

# WEST PLAINS IPM UPDATE

News about  
Integrated Pest  
Management in  
Hockley,  
Cochran, and  
Lamb Counties  
from  
Kerry Siders



August 1, 2025

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## Cotton Crop & Pest Situation

Cotton here in Hockley, Cochran, and Lamb counties ranges from just beginning to bloom (very late) with 7+ nodes above white flower (NAWF) to nearing hard cutout with <2 NAWF. Using our IPM scouting fields as a representation of the area cotton crop, we see that 20% of fields have reached physiological cutout (5 NAWF or fewer) this week. With the current weather trend of ~20 heat units per day, those fields which have reached this 5 or fewer NAWF would be considered safe from bollworms around August 20. The remaining 80% of the cotton acreage has such a wide range of maturity levels that I do not want to project when those fields might be safe from worms. I would approach these later maturing fields from this angle. We historically say our last effective bloom date is approximately August 15<sup>th</sup>, give or take a few days less to north and more to the south. This is a date in which a boll can be formed, have time to mature, and contribute to yield. Therefore, if we continue with this weather pattern into September, and we are accumulating even 18 HU/day, we can add 22 days to this date. Thus, would give us a target of September 6 for those late fields needing to be scouted and protected from worm issues. For aphids and stink bugs it may require a bit more time in the field depending on those insects' activity over the next 4-6 weeks. The point being is that NAWF is an important gauge of maturity and can help project time needed to be safe from insects and even manage irrigation.

Currently, I would be scouting for bollworms in non Bt cotton. Lygus, stinkbugs, and cotton aphids should be included in those scouting procedures, and possibly fleahoppers if they are crazy high numbers. Cotton aphids generally moderated in my area the past few weeks to a point that I must really look for them. Beneficial insect and arachnids continue to be found in very good numbers. Remember, cotton aphids thrive in skippy cotton, and excessive/late nitrogen. Late nitrogen can also delay cotton maturity. In those situations, do pay close attention to aphids. For more information on managing cotton insect in Texas go to:

<https://lubbock.tamu.edu/files/2022/07/managing-cotton-insects-in-texas.pdf>



## My priority list for August goes like this:

1. SCOUT! SCOUT! SCOUT! Lygus, stinkbugs, etc. have been about as active across a wide area this year as I have seen in many years. Scout, apply threshold, **act on good information.**
2. Continue with late season **weed control**: residual herbicide, cultivate, hoe, whatever it takes to keep weeds from going to seed, especially Palmer amaranth. **It is a numbers game.**
3. Be careful when irrigating not to cause additional vegetative growth resulting in delay of plant maturity. **The goal is to finish blooming before the end of August.**

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

SEPT. 10 Levelland Chamber of Commerce Ag Committee Shrimp Boil Event, Mallet EC Levelland

SEPT. 11 West Texas Agricultural Chemicals Institute Annual Meeting, Scottish Rite Lubbock

SEPT. 18 Cochran Co. Farm Fair, Fairgrounds Morton

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Editor: Kerry Siders, Extension Agent-IPM

Contact information:

1212 Houston St., Suite 2 Levelland, TX 79336

(806) 894-3150 (office),

638-5635 (mobile)

[ksiders@tamu.edu](mailto:ksiders@tamu.edu) (E-mail)



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