

Summary of the Chilli Thrips Meeting (1)

Seven sites joined in using the PolyCom system:

- 1) MREC-Apopka
- 2) GCREC-Balm
- 3) IRREC-Ft. Pierce
- 4) TREC-Homestead
- 5) SWREC-Immokalee
- 6) NFRECD-Quincy
- 7) Department of Entomology-Gainesville.

We also had two people call in using a poorly connected land line for which we apologize.

Dr. Waldy Klassen (TREC-Homestead) gave a few specifics about the thrips and discussed some of the relevant biology of *Scirtothrips dorsalis*. He pointed out that all of the information can be obtained by visiting the Center for Tropical Agriculture Website (<http://cta.ufl.edu/>) or go to the MREC Chilli Thrips site (<http://mrec.ifas.ufl.edu/lso/thripslinks.htm>).

Dr. G.B. Edwards (DPI-Gainesville) discussed the identification and taxonomy of *S. dorsalis* and after the meeting Dr. Matt Ciomperlik (²USDA APHIS PPQ CPHST, Pest Detection Diagnostics and Management Laboratory, Edinburg, TX 78541) sent two publications for posting on the websites:

- 1) **Evaluation of Possible Pathways of Introduction for *Scirtothrips dorsalis* Hood (Thysanoptera: Thripidae) from the Caribbean into the Continental United States.**
- 2) ***Scirtothrips dorsalis* Identification Aid (courtesy of Tom Skarlinsky (PPQ Identifier, Miami Plant Inspection Station).**

Dr. Amanda Hodges indicated that the Southern Plant Diagnostic Network (SPDN) would be interested in ensuring that identifiers in other at risk states have access to identification tools. Amanda will meet with GB and others as needed in order to provide as much information as possible to other states in the southern region.

There was some discussion concerning how far north this pest could be expected to become established. The first article addresses this issue. The second article is a useful tool for aiding in the identification of *S. dorsalis*.

Richard Clark (DPI-Gainesville) discussed the regulatory issues. In general, this pest is considered a regulated pest. If plant materials are found infested within a retail nursery the nursery can destroy the plants, return the plants to the nursery from which they were obtained, or treat them onsite until they are determined to be free of this thrips by DPI. If a wholesale nursery is found to have infested plant material, DPI will quarantine the infested crop until they are determined to be free of this thrips. At the time of the meeting

the thrips had been found on *Capsicum* sp. *Rosa* sp. and some sort of jasmine. The thrips has been found at 11 retail garden centers and 1 residential rose garden. The following counties were determined to be “positive”: Palm Beach, Orange, Lake, Hernando, Marion, Citrus and Seminole.

Dr. Seal (TREC-Homestead) discussed the results of pesticide trials conducted in the Caribbean. The results can be viewed on either website (see either **Chilli Thrips Management Guidelines** or **Comparative effectiveness of chemical insecticides against the chilli thrips, *Scirtothrips dorsalis* Hood (Thysanoptera: Thripidae), on pepper and their compatibility with natural enemies**).

Following the presentation by Dr. Seal a question was asked about how validity of this thrips to transmitting tomato spotted wilt. Dr. Funderburk agreed to review the recent literature that may cast doubt on earlier reports of this thrips being an efficient vector of this important virus.

There was also a discussion about relying to heavily on pesticides to manage this pest. A number of participants warned that this could result in significantly greater long-term negative impacts.

Drs. Amanda Hodges and Eileen Buss were interested in extension-related training aspects of the chilli thrips. In particular, county agents need to be provided with useful information to assist them in screening out suspect samples. Our county extension service can provide a necessary triage for sample screening in order to avoid sample overload at either the UF insect identification lab in Gainesville (Lyle Buss) or at DPI. Of course, all suspect positive samples will need to be confirmed by DPI, but we need to be able to triage as many samples as possible. Dr. Russ Mizell also expressed concerns relating for the need to provide enhanced training and triage of laboratory sample in order to prevent sample overflow. More details on extension ideas have subsequently followed in e-mail communications.