Greetings

I have just come on board as the Extension Agent for Integrated Pest Management on March 1. I will be handling the IPM program for Jones-Mitchell-Nolan-Scurry Counties that was previously conducted by Mr. Stephen Biles. I look forward to assisting you with the management of pest problems that may arise during the growing season.

General Situation

Ginning season has finally come to an end. Overall, we saw record yields and the quality of the cotton held up well. The extended harvest period and the continued wet weather has made land preparation difficult for this coming year. However, we are starting with good soil moisture conditions. Hopefully, we will have some timely rains at planting to enable good germination. If everything holds, we have the potential to make a good crop this season.

Cotton

As you are preparing fields for the coming year, now is a good time to make plans for managing insect, weeds, and diseases. Predicting insect infestations is just as questionable and reliable as trying to predict the weather in West Texas. However, starting the season with good soil moisture conditions should enable the crops and weeds to have good early growth. This may allow for early infestations of thrips and cotton fleahoppers. Management options for thrips include 1) scout seedling cotton and spray for thrips if warranted, 2) make in-furrow applications of Temik® (3.5 to 5.0 lbs/ac) at planting, or 3) plant seed that is treated with Cruiser®. Remember that Bollgard and Bollgard II cotton varieties do not provide protection against thrips or cotton fleahoppers.

The Rolling Plains Central Boll Weevil Bulletin, March 2005 issue, reported significant progress was made in 2004 to eradicate the boll weevil across the state. In 2004, the Rolling Plains Central zone experienced a slight increase in weekly trappings that were associated with infestations from the St. Lawrence zone. The Colorado City and Snyder districts, which are closest to the St. Lawrence zone, will be monitored at a rate of one trap each 0.1 mile. The rest of the zone will be trapped at one trap each 0.3 mile.

Wheat

Now is a good time to begin scouting wheat fields for greenbug and Russian wheat aphid infestations. Greenbugs are pale green with a dark green stripe on the back. Damage symptoms may begin as yellow spots in the field. Greenbugs will congregate at the base of the plant when temperatures are below 60°F, but they will move to the underside of the leaves when temperatures are warmer. In the few fields I have looked at I did not find any greenbugs, but each field should be scouted.

Scouting: While walking diagonally across the field, make a minimum of five random counts per 20 acres of field area, each consisting of one linear foot of
row. Greenbugs can be counted on small plants. On larger plants, slap the plants against the ground to jar greenbugs loose for counting. Placing a clipboard on the ground and then knocking the greenbugs onto the clipboard will make counting easier. If greenbugs are numerous, estimate the number present. Make counts during the warmest part of the day when greenbugs are most likely to be exposed on the above ground parts of the plants.

Treatment may be warranted if numbers exceed the following suggested thresholds:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant height (Inches)</th>
<th>No. of greenbugs / linear foot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-6</td>
<td>100-300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-8</td>
<td>200-400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-16</td>
<td>300-800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Occasionally, populations of 25 to 50 greenbugs per foot of drill row in very young, small grain plants may warrant treatment.

Russian wheat aphids are lime green in color, but are difficult to find because the leaf curls around them. Russian wheat aphids prefer drought conditions, so infestations this spring may be light. Refer to Texas Cooperative Extension publication B-1251, “Managing Insect and Mite Pests of Texas Small Grains” for control options of these insects.

**Weed Management**

Without a doubt, weed control will be a primary concern to everyone. Weeds are already abundant and the conditions are perfect for a flush of weeds at and after planting. If fields are to be planted in Roundup Ready® (RR) or Liberty Link® (LL) cotton, a broad spectrum of weeds and grasses including pigweed, sicklepod, cocklebur, morningglory, hemp sesbania, barnyardgrass, and johnsongrass can be controlled. The key to effective control is proper application timing of recommended rates. Care should be given to preventing drift to non-RR and non-LL cotton.

At the Concho Valley Cotton Conference in San Angelo, TX on March 1, Dr. Wayne Keeling offered suggestions for weed control in conventional cotton varieties. These included the use of Treflan®, and Prowl® - pre-plant incorporated (PPI); Caparol®, Karmex®, Cotoran®, Dual®, and Staple® - preemegence (PRE); Staple® and Dual® - post-emergence (POST); and Caparol®, Karmex®, Dual®, and Layby™ Pro - post-direct (PDIR) application.

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**Upcoming Events**

**Lower Rolling Plains Agricultural Conference**
March 30, 2005
8:30 am - 3:30 pm
Dunn Right BBQ
Dunn, TX

**Topics of Interest**

**Cotton Production**

Tillage Impacts on Insects in Cotton
Cost of Doing Business in The Rolling Plains
Rangeland Chemical Choices
Herbicide Trials
Integrated Pest Management
Weed Control in Cotton
Grain Sorghum & Forage Production
Laws and Regulations
CEU’s

To register contact:
Borden County Extension office (806) 756-4336
Mitchell County Extension office (325) 728-3111
Nolan County Extension office (325) 236-6912
Scurry County Extension office (325) 573-5423

As we begin a new season, if you would like to continue receiving this newsletter please contact Ms Treet Broadwell at 325-236-9011 or send an e-mail message to: e-bynum@tamu.edu.