Fundamental changes in grain and cotton markets in the past year have led to increased levels of uncertainty related to the price of those commodities. Texas Cooperative Extension is sponsoring the 2006 Advanced Technical Analysis short course that will be held in Robstown on December 4th through 5th. This short course is designed to help each participant develop a thorough understanding of how price risk management strategies built on agricultural futures and options can be integrated with technical analysis tools to aid in developing a marketing plan for their farming and ranching operation. The instructor for the short course is Alan Brugler. Mr. Brugler is an agricultural marketing consultant and president of Brugler Marketing and Management LLC, Omaha, Nebraska and appears as a regular market analyst on Market to Market.

Mr. Brugler was DTN director for market analysis and research commodity strategy for over ten years. Alan’s nearly 10,000 articles and graphics appeared in the Grains, Livestock, and Cotton segments, Technical Comments, Special Research Reports, ChartTalk, Midday Grain Comments, and the Weekly Options Review pages. He has led more than 470 seminars on fundamental and technical market analysis methods, options, and market outlook for audiences throughout the U.S. and Canada. He developed the Brugler Cycle Indicator (BCI) offered on the DTN Pro Series and DTNstant services.

Participants in this short course will gain a greater understanding of advanced hedging techniques, futures and options strategies, such as, covered calls, spreads, storage hedging, windows, etc. Significant time will be spent on the pros and cons of these strategies, and when it is appropriate to use these tools. Individuals can expect to leave the course with a better idea of what these tools are and when to use them.

This short course will be held at the Nueces County Show Barn in Robstown on December 4th and December 5th. The workshop will start at 9:00 a.m. on the 4th and end at noon on the 5th. A registration fee of $125 covers all course materials, lunch and breaks. Please call Larry Falconer or Stephanie Klock at (361)265-9203 if you have any questions regarding the short course or would like to register. Thank you very much. LLF

The Beltwide Cotton Conferences coordinated by the National Cotton Council will be held January 9-12, 2007 in New Orleans, LA. It begins the morning of January 10 with the Production Conference that will last 1.5 days followed by the technical conferences which will also take 1.5 days. I have found the conference to offer a good way to exchange ideas with cotton producers, consultants, researchers, Extension specialists, and the other broad segments of the cotton industry.

There are so many things going on at the conference that a person must examine the final program thoroughly, find all the meeting locations, and select events to attend. Many of the programs may not turn out to be what you expected, but usually something can be learned from each presentation. It is a lot of work if done correctly, and as I always say, “don’t spend your time in the halls holding-the-walls-up.” That means do not spend all your time talking in the halls. There will be plenty of time to visit when meetings are not scheduled.
For detailed information see http://beltwide.cotton.org. Early conference registration for discount will be in effect through December 1. Special room rates are not guaranteed unless made by December 1. Several of us Extension types from the Texas Gulf Coast plan to work the conference for ideas to bring back to our region. We did this many years ago. One of the programs to emerge at that time was the “Coastal Bend Cotton Quality Improvement Task Force.” I think it had some impact on our region.

**COTTON INCORPORATED STATE SUPPORT COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Subject project reports will be given December 12-13 (all day the 12th, one-half day the 13th) at the USDA Plant Stress Laboratory, 3810 4th St., Lubbock, Texas. Anyone connected with the cotton industry is invited. Producers especially should have an interest since their CI funds are used to support the projects. There is a committee of cotton farmers that select projects for funding each year. I think Cotton Incorporated has done an outstanding job for the entire industry in our state, across the nation, and worldwide.

**RESULTS OF INSECT CONTROL EVALUATION**

Each year we publish results of various agricultural studies conducted in the region. The report is available at http://agfacts.tamu.edu/~rparker/rpmaster.htm. We will also mail you a copy of the report if requested. The title of this year’s report is “Results of Insect Control Evaluations on Corn, Sorghum, Cotton and Bermudagrass in Texas Coastal Bend Counties.” Two of the reports, one dealing with stored corn and one dealing with boll weevil pheromone trap catches will be updated in early January.

The 2006 season was a difficult one as we lost many field experiments due to the “exceptional drought” (as designated by the National Weather Service), and in other studies data collection was limited. The main data not obtained in several studies was yield. Studies include those on corn (5), sorghum (5), cotton (8), and bermudagrass pasture (1). Areas of study in the report include corn, cotton, and sorghum at-planting insecticide treatments, foliar insecticide on corn, sugarcane borer hybrid evaluations (commercial and experimental) on corn, stored insect control on corn to reduce the cost of protection, fall armyworm and stink bug control in sorghum, cotton fleahopper insecticide evaluation, cotton variety evaluation based on seed cost, effect of nozzle type and drift control agent on cotton stalk destruction with 2,4-D, boll weevil pheromone trapping results, bollworm/budworm pheromone trapping, bollworm pyrethroid resistance monitoring, and grasshopper control in coastal bermudagrass.

**PROBLEMS WITH MANAGEMENT OF BOLL BOLLWORM IN TEXAS COASTAL BEND COTTON FROM 2003-2006**

The cotton bollworm/corn earworm has been difficult to control with standard rates of pyrethroid insecticide that were effective a few years ago. At certain times during the 2003 - 2005 seasons even the high rates of the pyrethroids failed to provide as effective control as obtained in earlier years. We began to monitor susceptibility of moths to pyrethroid insecticide using the adult vial test (AVT) in 2004. This test was developed by insect toxicologist to monitor changes in susceptibility of insects to various insecticides. In recent years we evaluated moths at 9 different concentrations in the AVT.

During the 2006 cotton growing season, bollworm pyrethroid-resistance levels from May through early June were somewhat similar to those during the same time period in 2004 and 2005 (Fig. 1). In the later part of the growing season (late June to early/mid July), resistance levels tended to be lower in 2006 compared to the same time period during 2004 and 2005. However, unlike findings for 2004 and 2005, bollworm resistance levels in 2006 did not decline during the months of September and early October (compared to the mid-summer months). In fact, in October 2006, pyrethroid-resistance levels were actually higher than at any time during the summer. We were not successful in capturing additional moths for testing after early October. It is possible that the higher resistance level was an anomaly, but it may be that pyrethroid resistance has gained a foothold in our region, possibly leading to relatively higher levels of resistance in future growing seasons. It may be advisable to consider this information as cotton seed is purchased for the 2007 growing season.
**ARTHROPODS TO BE ON THE LOOKOUT**

There are several arthropods that could easily be encountered over the next few weeks. **Fall armyworm** in pastures and small grain fields continue to be a problem in the region. Inspect these areas at least once per week. In vegetable gardens the **leaffooted bug and stink bugs** have been observed causing damage especially on tomatoes. It is time for **harlequin bugs** to be found on cole crops along with **aphids**; however, the aphid problem is usually not that severe. On live oak watch for the **datana caterpillar** often referred to in our area as the oak leafworm. This caterpillar feeds in groups usually at the tips of branches. There are often several caterpillar groups in a single tree. There are some signs that datana caterpillar numbers are not as widespread as in the past few years. Any day now we might witness the air filled with **balloon spiders**. They migrate by emitting silk into the air for ballooning on a warm windy day. We always get calls when the spider silk is observed in the air in such large amounts. **Stored grain insects** have begun to increase rapidly; check your grain twice a month for this activity. RDP

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**MODERN DARK AGES**

I often refer to this period in history as the “modern dark ages” with reference to all the misinformation about synthetic chemicals. To be sure all products, natural or synthetic, need to be handled and used with safety in mind, but the fear is unbelievable. Chemistry has brought us so many good things; I remember when the word “chemistry” was held in high esteem. Remember the phrase “**better living through chemistry.**” It was a slogan from DuPont. The words “through chemistry” were dropped in the 1980's and replaced in 1999 by DuPont with the slogan “the miracles of science.” I hereby adopt the slogan “**better living through chemistry!**” RDP

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**INTERESTING INSECTS**

Termites are marvelous architects. Not only do they use the arch, but they erect castles over 20 feet tall.

Termites are incredible hydraulic engineers; they often sink pits fifty feet in depth to obtain water for their homes.

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For more information contact:

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**Fig. 1.** Bollworm moth survival at 5 and 10 mg/vial cypermethrin in adult vial tests, in the years 2004-2006, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, Nueces County. (Figure prepared by Micahel F. Treacy, Agricultural Consultant.)