

MiteFax: San Joaquin Valley Cotton

Overview:

The crop continues to progress and is fruiting well. Retention levels are generally good. A few lygus treatments were reported this week, but the insect mostly remains a non-player. Some miticide treatments were being made to clean up lingering populations before hot weather can fire up pressure.

Last week's hotter temperatures helped push the crop, but the valley continues to lag behind on degree-day accumulations (see this week's table).

You will receive a DD60 diagram this week to help you more closely track crop progress. See the last item on page 2 for more details.

Mite Report:

Dan Munk, Extension Farm Advisor, Fresno County: "We're not seeing a lot of mite activity. Where I've done leaf sampling, it's been under 10%. At our county meeting Thursday, that also was the impression I got from visiting with growers and PCAs."

Galen Hiatt, PCA, Fresno: "Basically, our mite situation is pretty quiet. We used Temik everywhere, and I've only treated four

fields for mites. Those were cases where we weren't sure if we could make it all the way to layby. Mites are beginning to show up in my other fields. As soon as we go toward layby, we will start mite work. Right now, we're seeing them mainly on occasional plants."

Pete Goodell, Extension IPM Entomologist, Kearney Ag Center, Parlier: "This year, mites are more widespread but pressure generally isn't heavy. People are plugging along, treating a few fields here and there."

Nick Groenberg, PCA, Hanford: "We treated all our cotton, except for the Pima, for mites. There weren't any huge mite problems except one or two fields. If we have mite on Pima, we will treat fields before second irrigation."

Ron Vargas, Extension Farm Advisor, Madera County: "Miticide treatments have pretty much slowed up. I think our county meeting Thursday was one indication that mite pressure is very low. When growers are having problems from a particular pest, they want to discuss it. Nobody brought up mites."

Rudy Perez, PCA, Western Farm Service, Firebaugh: "We're still spraying mites. Mites are gen-

eralized, but there isn't a lot of pressure. We sprayed some before first irrigation and are spraying other fields where we're getting ready to water again. We're going with a quart of Kelthane or four ounces of Zephyr and kicking it up to eight ounces where cotton is bigger."

Steve Wright, Extension Farm Advisor, Tulare County: "Most fields have had a miticide treatment, and growers are starting or finishing up first irrigation. Miticides seem to be working well."

Joe Pieri, PCA, Simplot Soilbuilders, Edison: "We're halfway through our Zephyr treatments. We've irrigated once and usually spray before first irrigation, but we had to water up some cotton and waited to spray after establishing the stand. We went with four ounces on the smaller cotton and kicked up the rate on larger plants. There really aren't any hot spots. Right now, it's a matter of cleaning up the mites that are out there so we don't have any explosions as temperatures increase."

Gary Osteen, PCA, Osteen Plant Protection, Bakersfield: "We've seen a few mites in cotton but so far have only had to treat one

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When the Weather Heats Up, Mite Pressure Can, Too

Keep a close eye on pest populations when the mercury rises. Temperatures 80° F or above can trigger rapid mite reproduction. A lay-by treatment with Zephyr® miticide/insecticide can help prevent a "mite explosion" and help maximize your cotton's yield potential.--Sponsored Message



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ranch in the Wasco area. All of our cotton had Temik. I haven't seen an unusually large number of predators. The cool temperatures, I think, have been the thing that really slowed down mite development. In the other crops I check — with the exception of roses — mites have been real slow."

Brian Marsh, Extension Farm Advisor, Kern County: "We've had a few hot spots around, and those have been treated. We haven't seen a real pattern to these areas. It's been very spotty. We're seeing cases of heavy pressure in only part of a field. A number of people are controlling very low populations now in anticipation of hot weather and the potential for a blow up."

Bruce Roberts, Extension Farm Advisor, Kings County: "There are no hotspots. Treatments went on, and mites seem to be holding. If a field hasn't been treated, it probably will be before second irrigation. In fields I've checked, there are a lot of beneficials."

Wayne Pricolo, PCA, Agri-Consultants, Inc., Los Banos: "Things are pretty quiet. We've cleaned up mites. It's been taking a little longer due to cool weather, I think. Low temperatures delayed egg hatching. Nymphs have to feed before the Zephyr has an effect, but we've still got activity after three weeks. Nymphs are out there, but it appears they are being controlled."

Insect Summary:

Lygus: Counts remain low in most areas, but a few treatments were reported.

Galen Hiett, Fresno, recommended one on about 70 acres bordering Interstate 5 near the Highway 33 interchange. "Counts were up right on the edge," says Hiett. "We didn't treat the whole field, just that part."

At least one other PCA reported a jump in counts near that area, says Pete Goodell, Extension IPM Entomologist. Counts ran 5-8.

Nick Groenenberg, Hanford, was treating some acreage late in the week. Counts were at treatable levels but not in raging numbers. "These were cases where lygus were coming out of harvested grain fields or alfalfa," he says. "I don't see any migrating from the hills."

Steve Wright, Tulare Extension Farm Advisor, says PCAs are reporting some 6-10 counts on a spotty basis. Again, lygus there seem to mainly be internal, coming from safflower or alfalfa.

Much of the cotton is past "the critical first five fruiting branch stage" without enduring lygus pressure, notes Goodell.

"I'm beginning to get questions from growers about whether or not they should use Temik, since there don't appear to be any lygus," says Goodell. "The decision partly depends on what cotton is next to. Is it in an area where lygus will be moving from other hosts? I don't think we can say there aren't going to be lygus this year. We could see a wave coming from other sources besides the foothills, and that has to be considered."

Aphid: No real presence.

DD60 Diagram:

This week, we are including a Degree-Day reference sheet. The straight-line diagram shows the relationship between accumulated DD60s and the physiological development of the plant. It also takes into account differences in varieties and management approaches.

The graph was prepared by Bob Hutmacher, Extension Cotton Specialist, and Pete Goodell, Extension IPM Entomologist.

In our 1998 survey, several readers suggested that a graph or key be included with our regular degree-day table. They wanted a quick way to see how DD60 accumulations related to key development points, like first square or first open boll.

In evaluating this idea with Bob and Pete, we concluded that a suitable graph would require too much space every week or have to be so small that it would not reproduce well on many fax machines. So, we decided to provide one full-page version that you can file or post on a bulletin board for quick reference. We hope you find this useful. As always, we welcome your comments and suggestions.

Owen Taylor, Editor

Degree days >60 for 6/17/99

since 4/15/99 for San Joaquin Valley

since 4/24/99 for Sacramento Valley

Location	1999	30 yr.*	Days **
Arvin	558	738	-10
Shafter	593	663	-4
Visalia	558	624	-4
Stratford	549	663	-7
Kettleman City	643	663	-1
Five Points	552	617	-4
Tranquility	534	617	-6
Firebaugh	496	617	-8
Madera	453	604	-10
Los Banos	474	572	-7
Colusa	455	532	-6

Degree Day calculated with single sine, horizontal 60 F baseline.
*30-year historic average
** - is behind;
+ is ahead

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