

# BEET CURLY TOP VIRUS WEEKLY REPORT



## **CURLY TOP VIRUS CONTROL PROGRAM**

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Weekly Report for Week Ending March 9, 2012

### **Kern County**

This week, roadsides were incorporated into surveys of host plants and beetle leafhopper (BLH) activity. Daytime temperatures on Monday reached 84 degrees, allowing for good working conditions. Near Taft and Maricopa, much of the vegetation consists of filaree, malva, fiddleneck, and patches of winter grass. BLH counts remain low in all locations. Southlake, Cadet and other roadsides averaged less than 1 adult per 10 sweeps. While hillsides and rangeland continue to dry out, these particular areas appear to be holding up well.

At Gardner Field, Elkhorn Grade and other areas, much of the host vegetation has become desiccated. Any benefit from previous precipitation appears lost. Random BLH surveys around Gardner Field produced 0-2 per 10 sweeps on patchy filaree. Along the west end of the slopes, an occasional 3<sup>rd</sup> instar nymph was found. Based on survey totals, the count average was 0.8 nymphs per 10 sweeps. The consistency of instars indicates a recent hatch in this area. However, it also appears that the event was very small and limited.

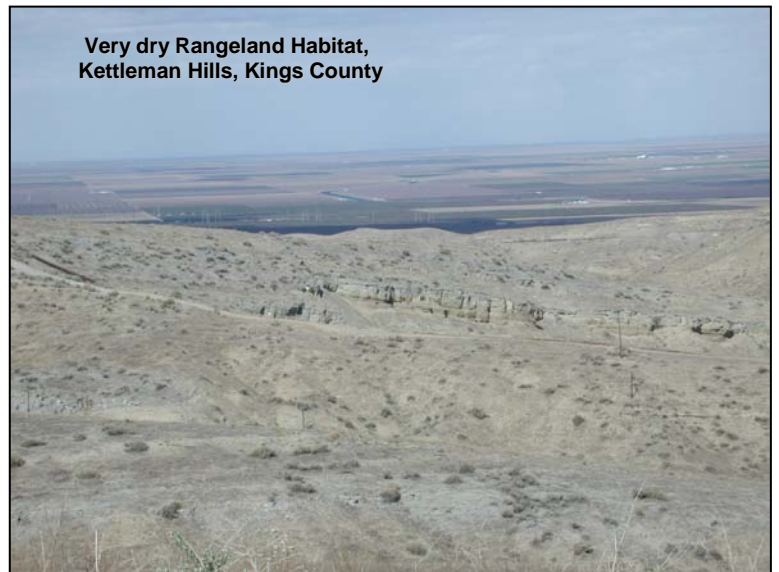
Daytime temperatures on Monday and Thursday were very warm. Strong winds struck Kern County Tuesday and Wednesday. The soil moisture was thoroughly depleted over much of the area, causing widespread plant decline. Foxtail in Elkhorn and Gardner Field has already started to stress. Much of the brome grasses and typical wildflowers have yet to emerge due to unseasonably dry and erratic weather conditions.

### **Kings County**

Survey was conducted in the Kettleman Hills during the first part of the week. The Kettleman Hills from the McGlashan Ranch to the North Tip are very dry and void of viable host plants due to the lack of rainfall. The condition of the rangeland vegetation appears as though it is August rather than early March.

### **Fresno County**

Survey in the vicinity of Zwang Ranch found filaree to be the dominate host plant. Filaree is short, less than an inch tall and most of it is stressed due to lack of moisture.



Beet leaf hopper and host vegetation was conducted throughout the hills of the Coalinga's Nose. Sporadic areas of new vegetation, predominately filaree, could be seen emerging among stressed out filaree and other common winter annuals. Very little precipitation in the area has led to the lack of vegetation and inconsistency in germination. BLH counts averaged 3 nymphs and 1 spring adult per 10 sweeps on one of the best slopes found. The Coalinga Nose area had vegetation similar to that of the Zwang Ranch but the BLH counts were lower. An average of 1 nymph per 10 sweeps was found with no adults. All nymphs in this area were 3<sup>rd</sup> instar, which is early. Staff is just now finding sharpshooter and grasshopper nymphs which normally precede BLH nymphs by 2-3 weeks in years with normal precipitation.

There are some new fences on the north side of Palmer Avenue and on the east side of Hwy. 33 locking out this area for survey. Access will have to be obtained before this area can be surveyed.

Shell camp is very dry, and for the most part, void of any viable host plants. Some grasses and germinated host plants could only be found on the sides of the roads where water collected from the scant precipitation. A little green Filaree was located in the gravel pit but there wasn't enough to be concerned about.

On Tuesday, 20-30 mile per hour winds blew all day long from a storm front. Rain did not fall in the Kettleman Hills or in the Coalinga area but rain could be seen falling in the Three Rocks area.

Survey in the Big "C" area found more vegetation, mainly short Filaree. The filaree is found developing the best in a burned area that covers about 600 acres. An average of 3-4 small nymphs per 10 sweeps was found in the burn. It appears a hatch is just beginning and follow up surveys will be needed to determine the BLH population.

Very little peppergrass and only a small amount of *Plantago* has developed this spring. Host plant development and distribution has been altered by very dry conditions on the westside of the San Joaquin Valley.