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Kansas Insect Newsletter

For Agribusinesses, Applicators, Consultants, and Extension Personnel

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Brown Wheat Mites:

Brown wheat mites are abundant in some wheat fields in western Kansas, but in some cases they are not the main problem. Brown wheat mites are common in western Kansas during droughts. Deciding if fields would benefit from treatment is often not an easy decision especially this late in the season. Brown wheat mites survive the summer as diapausing eggs. The mites usually begin laying these eggs in mid April and mite populations generally begin to decline. Thus, treatments this late in the season are usually not highly beneficial. In addition mites are often found in fields that have other problems. Before any treatments are made for brown wheat mites one needs to make sure that other more serious problems are not present. Currently, many fields are suffering from wheat streak, drought and freeze injury. Treating for mites only to find out that the real problems were being caused by wheat streak would be a real frustration.



Wheat Streak

Wheat streak may be a little more prevalent than we would have thought last August. The warm mild weather in October gave the wheat curl mites a longer time than normal to transmit the disease. Spring symptoms of wheat streak mosaic virus usually show up in April on edges of fields near volunteer wheat. Look for yellow streaking or mosaic patterns on young leaves. Severity of symptoms can vary from plant to plant depending on when the plant became infested, which can often give the field a very uneven appearance. More information on wheat streak can be found at:

<http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/path-ext/factSheets/wheat/wheat%20Streak%20Mosaic%20Virus.asp>



Brown wheat mites on leaf



Brown wheat mite injury

With brown wheat mites the injury begins as stippling from the mite feeding on individual cells in the leaf. Eventually the leaves begin dying from the tip of the leaf back. The browning of the leaf tips is very distinctive of heavy brown wheat mite injury. Symptoms on plants within a row are usually fairly uniform, however there can be variation from row to row in furrow irrigated wheat with the tops of the beds showing heavy damage and the bottom of the furrows showing little damage. Information on brown wheat mite including pictures of the damage and the over-summering eggs can be found at

http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/dp_entm/extension/InsectInfo/Wheat/Brown%20Wheat%20Mite.html

Phil Sloderbeck

Weekly Report from the Kansas State University Insect Diagnostic Laboratory:

The following samples were submitted to the Insect Diagnostic Laboratory from April 19-April 22, 2004:

- 4-19-2004, Riley County: Wolf Spider.
- 4-19-2004, Wabaunsee County: Black Carpet Beetles in home.
- 4-20-2004, Sedgwick County: Fruit fly in hospital.
- 4-20-2004, Douglas County: Varied Carpet Beetles.
- 4-20-2004, Morris County: Hackberry Psyllids in building.
- 4-20-2004, Harvey County: Winged Termites in yard.
- 4-21-2004, Lyon County: Vein Pocket Gall Midge larvae in yard.
- 4-21-2004, Sheridan County: Comb-footed Spider in home.
- 4-21-2004, Allen County: Elm Leaf Beetles in home.



Vein Pocket Gall Midge Larvae



Adult Vein Pocket Gall Midge

This week's Critter Pix contribution comes from Lyon County and is of a mass of Vein Pocket Gall Midge larvae (Order Diptera, family Cecidomyiidae). Mostly these are flies in the genus *Macrodiplosis*, and are mainly associated with oaks. There have been reports of these larvae "raining" down from trees as they drop to the ground to enter soil and go into diapause (a quiescent stage) until next spring. Adults emerge and lay eggs on the newly budding leaves, larvae feed on leaf tissues causing the characteristic Vein Pocket Galls along mid- and larger side veins. When mature (about mid-spring) larvae exit leaf and drop to ground to complete cycle. A photo of gall can be found on page 423 of **Insects in Kansas**, and information on galls on oaks on page 35 of the Cooperative Extension Service publication "Insects and Mites Associated With Shade Trees and Woody Ornamentals", S-85 (also available at <http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/library/ENTML2/S85.PDF>).

If there any questions regarding these samples or about the identification of any arthropod please contact the Insect Diagnostician at 785-532-4739 or at bbrown@oznet.ksu.edu .

Bobby Brown

Sincerely,

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