4	3.9	1.08	28.0	83.1	53.03	525
PHY 375 B2RF	986	43.6	3.9	1.10	27.1	82.3	53.02	523
DG 2570 B2RF	965	37.9	4.0	1.09	28.6	83.7	53.25	514
DP 1032 B2RF	974	43.5	3.9	1.09	26.5	81.6	51.93	503
FM 9170 B2RF	956	44.1	3.5	1.15	28.2	82.0	51.73	496
ST 4498 B2RF	918	44.0	4.0	1.07	28.8	82.8	52.32	481
FM 1740 B2RF	891	41.8	3.9	1.11	27.7	83.0	53.25	475
AT 65207 B2RF	897	43.5	3.9	1.08	27.9	82.8	52.87	474
DP 1048 B2RF	857	43.7	3.9	1.09	27.0	82.2	52.53	450
Mean	953	43.1	3.9	1.10	28.0	82.8	52.82	503

AT =AllTex, DP=DeltaPine, DG=DynaGrow, FM=FiberMax, PHY=Phytogen, ST= Stoneville

COTTON SCOUTING PROGRAM

From visiting with seed reps and folks around the county, it sounds like we are likely to have at least 3 times the number of cotton acres this year compared to the past few years. This is most likely the result of the high cotton prices that we saw last year. From what I understand, the price of cotton is likely to remain higher than normal for at least two more years. With such a dramatic increase in cotton acres this year, I am making it a priority to get my scouting program up and running. For those who have not participated in the scouting program in the

past, I will scout your fields either once or twice each week, as per our agreement. Each time your field is scouted, I will provide a field scouting report to help you better manage any insect pests that might show up. I will be charging \$6 per acre to scout once a week and \$10 per acre for twice a week. I am unaffiliated with any chemical company or provider, so this removes any potential for biased scouting. If you are interested in participating in the scouting program, please contact me via phone or email, which are provided at the top of this page.

EARLY SEASON PESTS IN COTTON

The early season in cotton is one of the most crucial periods during the growing season to have good pest control. The early season in cotton is defined as the time between emergence and the first 1/3 grown square (about 1/4 inch diameter). This usually takes about 5-6 weeks. With proper pest control, you promote a good stand and protect the early fruit, which contributes a large percentage to the total yield. There are only three major pests during this period, but they are by far the most significant.

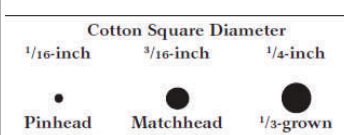
The first pest is thrips, which are slender, straw colored insects that are only a millimeter or two long. One thrips per plant should be used as the treatment level from plant emergence through the first true leaf. For plants with 2, 3, and 4 true leaves, this threshold is 2, 3, and 4 thrips per plant, respectively. Beyond 4 true leaves, treatment for thrips is rarely justified. Thrips often migrate in large numbers from adjacent weeds or small grains crops.

The next pest is the aphid. Aphids are round to pear shaped insects that are between 1/16 inch and 1/8 inch. They range in color from light yellow to dark green. Aphids can be found on the underside of leaves, on stems, and in terminals. A good indicator of an infestation is evidence of honeydew on the tops of leaves directly below the infestation.

Fields should be scouted often (twice per week), as aphid populations can increase dramatically in a short period of time. To scout for aphids, a total of 60 leaves, divided between the top, middle, and bottom portions of the plant should be sampled from across the field. Prior to the first cracked boll, the action threshold for aphids is an average of 50 or more aphids per leaf. After the first cracked boll, this threshold drops to 10 or more aphids per leaf.

The last major pest to scout for during the early season is the cotton fleahopper, which is the number one cotton pest in this area. Cotton fleahoppers are about 1/8 inch long and pale green. Scouting should be done carefully, as they move rapidly when disturbed. The action threshold for cotton fleahoppers during the first 3 weeks of squaring is 10 – 15 per 100 terminals. You should inspect the terminals of 25 plants in at least 4 locations across the field, with more locations needed for fields larger than 80 acres. Repeat applications are often required, but research suggests that there is little return on 3 or more applications.

The complete guide to managing cotton pests in the Blacklands can be found on the Williamson County Extension Office website (<http://williamson-tx.tamu.edu>) under the “publications” tab.



Thrips



Aphids

On Leaf For Size Comparison



Cotton Aphid



Cotton Fleahopper



AGRI LIFE PARTIAL COST RECOVERY

As of March 1, 2011, the Texas AgriLife Extension Service has initiated a new policy regarding partial cost recovery. Due to the economy and the current funding situation, our agency is taking the initiative to lessen the impact of the decreased funding in order to reinforce and stabilize our full program delivery network.

So, what does this mean for our clients? For every participant at our educational group meetings (crops tours, field days, etc.), we are required to send \$10 back to the Extension Service. This means that we will have to add \$10 to the registration fees that you would normally pay. I hope that this will not deter anyone from attending our programs, as the information that we provide can be far more valuable than this nominal fee increase.

Useful Links

Williamson County Extension Website

<http://williamson-tx.tamu.edu>

Southern Blacklands IPM Blog

<http://jared-ipm.blogspot.com>

TAMU Crop Testing Website

<http://croptesting.tamu.edu>

TAMU Soil Testing Website

<http://soiltesting.tamu.edu>

Pecan Nut Casebearer Forecast System

<http://pncforecast.tamu.edu>

TAMU Turfgrass Program

<http://aggieturf.tamu.edu>

Insects in the City

<http://citybugs.tamu.edu>