

Boll Weevil Bulletin



An Eradication Information Resource

November 2008

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Program personnel know what's at stake

In the 1.2 million cotton acres that make up the Southern High Plains/Caprock boll weevil eradication zone, this year program traps recovered a single boll weevil compared to some 300,000 captured in 2001.

"We believe he rode in on a vehicle coming from outside the zone," said Zone Manager Patrick Burson. "Capturing him tells us our traps are working. They're giving us a clear picture of what is going on in the field."

The SHP/C zone has been declared suppressed and out of quarantine since 2004. Since then, growers have been participating in a maintenance program. Along with the disappearance of the weevil, they have seen a significant reduction in the density of traps around cotton fields, equating to lower program costs and a consistently decreasing producer assessment.

"You'll see fewer traps, but that doesn't mean their job is any less vital to the program," said Burson. "In fact, the traps are even more important because each one is responsible for a larger geographical area."

According to Burson, program focus in the zone has evolved from

treatment to trapping and reducing program costs where feasible.

"We've put so much work into getting where we are that it is imperative we remain diligent in what we're doing," said Burson. "It's the data from accurate trapping that allows us to stay on top of what's going on in the zone. If we find a weevil, we react aggressively and decisively and eliminate the possibility for flare ups."

"It's also important for everyone to understand that this stage of the program is vital to maintaining the progress that's been made," Burson continued. "Growers have made an investment in this program and we need to protect that investment."

Burson and his team are ever aware that this is a grower funded program, and they remain persistent in reducing costs to save grower dollars where they can.

In fact, last month in lieu of rapidly rising fuel costs, program personnel decided to do their part by reducing their speed and driving a maximum of 60 mph. Doing so has increased gas mileage and is just one way they are helping to cut costs.

SHP/C retention election set for Dec. 10

Cotton producers in the SHP/C zone are eligible to vote in December on whether to continue the eradication effort in the zone.

Ballots will be sent Nov. 25 to all cotton growers and landowners who planted cotton in 2008. Those ballots must be postmarked no later than Dec. 10 to be counted. Producers who planted cotton 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 by Nov. 10.

All ballots should be mailed to TDA in Austin and will be canvassed on or before December 17, 2008.



BOLL WEEVIL BULLETIN**What Happens if Growers Vote 'No?'**

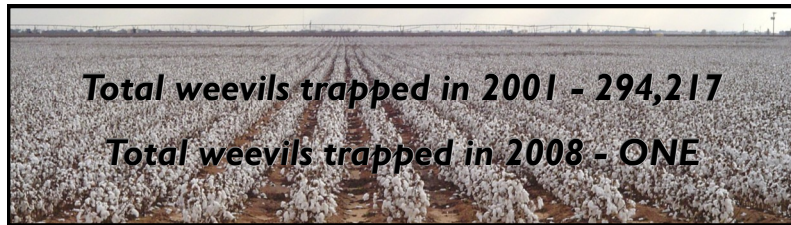
Make sure your neighbors and landlords know what is at stake if a majority votes "no."

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. Without a maintenance program in place, the boll weevil could re-establish itself on the High Plains and the investment made by area producers would be jeopardized.

3. With no traps for determining infestation, the zone's quarantine status would likely change. The SHP/C would be the only cotton production area in the U.S. not involved in eradication and re-establishing a program would be difficult and costly.

4. Without an active eradication program, the SHP/C would not be eligible for state or federal cost-share assistance. To date, the zone has received more than \$32.3 million.



Southern High Plains/Caprock
 Boll Weevil Eradication Program
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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 referendum 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.