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2005 Pink Bollworm Emergence Alert

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West Texas cotton producers outside of the current pink bollworm eradication area have widely adopted Bollgard technology to combat the pinkie in 2005. But there are still acres in the sprayed refuge option, and probably much of the dryland acreage in the infested area that will not be planted to a Bt variety. This acreage may need spraying this year. According to a predictive model developed in California and Arizona that relies on heat unit accumulations, overwintering pink bollworms should begin to emerge as moths after 500 heat units have accumulated since January 1. In a collaborative effort, **Plains Cotton Growers** (Roger Haldenby) and **Texas Cooperative Extension** are developing a site where producers, consultants and others can go to find out when overwintering pinkies are beginning to emerge, when emergence is over and spraying for the overwintering population is no longer needed and when each subsequent field population appears. This site should be up and running by June 3rd and will be accessed at: www.plainscotton.org.



But for now, using long-term historical temperatures and actual temperature data from 2005, Roger and I have generated the following information:

Dates when overwintering pink bollworm emergence starts and ends for 2005.

Location	Start of emergence		Emergence 95% complete
	Historical temperature averages	2005 Temperatures	Historical temperature averages
Lubbock	May 26	May 22	July 28
Midland	May 13	May 15*	July 13
San Angelo	May 8	May 6*	July 11

*Actual date 500 HU accumulated.

Cotton is marginally susceptible once squares reach matchhead size (about 650 HU after planting) but squares are most susceptible once white flower petals begin to appear on (about 10 days old). Emergence would be 95% over after 1950 HU have accumulated. These “square protection” applications will not be needed unless traps around the field average more than 5 moths per night (traps checked 3 times a week). Treatments should be on a 5-7 day schedule. Once flowers appear, control decisions should be based on boll inspections, not trap catches.

We are already catching moths in traps across most of the upper west Texas region, from Bailey County to San Angelo, over to the St. Lawrence area. A few moths have emerged in our overwintering emergence cage study at the Lubbock Center.

This season long trapping effort is a first for us so we don't have any previous years to compare with and therefore cannot predict what kind of pink bollworm season we may be looking at.

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