



# New Mexico State University

## Extension Plant Sciences

### Alfalfa Market News

New Mexico Hay Association, [www.nmhay.com](http://www.nmhay.com)



#### Hay Prices for New Mexico

#### Volume 14, Issue 3

August 27, 2015

| County     | Contact                      | Premium+ Hay (\$/ton)   | Top Quality Hay (\$/ton) | Other Hay (\$/ton)   | Condition/ Market Activity/Cut Complete   |
|------------|------------------------------|---|--------------------------|--|---|
| Chaves     | Sandra Barraza, County Agent | \$220-280 large delivered; \$300-310 small, in the barn                   |                          | \$140-150 striped large bales; \$250-290 small striped                               | 4 <sup>th</sup> cuts 95%, 5 <sup>th</sup> cuts started; market slow, most going in the barn; hot, widespread showers                        |
| Dona Ana   | Teresa Dean, County Agent    | \$180-200 large; \$8.00 small   |                          | \$100 rained on hay  | 5 <sup>th</sup> cuts 60%; moderate demand; most growers missed the rains; low pest pressure   |
| De Baca    | Aspen Achen, County Agent    | \$190-200 large; \$8 small; Barns still full with not much moving         |                          | \$150 striped, not moving much   | 4 <sup>th</sup> cuts 65%; slow market, hot/humid with some showers; some grasshopper pressure   |
| Eddy       | Woods Houghton, County Agent | \$260-290 (\$275 ave.)  | \$250-260                | \$180 lightly striped  | 5 <sup>th</sup> cuts 100%; slow market but picking up; very hot weather   |
| Lea        | Wayne Cox, County Agent      | \$230-250 large; \$9+ small   | \$200 large; \$8 small   | \$180+ striped early cuts  | 5 <sup>th</sup> cuts; hot and humid weather   |
| Rio Arriba | Don Martinez, County Agent   | \$150 large; \$60 large in the field; \$8-9 small                         |                          | \$90-95 grass mix, rained on; \$5-7 small; \$35-45 round bales, cow hay in the field | 2 <sup>nd</sup> cuts 100% in lower valleys, 1 <sup>st</sup> cuts 85% of high mountain timothy; slow market; rainy weather has slowed haying |
| Valencia   | Various Contacts             | \$7.00-9.00 per bale in the barn; \$6-8.00, in the field if not rained on |                          | \$5-8.00 grass; \$3.00-5.00 cow hay, rained on; \$4-5 sudan and millet hay           | 3 <sup>rd</sup> cuts 100%; market slow; recent hot weather, occasional spotty shower; a lot of rained on hay early                          |

Prices are a compilation of Agent information and other area estimates.

N/A = prices and/or supplies not available at this time

#### New Aphid Pest of Sorghum in Eastern New Mexico

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A new aphid pest of sorghum (including forage types) was confirmed in New Mexico this month and has reached threshold populations in some fields. The sugarcane aphid was a minor pest of sugarcane in Florida and Louisiana, but began infesting sorghum and causing losses in Texas and Louisiana in 2013. Sugarcane aphid has been now confirmed in sorghum in 12 states (Figure 1).

Several types of aphids can attack sorghum. Sugarcane aphid can be distinguished from similar aphids by its dark cornicles, the stove pipe structures located at their rear end. Greenbug, which is the most similar aphid, does not have dark cornicles, but usually has a green stripe down its abdomen and is more green colored while sugarcane aphid is usually pale yellow. Other aphid pests that are often found with sugarcane aphid are yellow sugarcane aphid and corn leaf aphid. Yellow sugarcane aphid is bright yellow and has numerous hairs on its back and pale cornicles. Corn leaf aphid has dark cornicles, but is dark green and unlike sugarcane aphid has dark legs (Figure 2).

In addition to grain sorghum, this aphid feeds on any sorghum grown for forage (e.g., sudangrass, sorghum-sudan hybrids, forage sorghums). It can multiply rapidly covering the undersides of leaves. Damage is severe and control can be difficult. In Texas last year 60% of sorghum acres were infested, with 5% overall losses, a monetary loss of almost \$35 Million. Losses in individual fields range from 20-100%. High numbers of these aphids not only damage leaves, they produce large quantities of honeydew, a sticky substance that can gum up harvest equipment such as swathers, choppers, and combines. Highest losses are typically when fields are abandoned because honeydew from aphids prevents harvesting. In addition, the honeydew can lead to slower drydown of hay in the windrow, which can already be slow in sorghum forages because of the relatively large stalks that are common. Extremely rapid reproduction can make this aphid seem to explode in population almost overnight. This insect reproduces asexually, is essentially born pregnant, and can reproduce only 4 days after birth.

In New Mexico, sugarcane aphid was first confirmed this summer on August 7 in Curry County. The following week it was confirmed in Roosevelt and Chaves Counties with Chaves Co. having economic infestations. It was then confirmed in Eddy County and is likely present in Lea County.

Lack of sugarcane aphid resistant sorghum hybrids and insufficient aphid suppression by natural enemies will require New Mexico sorghum producers (hay, silage, and grain) to rely on insecticides for sugarcane aphid management in 2015-2016. In 2014, numerous insecticide efficacy studies in Texas confirmed 2013 reports of performance problems with labelled insecticides for aphids in sorghum. Insecticidal control from all registered products was inconsistent, providing only moderate-to-poor control. Further, the broad spectrum activity of registered products is also inconsistent with maintaining beneficial insect populations that are an important source of control for this aphid (Figure 2).

Fortunately, there are two products that can provide effective control and are consistent with good insect pest management practices with minimal impact on beneficials. One product was recently registered in New Mexico, Sivanto 200SL. The other product which has performed extremely well in the last two years in Texas is Transform WG (sulfoxalur). A section 18 for Transform has been granted in numerous states and has been requested for New Mexico.

Sorghum is grown on over 100,000 acres in NM. Grain sorghum alone is valued on average at almost \$12 Million per year. In addition, sorghum forages account for a large percentage of the 85-100k acres of 'other hay' category of hay produced in the state. Sorghum is a good fit for NM, being drought resistant and a low input crop, but has potentially low profitability, so close management of inputs is critical. Particularly in dryland sorghum, a couple of insecticide applications could essentially wipe out potential profits.

Fortunately, there are some sorghum varieties that are commercially available that are less susceptible, and breeders are working on developing resistant varieties. Also the aphid is unlikely to be able to overwinter in New Mexico but will move up from overwintering areas in Texas every year. This means that early season infestations are unlikely and that if growers plant as early as possible it will help avoid or reduce later season damage from this pest.

Growers are encouraged to scout sorghum weekly for sugarcane aphid, then at least twice a week once sugarcane aphid is found in a field. There are different thresholds available. For now we are recommending treatment at 50-75 aphids per leaf which is an aggressive version of the south Texas threshold of 50-125 aphids/leaf. Another option is to use the West Texas recommendation detailed on the Texas A & M sugarcane aphid blog.



**2015 Sugarcane Aphid, *Melanaphis sacchari*, Occurrence on Sorghum and Johnsongrass August 27, 2015**

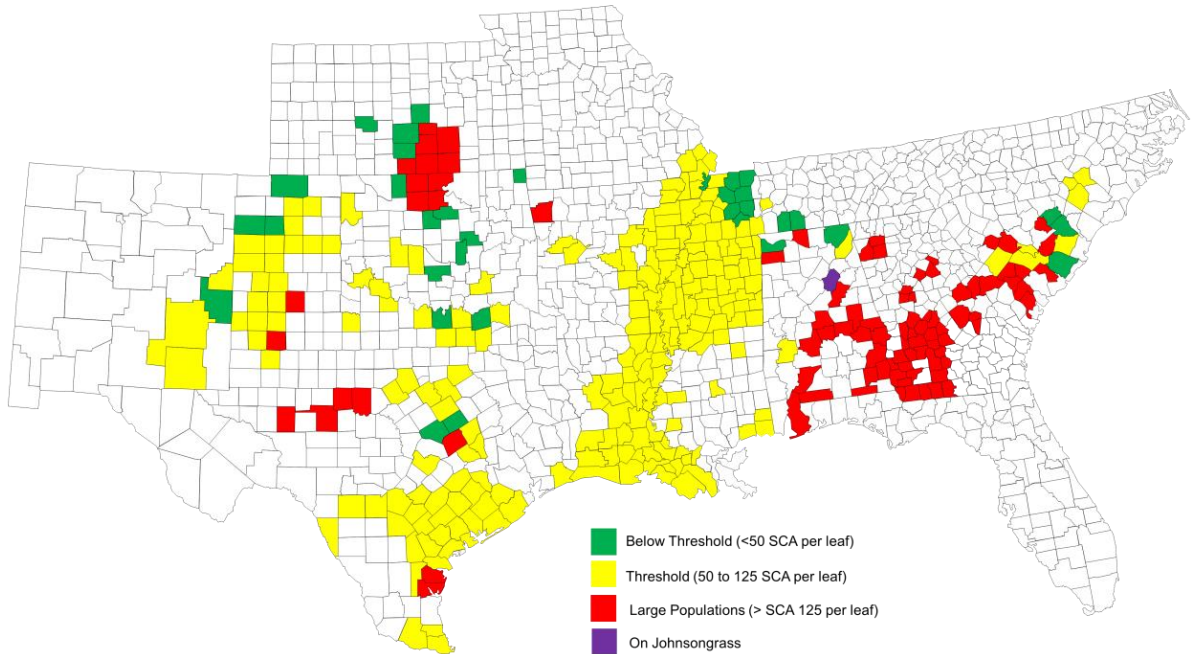
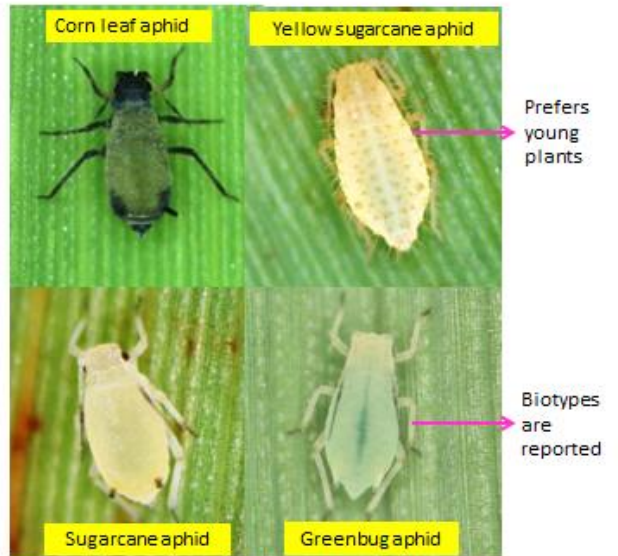


Figure 1.



**Other aphids species pests of sorghum**



Slide by: R.T. Villanueva and D. Sekula

Figure 2.

*Mark Marsalis*, Mark Marsalis, Extension Forage Specialist—New Mexico State University is an equal opportunity employer. All programs are available to everyone regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, handicap or national origin, New Mexico State University and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.

