

PLANT DISEASE AND INSECT ADVISORY



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January Alfalfa Weevil Egg Populations Down in 2005

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Alfalfa Weevil (Hypera Postica)
Photo by: Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma
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Alfalfa weevil egg populations for January are located in the attached table. In addition, degree days through January 18, 2005 are presented in the last column. For the purposes of comparison, January egg populations and viability of those eggs for the previous two years are also depicted in the table. Viability measurements for this year's samples are still being processed. Relatively low numbers of eggs were recovered in all counties with the exception of Payne County. In 2005, degree days through January 18 averaged 43.8 across the ten sample sites.

Remember, as far as alfalfa weevil populations are concerned, 150 degree days represents the level that serves as an indicator for growers and consultants to begin scouting for larvae. Unlike previous years, where many early (suicidal) emerging larvae may be present in our samples, relatively few were evident this year. Any of these early emerging larvae will likely be killed by ensuing cold weather events. With warm weather conditions on the immediate horizon; however, it is likely that more adult activity will begin. During warm spells in

January and February adult mating and oviposition can increase dramatically. If the present populations hold through the February sampling period, we could be in for a relatively light and late season with alfalfa weevils.

During sampling, we often keep our eye out for any additional insect activity, such as army cutworm. No such activity was noted during the January sampling trips. The army cutworm is often a pest in February and March, before the alfalfa begins to really grow.



This pest is also quite particular about where they lay their eggs as moths, preferring areas that have fewer weeds and less old forage growth. They also tend to prefer sandier soils. We will keep you posted in a later release about the egg viabilities for the January 2005 samples and for those that will be taken in February. Currently, the outlook for this coming season is promising.

County	January 2005	January 2004	January 2004 % Viable*	January 2003	January 2003 % Viable*	Degree Days (2005)
Grady	43.6	206	34	110	91.1	51
Kay	124	94.8	49	96.8	76.3	24
Kingfisher	162	207.2	75	48	---	30
Payne	338.8	241.2	79	366.8	77.6	43
Pottawatomie	218	118.4	79	48.8	---	65
Tillman	54	26.8	---	65.2	---	60
Washita	57.2	486	69	79.2	86.4	37
Woods	88	496	72	56.4	---	18
Garvin	113.2	38	---	---	---	67
Tulsa	105.6	115.2	90	---	---	43

** Mean 130.4 203 54.7 125.4 81.6 43.8

* No viability in a specific county means that egg numbers recovered was insufficient to conduct an assessment.

** Means, within each year, represent all areas sampled, not simply those depicted.

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