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P 331  
94-8



Texas Agricultural Extension Service  
The Texas A&M University System

*Bill Ree*

Bill Ree, Extension Pest Management- Pecans  
Jerral D. Johnson, Extension Plant Pathologist  
George Ray McEachern, Extension Horticulturist  
Charles Cole, Extension Entomologist

# Texas Pecan Pest Management Newsletter



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OCT 24 1994

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August 31, 1994  
#94-8

## General

Overall the Texas pecan crop is light, but there are some areas that have still have a good crop. Wichita county and east along the Red river and Tom Green county have reported good crops all season. Also, isolated orchards can be found from San Saba up through Comanche county have above average crops. On the other end of the scale Guadalupe, Gonzales and Milam counties just a few areas that report very light to no crops.

Although many areas have light crops and insecticide treatments for nut feeding pests can not be justified, foliage feeding insects such as the black pecan aphid will need to be controlled if populations exceed an average of three per compound leaf.

Thunderstorms across parts of the state have brought timely and much needed moisture. In areas with pecan weevils a good soaking rain will allow weevils to emerge.

## Insects

**Yellow Pecan aphids:** Yellow aphid populations are increasing in some orchards behind insecticides applied for the hickory shuckworm and pecan weevil. Although YPA populations can reach very high

levels, additional insecticide treatments for YPA are probably not justified. Producers should be more concerned about the black pecan aphids, mites and the nut feeding insects.

**Black pecan aphid:** Watch for black pecan aphids during September after the last shuckworm or pecan weevil treatment. Black aphids can build up during September and October and will cause premature defoliation if populations are left unchecked. A worse case situation would be to have a early defoliation with a good crop set. Although very few producers have a heavy set the foliage needs be remain on the tree up to frost to help store up carbohydrates for next year.

Fortunately BPA are easy to control. Suggested insecticides include: (chlorpyrifos) Lorsban 4E @ 2 pints per 100 gallons; (dimethoate) Cygon @ 0.66 pints per acre or malathion @ 1-2 pints per 100 gallons.

**Stink Bugs:** Orchards should be monitored during September and October for adult stink bugs and leaffooted bugs. These insects have a wide host range and during this time of year as other host plants be come unattractive or are harvested adults will migrate to pecans. Producers

should be aware of what is happening to surrounding crops There are really no thresholds to go by when it comes to stink bugs which is one of the things what makes controlling this insect so difficult. If possible watch the the borders rows carefully. If an insecticide treatment is needed cypermethrin (Ammo or Cymbush) are effective.

If trap crops were planted watch for immature stink bugs and leaffooted bugs and adults in the trap crops. Trap crops will need to be treated at least once to control adult stink bugs and to prevent immatures from reaching the adult stage.

Stink bugs can damage pecans up to the day of harvest!

## Pecan Weevil:

Where it occurs, the pecan weevil is regarded by many as the most destructive nut feeding pest. Included with this newsletter is a map showing the distribution of this insect according to a 1979 survey. In this survey Duval, Frio, Jim Hogg Web and Zavala counties were also reported as having the pecan weevil, however, weevil infestations in these counties could not be confirmed and were not included on the map.

If any producer has a confirmed weevil infestation in a county not indicated on the map please notify me at P.O. Box 2150, Bryan, TX 77806.

In areas with heavy or tight soils that are hard due to drought a good soaking rain will be needed to let the majority of the adults emerge. Watch for the drought delayed emergence (this is where emergence traps pay for themselves). It could take approximately 3 to 4 days for weevils to emerge after a soaking rain.

## Beneficial Insect

*Macrocentrus instabilis* Muesebeck. This insect is a solitary internal parasite of several lepidoptera insect pests which includes the pecan nut casebearer and hickory shuckworm. In a 1929-34 study, parasitization of overwintering pecan nut casebearer larvae averaged 1.48 percent while parasitization of the first generation averaged 4.3 percent.

*Macrocentrus instabilis* overwinters as an immature larva within the body of the host insect. Parasitization of the pecan nut casebearer occurs most often when the casebearer is in its second or third instar. During the summer months the parasite requires 28 to 36 days from an egg to adult emergence. This parasite has the same number of generations as the casebearer.

## Mites

Pecan leaf scorch mite activity has been observed in a few orchards in Gregg and Lee Counties. Scorch mites can be found on the underside of the leaf where they feed on the plant sap. This feeding will cause a

scorching or the leaf which in turn will cause the individual leaflets to fall.

The scorching will occur first near the midrib of the leaf and in the lower portion of the canopy. The scorching or browning of an individual leaflet will progress from the midrib area to the edge. This should not be confused with fungal leaf scorch which starts at the tip of the leaflet and progress down the leaf. If there is any question as to the cause of leaf scorch, mites can be seen with the aid of a good 10X hand lens.

Recommended treatments for mite are limited, but there are a few options. Two miticides are labeled for pecans: Kelthane® MF at 1.5 to 2 quarts per acre (It is recommended that the water pH should be between 5 and 7) and Vendex® 50 WP at 4-8 oz per 100 gallons. Both miticides are a single treatment only. Two treatments of dimethoate at 0.66 pints per acre should provide some suppression.

## Pesticide Collection

A series of four pesticide waste disposal dates have been established for September.

Collection dates and sites are:

September 15 - Tornillo  
September 20 - Ballinger  
September 23 - Stephenville  
September 27 - Tyler

Daily collections will start at 8 am and end at 3 pm.

Contact your local county Extension Office for exact locations of collection sites.

The following will be excepted at the designated collection sites: Insecticides, fungicides, rodenticides, nematicides, bactericides, growth regulators, harvest aid chemicals, pesticides used on livestock, other miscellaneous pesticides, all formulations of herbicides excluding those containing 2,4,5-T- Silvex, unknown or unlabeled materials suspected of being one of the above mentioned eligible substances and treated seed (contact your local TDA regional office as soon as possible to schedule loads larger than 2,000lbs).

The following will NOT be accepted:

Explosive materials, pesticides (herbicides) containing 2,4,5-T - Silvex, unrinsed or improperly rinsed pesticide containers, fertilizers or nutrient materials that are neither hazardous nor contain pesticide mixtures, and pesticides or wood preservatives containing Pentachlorophenol.

These disposal days are organized by the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) in cooperation with the Texas Department of Agriculture and The Texas Agricultural Extension Service.

## County Reports

**Anderson County:** Scab has increased some during the past month. Humidity has been high all summer and this has contributed to the scab pressure. The crop is variable. The East Texas Pecan Conference will be held in Palestine on September 20th (see meeting notice).

**Brazoria County:** The crop is fair on improved varieties but scab is increasing due to the weekly rains. Rains have been county wide with 8-9 inches received so far during August. Second generation casebearer was heavy and a fair amount of shedding has been observed.

**DeWitt County:** Fair crop but the county is dry. No aphid problems and some shuckworm treatments have gone out.

**El Paso:** Black aphids continue to increase in untreated orchards. Control of black aphids ranges from good to excellent with the best control being from ground applications. Some orchards that received heavy rains were cleaned up pretty well and may not require insecticide applications if the beneficials can keep things in check. No hickory shuckworms were collected during the week.

**Fort Bend County:** Native crop is light but the improved varieties are good but less than 1993. The county has received some rains but they have been spotted across the county.

**Guadalupe County:** No Pecans.

**Lee County:** High yellow aphids populations were observed in one orchard behind insecticide treatments for the hickory shuckworm. Pecan leaf scorch mites are also heavy and will require treatments. Crop is light over most of the county.

**Milam County:** No pecans. Overall the crop is as light as there has been in the last 20 years. Yellow aphids are building up behind insecticides that were applied for shuckworm. Some black aphid infestations have been observed.

**Navarro County:** county received from 1 to 4 inches or rain during the past week. Yellow pecan aphids are building up and some black aphids are present but not heavy yet.

**Pecos County:** Crop is light and the county is very dry. Some third generation casebearer has been observed along with some black pecan aphids. Yellow aphids are increasing.

**San Saba County:** Dry conditions prevail county wide. A few pecan weevils have been caught in traps and the first insecticide treatments for weevils went out last week. Crop looks fair in places and in some areas it is very light.

**Wichita County:** The area around the Red river has a good crop but the county and surrounding area is very dry. Rainfall for Wichita Falls totals 12.5 inches for the year. Approximately 150 people attended the Red River Pecan field day on August 25 in Montague county.

## Meetings

### Texas

**September 20**  
East Texas Pecan Conference  
Palestine Civic Center. 8:30 AM  
Glenn Huddleston - CEA  
903-723-3735

### State

**September 15-16**  
Alabama Pecan Conference  
Gulf Coast Experiment Station  
Fairhope, Al  
Dr. Bill Goff  
205-844-4985

**February 26-28, 1995**  
Southeastern Pecan Conference  
Marriotts Bay Point Resort  
Panama City, Fl  
Sally Beshears  
904-997-3458

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