



# PANHANDLE PEST UPDATE



Dr. Ed Bynum, Texas AgriLife Extension Service, 6500 Amarillo Blvd., West, Amarillo, TX 79106  
 Ebynum@ag.tamu.edu, 806.677.5600 ext. 612

May 30, 2012  
 Volume 4, Issue 2

## Thrips

As wheat is senescing and drying down, thrips are migrating in large numbers into adjacent crops and numbers above the threshold levels in cotton are being reported. Cotton is generally subject to severe plant damage from the cotyledon stage up to the 5th true leaf. In the Texas High Plains, there can be a mix of Western flower thrips, *Frankliniella occidentalis*, and Onion thrips, *Thrips tabaci*. But, both thrips cause the same type of feeding damage. The thrips are slender straw colored insects about 1/15 inch long. Damage occurs when thrips rasp open the cell and suck out the plant juices. Protecting cotton the first two weeks is critical because damage like what is shown in the photos below can reduce yields. Field data collected by Dr. David Kerns has shown that when daily temperatures are above 83° F the action threshold is 1 thrips per true leaf. But, if a cold spell should settle in and daily temperatures are projected to stay below 83° F for 4 to 5 days the action threshold is about 0.5 thrips per true leaf.

Seedling cotton unprotected from soil applied and seed treatment insecticides needs to be scouted daily to insure timely application of foliar insecticides. Under heavy thrips pressure 1 or 2

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Thrips in Cotton	1
Moth Trapping	2

applications may be required and a third treatment may also be needed to keep thrips suppressed. Acephate provides quick effective control, but residual protection is less than a week.

If a soil applied or seed treatment insecticides were used, field scouting for thrips is recommended to insure products are still providing protection. These treatments generally provide protection for 18 to 21 days following planting. But, data has indicated dry soil moisture conditions may reduce the effectiveness of these products. The presence of immature thrips are a sign that these products are no longer providing effective control. A foliar insecticide may be necessary if thrips numbers exceed the action threshold.



Photo by Dr. David Kerns



Photo by Dr. David Kerns



Photo by Dr. David Kerns



Onion thrips, *Thrips tabaci*



Photo by Dr. David Kerns

Western flower thrips, *Frankliniella occidentalis*



Photo by Dr. David Kerns

## Moth Trapping

The moth trapping project for monitoring activity of southwestern corn borer, fall armyworm, and western bean cutworm was initiated this week on May 29. Each of the moth species will be monitored across the Texas High Plains and reported weekly at <http://amarillo.tamu.edu/facultystaff/ed-bynum/insects/>. There are 15 Texas AgriLife County Extension Agents and Dr. Pat Porter, Extension Entomologist – Lubbock, monitoring these moths in 17 counties. The counties represented are Castro (Chance Crossland), Deaf Smith (Rick Auckerman), Gray (Brandon McGinty), Hartley/Dallam (Mike Bragg), Hale (Gary Cross), Hutchinson/Hanson (Kristy Synatschk), Lipscomb (J. R. Sprague), Lubbock ( Dr. Pat Porter), Moore (Marcel Fischbacher), Ochiltree (Scott Strawn), Parmer (Benji Henderson), Potter (Brandon Boughen), Randall (J. D. Ragland), Sherman (Brad Easterling), and Swisher (David Graf). Current trap catches will also be reported in future editions of this Panhandle Pest Update Newsletter and the Focus on South Plains Agriculture, and by reports and newsletters from each of the County Extension Agents. For specific questions or information about a specific county contact your local County Extension Agent or contact me (Ed Bynum) at (806) 677-5600 or [ebynum@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:ebynum@ag.tamu.edu).



Moth Bucket Trap



Southwestern corn borer moth



Western Bean Cutworm



Fall Armyworm