

STWG steering committee makes changes, discusses program, finances and misinformation

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tendance questioned why one contractor did not have a contract, information was provided verifying that contractor was provided the bid solicitation, but had chosen not to bid. Management also provided information showing almost all of the zone's aerial contracts have been and continue to be with local contractors.

Growers at the meeting were also concerned about program debt and wondered when they could expect to see lower

assessments. Foundation management presented financials that showed how program debt had been reduced from \$29M to \$4M, in spite of the fact that program expenses had been below assessment revenue only one year since the program began. State and federal cost-share assistance has helped reduce the zone's debt. Management also explained how the Foundation board was committed to doing all they could to help secure additional cost-share funds to further reduce zone debt. However, it is vital that all involved with the program do what they can to reduce program costs. Only after the debt is paid off and

program costs are reduced to a level less than the current assessment rate, can the assessment be lowered.

This year's trapping protocol changes and resulting data have made it clear that volunteer cotton is a huge source of weevils and a drain on program funds. Eliminating volunteer cotton will save the program a significant amount of money and pave the way to a lower assessment.

Other issues discussed included the excellent Sunset Commission report received by the Foundation and subsequent legislative changes this year. The committee discussed how those legislative changes could be

beneficial to the STWG zone. Management also reported on the commitment during the session from Commissioner Staples and the legislature to helping growers finish eradication.

Foundation CEO Lindy Patton thanked South Texas Cotton and Grain and the National Cotton Council for their leadership and help in securing additional assistance.

The next committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 21, at 1:30 p.m. at the Old Nueces County Show Barn (next to the Texas Boll Weevil office), 909 E. Avenue J, Robstown, TX.

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

South Texas/Winter Garden
Boll Weevil Eradication Program
P.O. Box 5089
Abilene, TX 79608-5089



South Texas/Winter Garden

Boll Weevil Bulletin



An Eradication Information Resource

October 2009

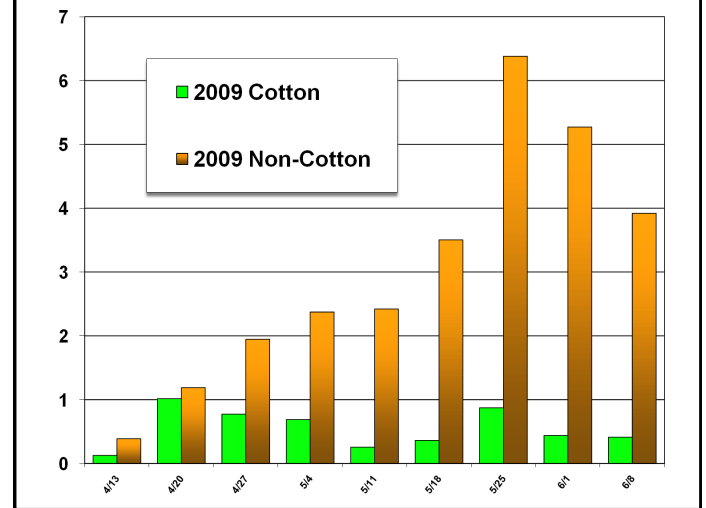
2009 non-cotton fields are the source of significant weevil populations

In November of last year, the Foundation's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met to discuss program issues in south Texas. What it deduced was that the increases in the average number of weevils per trap for 2008 were attributed to hurricanes and other weather anomalies, and also to volunteer cotton and cotton in other crops. It concluded that volunteer cotton must be addressed, and stalk destruction must improve in order to eradicate the boll weevil from Texas.

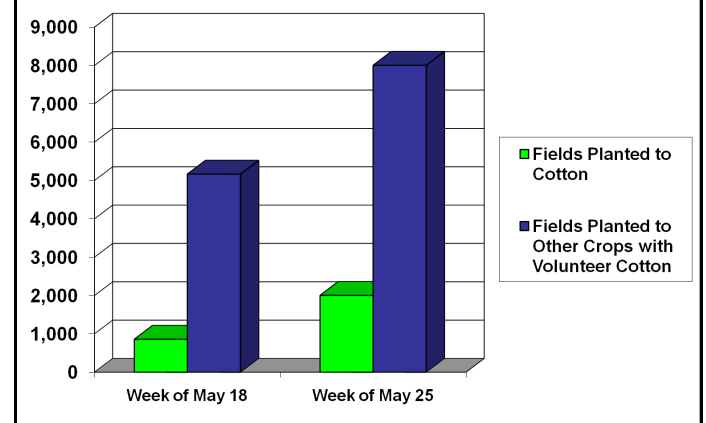
Noting the danger associated with volunteer cotton, the Foundation implemented a program plan for 2009 that included mapping and trapping all previous year cotton fields in those areas with active weevil populations, treating 2008 and 2009 fields when weevils were caught and applications could be successfully made. The plan also called for identifying, and if possible, destroying all volunteer cotton plants along roadsides, pastures, and other non-crop areas.

The trapping data collected from both 2008 and

2009 Boll Weevils Per Trap Per Week Uvalde District



2009 Trapping Results Total Weevils Captured Uvalde District



2009 cotton fields has produced astounding results. As seen in the chart, 2009 Boll Weevils Per Trap Per

Week, Uvalde District, the data shows that in the Uvalde district the *(Continued on page 3)*



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It is clear that boll weevil eradication is critical to the sustainability of cotton production in Texas. Equally essential, however, is the partnership that exists between cotton growers and the boll weevil eradication program.

Across the state, each boll weevil eradication zone operates based on recommendations from a local grower steering committee. This partnership is the cornerstone of the program and fundamental to the successes we've seen thus far.

Earlier this year, growers in the Winter Garden area organized to form a local steering "sub-committee" to increase grower input and program ownership for the growers in that area. The Winter Garden sub-committee works with the South Texas/Winter Garden (STWG) zone steering committee to review program progress and make recommendations to the Foundation. Already, the Winter Garden committee has met twice since their establishment.

The STWG zone steering committee has been meeting on a regular basis since the program began to review program progress, analyze financial data, address concerns, and make recommendations to the Foundation. The committee has been instrumental in keeping the program on track in spite of many obstacles. Unfortunately, sometimes information discussed at committee meetings

This partnership is the cornerstone of the program and fundamental to the successes we've seen thus far.

is not adequately communicated throughout the zone. So for the last steering committee meeting, the committee invited producers and associates from across the zone to participate in a question and answer session to address concerns and clear up misinformation about the program. Around 80-100 growers attended the meeting with Foundation management and the committee.

One concern discussed was representation on the steering committee. The committee explained that the Foundation is not involved in the makeup of the committee and made it clear they would welcome anyone interested in working to improve the program. The committee approved adding the following members: Tracy Robertson, Robstown; Bayne Horne, Sinton; David Zimmerman, Bishop; and Jon Gwynn, Corpus Christi.

Another concern discussed was based on misinformation about aerial application contracts. Some in attendance had been led to believe some local contractors were not allowed the opportunity to bid on certain contracts. Foundation management provided information verifying how the Foundation must follow state approved procurement guidelines and all bid solicitations and awards must be approved by the Commissioner of Agriculture. When some in at-

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STWG Steering Committee
James Adams, Odem
Austin Clary, Sabinal
Bobby Dillon, Taft
Jon Gwynn, Corpus Christi
Jimmy Hayes, Port Lavaca
Bayne Horne, Sinton
Rick Kocurek, Robstown
Danny May, Port Lavaca
Wayne Miller, Corpus Christi
Thomas Moeller, Kingsville
Dwayne Nunley, Port Lavaca
Danny Parker, Uvalde
Robert Rieder, Sinton
Tracy Robertson, Robstown
Gary Underbrink, Kingsville
Stanley Woelfel, Kingsville
David Zimmerman, Bishop

Winter Garden Sub-Committee
Austin Clary, Sabinal
Bryson Dalrymple, Uvalde
Ralph Hesse, Uvalde
Dwight Jackson, Corpus Christi
Mark Lamon, D'Hanis
Joey Lamon, Castroville
Archie McFadin, Uvalde
Mike McHugh, Uvalde
Carl Muecke, Jr., Knippa
Jeff Nunley, Victoria
James Parker, Uvalde
Danny Parker, Uvalde
Pete Pawelek, Poteet
Freddy Plagens, Hondo
Rodney Sams, Bandera
Richard Santos, D'Hanis
Noel Troxclair, Uvalde
Kenneth Verstuuyft, Sabinal
Harold Weiblen, Castroville

2009 non-cotton fields are the source of significant weevil populations

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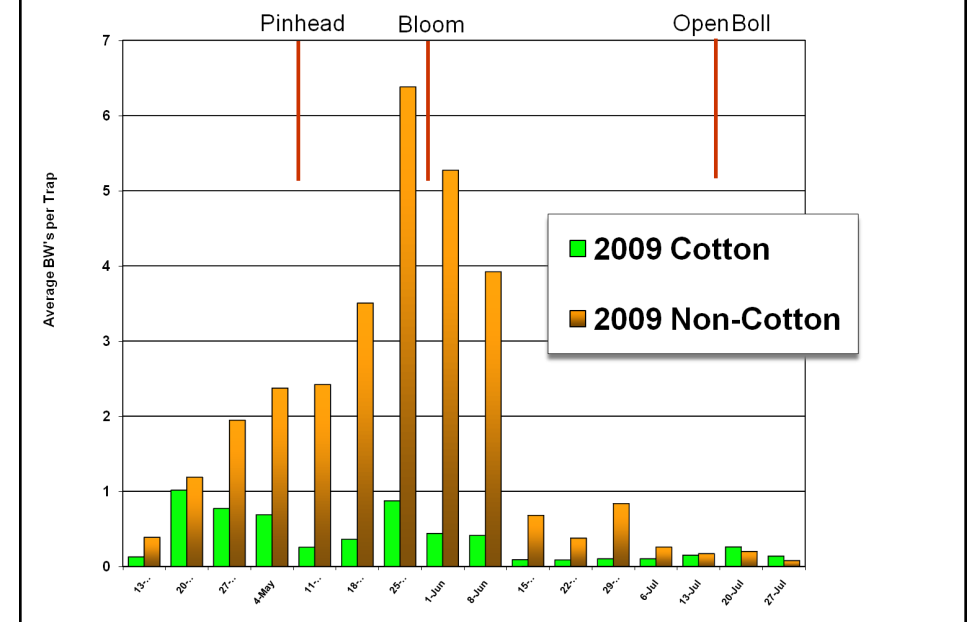
majority of weevils captured were found in fields NOT planted to cotton in the current year.

The second chart, *2009 Trapping Results, Total Weevils Captured, Uvalde District*, demonstrates this phenomenon another way. For the week of May 18, there were over 500 percent more weevils captured in fields planted to other crops (with volunteer cotton) than in those fields planted to cotton in 2009.

The third chart, *2009 Boll Weevils Per Trap Per Week, Uvalde District*, shows weevil captures in relation to cotton crop stages: pinhead, bloom and open boll. This is important because at pinhead square weevils begin to feed and reproduce—rapidly. Logically, this is when the program begins making boll weevil treatments.

Notice the spikes in weevil captures in 2009 non-commercial cotton after pinhead crop stage. Weevils in this cotton are feeding and reproducing at a fast rate. Unfortunately, because this cotton is non-commercial, treating it is challenging. One could see how non-commercial cotton beneath a corn canopy, for example, could be difficult to treat. Untreated plants allow uninterrupted weevil production in non-commercial cotton.

2009 Boll Weevils Per Trap Per Week, Uvalde District



Crop-specific chemical labels are also necessary to treat non-commercial cotton in other crops. Program management is working to secure the necessary chemical labels to make those treatments. The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) has been very helpful in this process.

The numbers presented illustrate the dangers of non-commercial cotton to boll weevil eradication. They justify the emphasis put on this problem by the legislature, TDA, the Foundation and the growers. Already, by

working together to address this issue, in 2009 weevil numbers have been reduced by some 85 percent over last year in the zone.

This information also makes it clear for 2010 that in areas with active weevil populations we must work even harder to identify, destroy and/or treat all cotton plants, not just those in cotton fields. Therefore, in 2010 the Foundation will continue trapping and treating 2010 cotton fields as well as those fields planted to cotton in 2009.

Program on alert for wild cotton and seed

The Texas Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation is soliciting help in locating isolated cotton plants along highways and ditches, in fields and in gin yards. This wild cotton is capable of producing next year's weevils and providing a host



Cotton in corn.

during the fall and winter months. Just two volunteer stalks left untreated can produce some 250 weevils alone. The weevils from these same two stalks have the potential to produce over 18,000 eggs. Left unchecked, 18,000 boll weevil eggs

have the capability of setting back eradication efforts by years.

Please help locate these plants. Doing so will save producers money. If you find any wild cotton, please call 1-800-687-6688 and report it. Your fellow cotton producers are appreciative.