Recent weather creating environment for potential aphid infestation

Bastrop County landowners who are interested in proactive water well management are invited to a Texas Well Owner Network training April 15 in Lincoln, Texas. The training, which is free and open to the public, will be from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Bastrop County Community Center, 1014 Main Avenue.

The TWORN program for Texas residents who depend on household wells for their water needs, so they can learn about improving and protecting their community water resource, was introduced by Drew Gholson, Texas A&M AgLife Extension Service program specialist and network coordinator.

Participants may bring well water samples to this training for screening. The cost is $10 per sample, due when samples are picked up from the training site.

Sugarcane growers may need to begin proactive measures to may need to begin scouting for sugarcane aphids infestations. The insects are destructive and can grow quickly, populations can be difficult to see with the naked eye.

Sugarcane aphids have a tan to light green colored body and dark feet. They also have dark-colored cornicles, unique extensions at the rear of the body that resemble tailpipes.

In addition to the undersides of sugarcane leaves, cornicles that sign they are present are a sticky residue that they excrete onto the leaves called “honeydew”, which can be found on the sorghum leaves below the leaves where the aphids are rearing.

The sugarcane aphid poses a couple of significant challenges to sorghum growers. The aphid is difficult to identify, a magnifying glass is required. The characteristics are difficult to see with the naked eye.

Sugarcane aphids have an asexual reproduction process, which means they are able to reproduce without a female. This process is right.

The development of a tool was made possible through the Southern Extension Risk Management Education Competitive Grants program, and is designed to be fairly simple to use. It is an internet-based application that can be used up on any iPhone or other mobile device.

The tool is available for download at no cost to assist sugarcane producers and others concerned about aphid infestations.

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