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MiteFax: San Joaquin Valley Cotton

May 31, 2002

Here is this week's issue of *MiteFax: SJV Cotton*, sponsored by Syngenta Crop Protection, which this week announced that it has gained a label for Centric, its new aphid and whitefly insecticide.

We welcome your comments and suggestions.

Owen Taylor, Editor

owen@agfax.com 601-992-9488

Overview

Hotter temperatures this week helped energize the crop. For the first time in '02 the valley hit triple digits, and several days in the 90s have contributed to some nice degree day accumulations. We are starting our DD60 table for the season.

Also, we are sending 2 extra pages in a separate broadcast to bring you Pete Goodell's 2002 lygus forecast.

The following reports were made Thursday-Friday, May 30-31.

Crop Reports

Sara Savary, PCA Crop Care Associates, Fresno: "The cotton is growing finally. We're getting our first

irrigation started. We're spraying some fields for mite before first irrigation, while some look like we can wait until afterwards. I've got some thrips problems next to grain, and it's looking ragged. Where we spray for mites in those cases we'll put something in for thrips. Our most advanced cotton has 8 nodes and 2 squares."

David Simoni, PCA, Western Farm Service, Hanford: "Cotton is looking real good, and it's made progress in the last 7-10 days. It's squaring up well. People are starting to irrigate. We're spraying a fair amount of mite before first irrigation, and some guys are putting down Temik. You can't find mites everywhere, but they are starting to build pretty widely."

Tony Touma, PCA, Bio Ag Consulting, Bakersfield: "This is a typical mite year in Buttonwillow, maybe a little lighter than normal, but mites certainly are present. You can walk in the field and find mites quite easily. We'll treat 90-95% of our acreage before first irrigation. Most of what we won't treat will be the 5% of our cotton that had Temik."

"I wrote my first recommendation

today for a lygus treatment. Counts were running 4-5 in cotton next to drying wheat. We'll start sweeping heavily next week.

"The cotton looks beautiful. It has lots of squares. Some cotton has 4-6 squares with a lot of first position squares. Retention is very high. We're past the point that thrips will be a concern."

Rick Sandberg, PCA, Agri-Consultants, Cantua Creek: "The cotton is starting to grow. Our fields at Cantua Creek are running 8-9 nodes and a couple of squares. We'll do a little sweeping tomorrow (Friday), then start on a regular basis Monday. Earlier this week I found squaring in 8 out of 10 fields, but some of those were in cotton with 6-7 nodes, and the squares were so small you could barely see them.

"We're seeing a little increase in mites over what we had by this time last year. In the Cantua Creek area we have applied Zephyr, which we didn't have to do last year. There was just enough there that we knew it would be better to do something now rather than wait until they blow up."

Continued on next page

CENTRIC® Gains California Label!

Control aphid and whitefly this season with CENTRIC, now labeled for California cotton. It's soft on beneficials and doesn't flare mites. CENTRIC fits well in an IPM program with Bt or conventional cotton, plus it's an important new tool in the campaign to prevent sticky cotton. CENTRIC gives long-lasting control, in many cases exceeding grower standards in trials run in California. CENTRIC also suppresses lygus. It's new from Syngenta Crop Protection. We're committed to helping growers succeed with proven Cotton Solutions. (Sponsored Message)



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We didn't have Temik there, just Orthene on seed, which held back the thrips. They've been pretty bad the last few years, and the seed treatment kept the cotton from looking too gnarled up.

"In the Los Banos area we used Temik on more fields, and it held okay. We're applying Zephyr on a few fields before first irrigation. The soil is sandier and dustier, which provides a better environment for mites. We've also had some fields in that area with moderate hail damage, and mites are in the cotton but not out of hand. We're holding off on the Zephyr until after those plants are bigger.

"We've just started irrigating in the Cantua Creek area but haven't started yet at Los Banos."

Bob Hutmacher, Extension Cotton Specialist: "Recovery is underway in some of our worst looking fields. Some cotton won't pull through in this hot weather, but it was probably not going to make it, regardless. But I also saw one field in Tulare County last week that was so worked over from thrips and other problems that I thought disking would be the best option. However, this week those plants had 2 healthy leaves and the cotton was starting to grow out of the damage.

"With warmer temperatures, the crop in general has kicked into gear. I've been in cotton this week at 11-12 nodes, and I saw some good looking cotton in the Tranquility area at 8-9 nodes.

"There are no significant pest problems, although about 75% of the people I've talked to have treated for mites. Mite treatments are a lot more common right now than they have been during this period for the last couple of years.

"More irrigation is underway, and by the end of this week one out of five fields will have had first irrigation. We're starting maybe a week earlier than we expect in many areas, but it's still within a normal window."

Mike Molatore, PCA, Western Farm Service, Mettler: "The crop has finally taken off, and some cotton is pushing for a small shot of Pix. All our cotton has been sprayed for mites or will be treated before first irrigation. Sometimes in this area we can get by without treating before first irrigation. But we would rather apply Zephyr before there's any more growth so we know we've got it working on as many leaves as possible.

"Some lygus are showing up, and a few guys are treating. We've got growers watering now, and some are just starting. Others are holding off for 2 more weeks. They're going with the idea that they did a good job of pre-irrigation and want to force those roots to grow down into the water they've already put out there."

Bill Weir, Extension Farm Ad-

visor, Merced County: "We have 2 different tests set up for miticides, and leaves are 40% to 70% infested with mites. Nearly all the fields around here have been sprayed. We're getting a lot of thrips in our counts, too. I'm not worried about them, but they are out there. We're starting to irrigate. The weather is certainly warming up, and the cotton likes it. But it needs a drink. It's just starting to square in our area."

Roger Beach, PCA, Wilbur-Ellis Co., Shafter: "Cotton is finally starting to grow. I started sweeping this week and have been picking up a lygus here and there, but nothing to worry about yet.

"Everybody has either finished or is starting their first irrigation here in the Wasco, Shafter and Rosedale areas. This is actually a little behind normal, but a large part of my acreage got 1.5" of rain 3 weeks ago, and that's allowed us to hold off. Almost all my cotton had Thimet or Temik under it, and we've just started using Zephyr on fields here and there."

Degree days >60 for 5-29-02 since 4-1-02

Location	2002	30 year	Days -/+
Arvin	491	492	-0
Shafter	431	492	-5
Visalia	413	422	-1
Stratford	421	455	-3
Kettleman City	519	455	6
Five Points	446	422	2
Tranquility	426	422	0
Firebaugh	404	422	-2
Madera	332	412	-8
Los Banos	329	398	-8
Colusa	382	494	-13

Degree Day calculated with single sine, horizontal 60 F baseline
