

Yoakum County Agriculture & Natural Resources Newsletter

May 2026 Edition | Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service | Yoakum County

From the Agent's Desk: Welcome to the May 2026 Edition

As producers continue preparing for the growing season, moisture remains a key topic of discussion across Yoakum County. While planting activity has been limited in some areas, producers are actively monitoring field conditions and preparing equipment for favorable planting opportunities. Extension programs continue to provide timely research-based information and educational opportunities to support local agriculture.

— Rusty Lanier, County Extension Agent
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service — Yoakum County

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This newsletter covers crop and field conditions, cotton and peanut updates, weather and moisture summaries, weed management considerations, educational programming highlights including Newsome Grape Days CEU events, farm and ranch visits, producer consultations, and upcoming events for summer 2026.

Upcoming: Early Season Cotton Scout School, Cotton & Weed Management Programs, Summer CEU Opportunities, and Farm and Ranch Consultations.

The Yoakum County Extension Office remains committed to providing research-based educational programs, producer assistance, and outreach opportunities that support the success of agriculture in our county.



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IPM Podcast Scan



Sandy Land Crop Report Summary

Recent rainfall across the region has provided beneficial moisture for crop establishment and early-season growth. Peanut producers have experienced relatively few issues thus far, with healthy root development attributed to early rainfall. However, continued wet conditions and humidity may increase concerns regarding nitrogen leaching and early-season disease development as the growing season progresses. Producers with a history of disease pressure may benefit from proactive management strategies.

Cotton producers have also benefited from moisture conditions, resulting in minimal insect pressure during the early season. The primary concern moving forward is weed management, as favorable growing conditions have encouraged weed emergence throughout the region. Current moisture levels should allow producers to effectively utilize post-emergence herbicide programs where needed.

According to West Texas Mesonet data, rainfall totals remain below long-term averages but have provided much-needed moisture for crop establishment. Weather outlooks indicate continued opportunities for precipitation across portions of the region, supporting crop development while emphasizing the importance of continued field scouting and timely management decisions.

Peanut Update Quotes

"Our main and most immediate concern right now is nitrogen leaching due to rainfall."





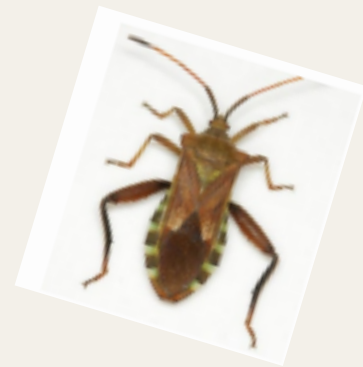
West Plains IPM Update Summary

Recent rainfall has contributed to favorable growing conditions across the region, with the majority of cotton acres planted between late May and early June. Current scouting efforts have revealed very low insect pressure, with no significant detections of cotton fleahoppers, Lygus bugs, aphids, or thrips. Producers are encouraged to remain vigilant and continue routine field scouting, as many weed species serve as host plants for cotton pests.

Weed pressure has increased following recent rainfall events, making timely weed management an important priority. Current humidity levels have created favorable conditions for effective postemergence herbicide applications, particularly glufosinate (Liberty), when used in conjunction with a strong residual herbicide program.

Corn scouting efforts have identified corn leafhoppers at two locations in Hockley County. Extension specialists continue monitoring populations and educating producers about the potential risk of corn leafhopper-transmitted red stunt disease. Producers are encouraged to remain informed and continue regular scouting activities throughout the growing season.

Educational opportunities remain available through the Early Season Cotton Scout School, which provides training in weed identification, herbicide injury diagnosis, cotton growth and development, insect identification, disease recognition, and field scouting techniques.



"Be vigilant and scout frequently."

-Kerry Siders

Early Season Cotton Scout School with Kerry Siders

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

Option #2: Friday, June 12, 2026, at the Extension Office in Levelland
<https://maps.app.goo.gl/RdUCCQTcSxfwoC8z8>

OR

Option #3: Thursday, June 18, 2026, at the Ag Center in Littlefield
<https://maps.app.goo.gl/cGeEPRUnc9E1dWVBA>

"Recent Rainfall Improves Planting Conditions Across West Texas"



Cotton Planting Progress Update

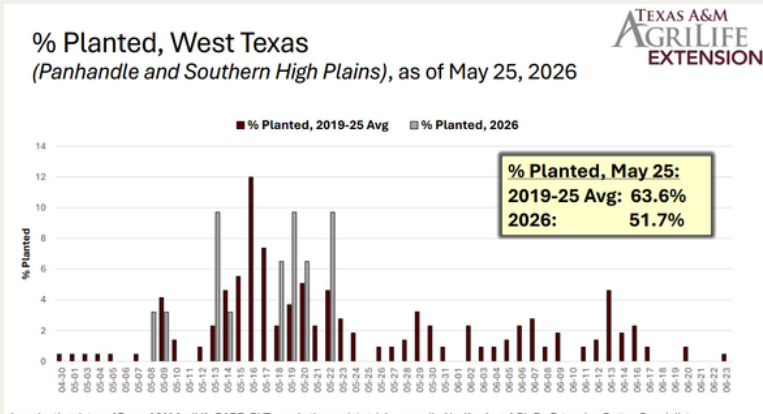
According to data compiled by Dr. Ken Lege, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Cotton Specialist, cotton planting across the West Texas Panhandle and Southern High Plains continues to trail historical averages due to recent weather conditions. As of May 25, 2026, planting progress was estimated at 51.7%, compared to the 2019–2025 average of 63.6%.

Recent rainfall events have provided much-needed planting moisture across the region, resulting in many producers delaying planting until favorable field conditions developed. While planting progress remains behind average, the moisture received has improved prospects for crop establishment and emergence.

Looking ahead, continued opportunities for rainfall over the coming weeks may further support stand establishment and early-season growth. Producers remain optimistic about completing planting within key insurance and production deadlines while taking advantage of improved soil moisture conditions.

Source: Dr. Ken Lege, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Cotton Specialist.

"The recent rainfall may have slowed planting progress, but it has significantly improved planting conditions across the region." — Dr. Ken Lege



Recent temperatures and predicted planting conditions at Lubbock, TX									
Date	Day	High	Low	% Chance Precip	Wind	5-d Total Precip	Planting Conditions Based on 50% Soil	Planting Conditions Based on 75% Soil	Comments
5/14/2026	Wed	82	52	0	12	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
5/15/2026	Thu	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
5/16/2026	Fri	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
5/17/2026	Sat	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
5/18/2026	Sun	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
5/19/2026	Mon	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
5/20/2026	Tue	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
5/21/2026	Wed	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
5/22/2026	Thu	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
5/23/2026	Fri	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
5/24/2026	Sat	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
5/25/2026	Sun	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
5/26/2026	Mon	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
5/27/2026	Tue	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
5/28/2026	Wed	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
5/29/2026	Thu	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
5/30/2026	Fri	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
5/31/2026	Sat	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
6/01/2026	Sun	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
6/02/2026	Mon	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
6/03/2026	Tue	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
6/04/2026	Wed	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
6/05/2026	Thu	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
6/06/2026	Fri	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
6/07/2026	Sat	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
6/08/2026	Sun	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
6/09/2026	Mon	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
6/10/2026	Tue	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
6/11/2026	Wed	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
6/12/2026	Thu	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
6/13/2026	Fri	78	48	0	10	0.0	Good	Good	10 years of planting rain chance.
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New World Screwworm: An Emerging Threat to Texas Wildlife

The New World Screwworm (NWS), *Cochliomyia hominivorax*, is once again becoming a concern for Texas due to its recent movement northward through Central America and Mexico. Although eradicated from the United States in 1966, this parasitic fly poses a serious threat to livestock, wildlife, and the Texas economy if it becomes re-established.

Unlike common maggots that feed on dead tissue, New World screwworm larvae feed on the living tissue of warm-blooded animals. Females lay eggs in wounds or near mucous membranes, and once hatched, the larvae burrow into the flesh, causing severe tissue damage, rapid health decline, and potentially death.

Wildlife at Risk

Texas is home to more than 100 mammal species vulnerable to screwworm infestations, including white-tailed deer, mule deer, black bears, coyotes, squirrels, and many exotic wildlife species. White-tailed deer alone contribute over \$9 billion annually to the Texas economy through hunting and wildlife-related activities.

Signs of Possible Infestation

Landowners, hunters, and wildlife enthusiasts should watch for:

Open wounds with visible maggots

Foul odors resembling rotting flesh

Head shaking or irritation

Lethargy and isolation from other animals

Wounds around the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, genitalia, or antler growth areas in deer

Reporting is Critical

Anyone observing wildlife with maggot-infested wounds should immediately report the sighting to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) or the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC). Early detection and rapid reporting are essential to preventing the spread of New World Screwworm.

Monitoring Wildlife Populations

The publication encourages Texans to actively monitor wildlife through:

Trail cameras placed near water, food sources, and travel corridors

Observation from hunting stands and blinds

Backyard wildlife watching

Tracking scavenger activity such as vultures and coyotes

Maintaining detailed records of wildlife observations and herd composition data

Seasonal Concerns

Risk of infestation increases during periods when animals are more likely to sustain wounds, including:

Birthing season, when females and newborns are vulnerable

Breeding season, when males may receive injuries from fighting

Antler growth and shedding periods in deer

Takeaway

Protecting Texas wildlife from New World Screwworm requires vigilance, monitoring, and immediate reporting of suspected cases. Landowners, hunters, wildlife managers, and the public all play an important role in helping prevent this destructive parasite from re-establishing itself in Texas.

