

# MiteFax: San Joaquin Valley Cotton

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Here is this week's *MiteFax*, sponsored by the California Cotton Team of **Syngenta Crop Protection**, maker of **Centric**® insecticide.

## OVERVIEW

On most fronts this crop continues to move quietly ahead. A few more lygus treatments were reported, and aphid applications were being made here and there.

Otherwise, things are pretty quiet. Blooming has moved farther north, and the early planted crop continues to be at least 2 weeks ahead of "normal" in many cases.

These reports were made Thursday and Friday.

## CROP REPORTS

**Wayne Pricolo, PCA, Agri-Consultants, Inc., Los Banos:** "There still isn't a lot going on. Insects have been pretty quiet. We finished a few layby miticide treatments this week in combination with low rates of Pix. Square retention is good, maybe 80-85% where no Temik was used and in the 90-95%

range where it was. We had thrips early, plus all the wind, and that worked against retention some, plus we had a little loss that you might expect with first irrigation.

"Definitely, though, none of it was caused by lygus. Out of all the cotton I check, we've only sprayed a 20-acre field. That's it. There were low to moderate counts off and on for 10 days, and we added some Leverage when we went across with Pix just to clean it up. Second irrigation is starting or is well under way, and we've put out Temik. We saw our first pink bloom Thursday."

**Jerry Salvador, Salvador's Consulting Service, Tranquility:** "We had a small outbreak of aphids and had to treat a few fields last week. In the last couple of days we've found isolated spots with lygus. If we're spraying for lygus we will include something for aphids and vice versa.

"It's funny how calm things were up until a few days ago, and now we're treating a little. Another odd thing is how random some of

these lygus patterns have been. On one ranch there were three fields. The one in the center had high counts while fields on either side hardly had any lygus."

**Clay Houchin, PCA, Buttonwillow Warehouse, Buttonwillow:** "Everything is going well. Mite pressure is slim to none everywhere I'm working. We cleaned up most of fields early with 4 oz/acre of Zephyr, and we're cleaning up everything else with 5-6 oz/acre now. Lygus pressure is hot in some spots. We're applying Capture, if necessary. If they're light, we're going with Dimethoate.

"With some of our racehorse varieties – both Pima and Acala – we're applying Pix early. Everything is loading up nicely."

**Bob Hutmacher, Extension Cotton Specialist:** "I've had 4 calls this week from growers asking about how to manage this crop if their water district either cuts back on their allotments or, worse, the district runs out of water alto-

*Continued on next page*

## Remember These Keys To Success With Centric™

Remember these tips when using **Centric**™ insecticide to stop whiteflies and aphids:

- Add buffer to the solution.
- Switch from NIS to oil carrier after mid-July.
- Apply Centric *before* cotton gets sticky.
- Tank mix Centric for broad-spectrum control.

Turn to Syngenta Crop Protection for these and other innovative solutions, backed by one of the most knowledgeable Western cotton teams in the industry.



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gether. In other words, how do you manage irrigation in a case like that? One county farm advisor said he's received a couple of similar calls. What their options are may depend on the availability of cheap well water and the expected price of cotton.

"This sort of underscores the fact that people still have choices to make. Maybe this will be a low-bug year, but that doesn't automatically mean it's a low-problem year. There's a huge range of growth rates out there, and everything will have to be managed on a field by field basis. These questions relating to water availability add another dimension to how some farmers will have to work with their crop.

"On the plus side, most fields still look really promising. Everything I've been in this week has good to strong retention. Probably the lowest field I was in this week in terms of retention was in Kern County, and it still had 65% on the top 5 with 18 nodes, so that's nothing to panic about. In the places I've been, I haven't seen much apparent lygus damage this week."

**Lowell Zelinkski, Ind. PCA, Bakersfield:** "Lygus are higher in some areas than I would have anticipated, considering the conditions this season. There are a number of fields that have treatable levels. They're primarily coming out of alfalfa and possibly some early safflower that's drying up.

"We're seeing a few stinkbugs and worms, but they're hardly worth mentioning. Other pests aren't really amounting to anything. Zephyr seems to be working great. It appeared to start out a little slower than I thought it would, but 2 weeks later the mites

were gone and haven't come back. I was a little concerned, but my growers weren't.

"The most interesting thing I'm seeing is that we have squaring on much lower nodes on the earlier planted cotton. In cotton planted in the March 10-30 period the first fruiting branch is 5th to 6th. Cotton planted April 5-15 is at 7th to 8th. This is something we're taking into account while planning our Pix program. These early fields may not need Pix this year or perhaps not much. Where plants are fruiting higher, that's an indicator that we're more likely to apply Pix and/or increase the rate."

**Sara Savary, PCA Crop Care Associates, Fresno:** "Cotton looks great and it's growing fast. So far, I don't have anything that's lagging behind where I think it should be. We have some of that Israeli Pima and had to apply Pix. We also made Pix treatments on most of the Roundup Ready varieties. The Phytogen looks good and, so far, we haven't had to apply any Pix on it.

"We've sprayed everything for mites, either before first irrigation with Zephyr or after irrigation with Kelthane. Mites weren't raging, but they were coming up.

"I had some lygus along the San Joaquin River. There were large numbers in the weeds along the levees. Canal companies aren't taking care of weeds in the ditches. We also had some patches of lambsquarter inside the cotton that attracted lygus. They really weren't touching the cotton, yet. We spot-sprayed all those areas.

"We're just in the middle of second irrigation. The Pima is at first bloom, and the rest of our cotton should be blooming next week. For us, it seems early for first bloom,

but we got it in early, too. We're a good 2 weeks ahead of normal."

**Steve Wright, Extension Farm Advisor, Tulare County:** "We're getting our first bloom right now. Earliest blooms started appearing last weekend. The old rule of thumb is that the Fourth of July is about average for first bloom, so that gives you a pretty good idea about how far ahead of schedule we are. There's still a lot of irrigation underway. Some spider mite treatments are being made. Aphids are showing up in small hot spots, but beneficial insects seem to be doing a good job of holding them down."

## DD60 TABLE

Accumulations from March 15 and April 1 planting dates.

**As of: 6/17**

### 2004 accumulation to date

	3/15	4/1
Shafter	905	781
Kettleman	1060	923
Five Points	810	711
Los Banos	739	647

### Long term (LT) average

	3/15	4/1
Shafter	753	696
Kettleman	819	760
Five Points	725	672
Los Banos	583	535

### Difference\* 2004 vs. LT

	3/15	4/1
Shafter	152	85
Kettleman	241	163
Five Points	85	39
Los Banos	157	112

\*Positive Value indicates greater DD in 2004 than long term.