

MiteFax: San Joaquin Valley Cotton

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Here is this week's issue of *MiteFax*, sponsored by the California Cotton Team of Syngenta Crop Protection, maker of Centric®, Zephyr® and other crop protection products designed for SJV cotton.

OVERVIEW

More worm and lygus treatments were reported this week. Worm pressure has been intense in places. Lygus infestations are heavy in the southern SJV and in areas where they're moving out of weeds and into squaring cotton. Miticides have been going out on a pretty wide basis.

We are starting our DD-60 table this week with comparisons between the year to date and 1998, a year with a cold, delayed start.

These reports were made Thursday and Friday.

CROP REPORTS

Chris Morgner, PCA, Agri-Valley Consulting, Merced: "Cotton looks good. We've mainly got weed control underway. Our cotton seemed

to make it through the hot weather okay. We'll start watering a few fields around the week of the 16th at the earliest and start most of the rest during the second half of the month.

"We've found a few beet armyworm strikes, but nothing serious. We added Zephyr to herbicide treatments on 2 ranches where we didn't use Temik. Mites weren't in high numbers, but we knew that was the last chance until after 1st irrigation. Some mites are blowing in from alfalfa.

"Compared to the previous week, we're seeing a few more lygus in alfalfa, probably a forced migration out of drying weeds in fallow areas. Normally, our cotton would be squaring now, and these lygus tend to be pretty voracious. So, the timing may work out for us. The cotton isn't attractive to them right now, and we're 10-14 days from much squaring. The lygus should be concentrating in alfalfa where they're easier to manage."

Galen Hiett, Independent PCA, Fresno: "Right now I'm trying to figure out how far we need to treat into one field for lygus. They came from fallowed acreage nearby that was full

of weeds. It was disked sometime Wednesday. I've got light worms in cotton. So far, I can find the damage more readily than the actual worms.

"Our cotton is squaring on the 7th and 8th nodes on some of the early fields. Some irrigation will start this weekend. We've got Temik down on everything and aren't finding mites."

Vern Crawford, PCA, Wilbur-Ellis Co., Shafter: "Lygus made a big jump this week. If cotton is short and stressed, you won't find any. But where it's running 8-11 nodes and 12-14" tall, they're turning up. I found some 10 counts, all adults that migrated into a field. It was being irrigated, and the 10-count was where the water ran first. In the part that was still stressed, the count was zero.

"Populations are high in weeds, and they're going to pile out when vegetation dries down. We may start finding missing squares next week. Irrigation and fertilizer will make cotton nice and succulent.

"A couple of growers are putting out Zephyr for mites and adding Orthene, then sidedressing behind the

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sprayer with Temik. They know it will take 2 weeks to get the water on and activate the Temik. The Orthene, they figure, will hold lygus until the Temik kicks in, and the Zephyr will keep mites from blowing up.”

Miguel Romero, PCA, Britz Fertilizer, Tulare: “The cotton that survived is doing well. Despite all the hot days, the nights haven’t been too bad, and that’s helped.

“Worms have been horrible for the last 2 weeks. It’s both beet armyworms and loopers, and they don’t want to go away. We are spraying nearly everything with Zephyr and adding Success or Steward for worms. We’ve got a couple of situations where we treated worms early and will have to retreat now.

“Our most advanced cotton is 7-8 leaf pushing 9-10 with pinhead squares. If the weather establishes a pattern with 85-90 degree highs, we could have some good sized squares by the middle of next week and blooms soon after that. A very small amount of irrigation started Monday.”

Dale Deshane, PCA, Supervised Control, Bakersfield: “We’re getting quite a bit of lygus. We’ve sprayed all the early cotton in southern Kern County for lygus since last Thursday. They’re critical right now.

“We’ve mainly been using Capture but will try a little Vydate. Cotton, though, is just beginning to square, and we’re not sure with the heavy pressure that something like Vydate or Monitor will keep them out. As late as it is, we don’t want to lose that bottom crop. Our fields in the Buttonwillow area probably will be treated by early next week.

“Worms have settled down, generally speaking. We’re still spraying them on some of our Temik cotton. So far, we’ve sprayed about 20% of our cotton for worms.

“People are putting water on, and

some growers are applying light rates of Pix. Mites haven’t come back much on our very first fields. We’re seeing a little light mite. After irrigation we’ll make our 2nd miticide treatment.”

Jerry Anderson, PCA, Anderson Consulting, Dos Palos: “Some ditches are being pulled for water. Only 2 small fields planted early have squares. We’re getting nearly all our Zephyr put on before 1st irrigation.

“In a few fields mites weren’t bad until the last few days, then we started seeing a few more move up the plant, so I’m glad we’re getting most of the acres treated now. We don’t want anything to slow down this cotton.

“Another PCA said he had a field with lygus counts up to 10 where alfalfa had been cut nearby. They’re really thick in the alfalfa. Last week we had armyworms crawling out and eating cotton, and it caught everyone by surprise. We all were sweeping and getting no real counts. Suddenly, we had yellowstripes in cotton.

“We had a lot of wind 2 weeks ago, which may have forced moths to lay eggs closer to the ground. That meant

we wouldn’t pick up worms in the net. We had some 3 counts, which isn’t enough to justify treatment. In one area, a lot of hay was cut at one time, and that put them on the move just before baling started.

“They ate a good deal of cotton right down to the ground. We sprayed around one field next to alfalfa, and the next day the worms moved out the other side of the alfalfa and started eating cotton there. One PCA said they were actually going into flooded rice fields and eating rice.”

Nick Groenberg, Indep. PCA, Hanford: “Cotton is growing pretty good and squaring. Some has 4 fruiting branches and 11-12 nodes. We had armyworms earlier and treated 30-40% of our acreage, but right now we really don’t have that many problems. We’ll apply miticides on most of the cotton before 1st irrigation. A few lygus are around, but we haven’t had any bad problems. So far, we’re just picking up light counts.

“A little 1st irrigation started this week, and we’ll be going hot and heavy with the water next week.”

DD60 Table: 2003 Compared To 1998

As of: 6/6/2003	3/15	4/1	4/15	5/1
Shafter	578	507	457	409
Kettleman	640	564	513	464
Five Points	488	432	392	357
Los Banos	441	391	359	327
As of: 6/6/1998	3/15	4/1	4/15	5/1
Shafter	398	333	319	198
Kettleman	378	316	304	186
Five Points	360	303	292	177
Los Banos	288	247	241	146
Difference*	3/15	4/1	4/15	5/1
Shafter	179	174	138	211
Kettleman	262	248	209	279
Five Points	129	129	101	180
Los Banos	154	144	118	181

*Positive value indicates greater DD in 2003 than in 1998.