

YRGV Boll Weevil Bulletin



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Stalk Destruction, Volunteer Cotton Removal *Critical* at this Stage

Despite problems associated with excessive rainfall, growers *must* be diligent in making sure all cotton stalks and volunteer cotton are thoroughly and completely destroyed.

In the Valley, as a result of Hurricane Dolly, much of the 2008 cotton crop was lost as lint and seed were blown out of the burr and scattered. Sustained high winds and unrelenting rain has allowed the scattered seed to emerge, creating numerous pockets of hostable volunteer cotton throughout the zone. It is critical to the success of the LRGV program that we stay on top of these emerging plants.

The boll weevil eradication program has always been a cooperative effort. We need your help now to protect what has been accomplished so far. Please report, plow or pull up any volunteer plants you encounter, and permanently destroy those plants found in harvested cotton, milo and corn.

Field operations, including stalk destruction, have been difficult - but growers did it anyway. Unfortunately, some of those previously de-

stroyed stalks are re-producing hostable material. These plants must be sprayed or physically destroyed in order to keep reproducing weevils under control. Take away the cotton plant and you take away the cotton that supports the boll weevil, subsequently reducing the numbers that can emerge next year.

Program traps that had been blown away have been re-deployed and trap monitoring is continuing as normal. The Foundation will continue to treat hostable fields and pastures, and will use mist blowers to treat ditches, turn rows and roadways for volunteer plants. Foundation personnel need to be aware of all volunteer cotton and regrowth so applications can be made.

These are *your* fields. This is *your* livelihood. This is *your* program. Please help us by reporting all regrowth and volunteer cotton to your local TBWEF office so that it can be included in treatment and destruction efforts. It's the work we do now that will be crucial in reducing weevil numbers come spring.

LRGV Retention Election Set for Nov. 14

Cotton producers in the LRGV zone are eligible to vote in November on whether to continue the eradication effort in the zone.

Ballots will be sent on October 30 to all cotton growers and landowners who planted cotton in 2008. Those ballots must be postmarked no later than November 14 to be counted. Producers who planted cot-

ton in 2008 who do not receive a ballot should call TDA at (512) 463-3285.

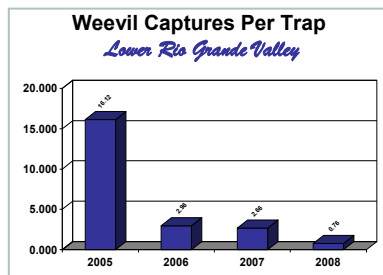
Producers will also elect a cotton grower to represent the zone on the Texas Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation Board of Directors. Nomination forms were due to TDA October 14.

All ballots should be mailed to TDA in Austin and will be canvassed on or before November 24, 2008.



BOLL WEEVIL BULLETIN

It's Working.
Weevil Counts are
Down 95.3% Since the
Program Began in 2005.



What Happens if Growers Vote 'No?'

Make sure your neighbors and landlords know what is at stake if a majority votes "no."

1. Program activities in the zone will cease. Traps will not be placed or checked, and fields will not be sprayed should reinfestation occur.

2. The zone's debt will still need to be repaid. An assessment will be made each year until the debt is satisfied.

3. To date, the zone has

received more than \$14.6 million in state and federal cost-share assistance. Without an active eradication program, the LRGV would not be eligible for such funds.

4. With no program in place, the zone will remain under state quarantine. The Valley would be the only cotton production area in the United States not involved in eradication. Re-establishing a program would be difficult and costly.

Read Your Ballot Carefully

Producers are encouraged to read the ballot carefully and follow the verification procedures to ensure their vote counts.

Please note these items on the ballot:

- A simple majority is required to continue the program.
- The assessment for the zone cannot exceed the maximum annual assessment approved in the *original* referendum.
- You may vote for only one person in the director election. If the measure fails, the zone will continue to be represented by a director appointed by the commissioner of agriculture.
- The ballot must be signed by an eligible cotton-grower or crop-sharing landlord who planted cotton within the zone during 2008.

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