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MiteFax: San Joaquin Valley Cotton

June 14, 2002

Here is this week's issue of *MiteFax: SJV Cotton*, brought to you by the California Cotton Team of Syngenta Crop Protection, maker of Centric, Zephyr, Warrior and Curacron. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

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Overview

The crop continues to progress, and second irrigation has started a bit more widely. Lygus are present and being treated a little more than last week, but no runaway problems were reported. Mites are being treated before first or second irrigation in some fields, but no out of control situations were noted.

The following reports were made Thursday-Friday, June 13-14.

Crop Reports

Sara Savary, PCA Crop Care Associates, Fresno: "Lygus are coming out of cut alfalfa, and we're spraying

for that. We're getting five to seven counts. The lygus counts along the river are low, running one to two, and retention is high, so we're not doing much with those. Mites aren't really moving. We'll come back with a ground rig after the fields dry up and clean up any mites that are still out there. We've got some fast growing cotton now. It's nice to see."

David Simoni, PCA, Western Farm Service, Hanford: "Cotton is coming along pretty good now, getting up to speed and fruiting well. We're finishing up first irrigation and starting on the second irrigation on some. A lot of miticides went out before first irrigation. We'll catch up before second irrigation on those fields that haven't been treated already.

"We're spraying a little lygus. They're starting to move out of hay, other surrounding crops or weedy areas adjacent to the cotton. We're getting a few nymphs, too. Some guys are putting on Temik and others are spraying. It depends on the situation.

"We're putting in some Pix now at the lower end of the rate range. A little aphid are starting up here and there. We've definitely had heavier pressure

with mites than we did last year. And, overall, it's a little more 'buggy' right now. But there's nothing out of control."

Tony Touma, PCA, Bio Ag Consulting, Bakersfield: "The cotton looks beautiful. It's squaring good, and retention is high in most areas. Lygus is a problem next to safflower, sugar beets and drying grains. I've treated 800 to 900 acres south of Buttonwillow. The Buttonwillow area, itself, is clean. Overall, though, the crop looks very strong, and it will take a lot of lygus to affect it.

"Mites are under control. We haven't seen them coming back behind Zephyr. We have started finding aphids. They're showing up on a ranch that for some reason is an early indicator for aphids. We haven't made any treatments yet. We had a very bad season with aphids in 1995, and that was a year in which they came into the cotton in mid June. I don't necessarily think we will have that problem this year. We have more treatment options. There are strong predator populations, too. Lacewings started moving into the cotton two or three weeks ago. I'm hop-

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ing they will keep aphids in check."

Rick Sandberg, PCA, Agri-Consultants, Cantua Creek: "We've treated everything at Cantua with Zephyr. We had a little mite here and there and thought, in general, it was better to treat before first irrigation. It's sprinkler-irrigated cotton. That usually gets us by most of the year except maybe treating a few edges. At Los Banos, we've treated about a fourth of our fields. We're not seeing a lot of mites on the other cotton, and we're trying to decide whether or not to treat before layby.

"There are a few lygus here and there but none at levels that worry us. So far, we haven't treated them. Retention is good. We're only doing a couple of Pix treatments right now. We don't feel like the cotton is far enough along. In Cantua this year it's not in our best fields. At Los Banos, we had hail damage earlier, and last weekend we had wind damage on top of that. Winds were pretty consistently blowing at 25-30 mph. In sandier soils the wind took the whole leaf off and left the petiole in some cases or at least ripped it good. It was some pretty ugly stuff to look at Monday."

Ron Vargas, Madera County Extension Farm Advisor: "Cotton is finally looking pretty good. A lot of Zephyr was used early. About half of it has been sprayed for mites before first irrigation. Our first fields are being irrigated now. Lygus counts have been kind of here and there. Somebody called it a 'tweeny' situation where you're caught between doing nothing or doing something. These are cases where you've got a relatively low count but borderline retention. Counts, for example, have been running two to three per 50 sweeps, with retention levels at 65% to 70%. You don't have a big number of lygus, on one hand, but you're at the treatment threshold, based on retention.

"We've had a tremendous flush and growth of short podded mustard on roadsides and other areas all over the valley. It's more than I've ever seen. You can sweep it and find lygus in there. We don't know yet if that will lead to high lygus numbers as cotton squares, but it's something we're watching."

Larry Holcomb, Area Manager, UAP West, Firebaugh: "Our cotton in the Hanford area looks great. It's running 10-12 nodes and setting 5-6 squares on each plant. Retention is 90% or higher. We haven't been picking up any lygus. Counts through Hanford haven't amounted to anything, either.

"We had mite infestations early, but even the stuff I haven't sprayed isn't having any real pressure. I've talked to some of my clients about how to proceed. Where we have sprinklers we're going with first irrigation and not even treating for mites. That could be considered a risk, but when we get a little water on the cotton it seems to help with the mites, and that may be all we need right now. We've got a little on the edges, but nothing bad.

"Out of the cotton I work, we've treated about 20% for mites. Before the next irrigation and layby we'll come in with something, either Kelthane,

Comite or Zephyr, depending on what the pressure does.

"Otherwise, things are pretty quiet with insects. We did have high winds last Saturday and Sunday, with gusts apparently hitting 45-50 mph, and some of the leaves look ragged."

John Moore, Ind. PCA, Bakersfield: "I've treated a little cotton for lygus with Provado. They didn't seem to be coming from a very recognizable source, although they may have started in almonds. They were in a location where cotton consistently loses squares early and we usually see retention drop off. Even though counts weren't that high -- averaging four to five -- we decided to spray because of the pattern we've seen with square loss there in the past. A fair amount of Temik is being irrigated in now, and hopefully that will slow down further pressure.

"I saw my first winged aphid for the season yesterday. That was at Wasco. But I can hardly find a mite in the cotton. We used a little Zephyr early, but most of the cotton hasn't had anything on it at all for mites. Some of the cotton had Temik at planting, and that helped. Part of that has had more Temik on it. We're just getting ready to do the second irrigation."

Degree days >60 for 6-13-02 since 4-1-02

Location	2002	30 year	Days +/-
Arvin	645	731	-5
Shafter	665	731	-4
Visalia	654	620	2
Stratford	652	662	-1
Kettleman City	801	677	7
Five Points	680	615	4
Tranquility	666	615	3
Firebaugh	626	615	1
Madera	525	603	-5
Los Banos	537	575	-3
Colusa	611	722	-8

Degree Day calculated with single sine, horizontal 60 F baseline
