

PBW is Not a Major Issue in Greece

Interview with Dr Stefanos Andreadis



Dr Stefanos Andreadis is a researcher at the Institute of Plant Breeding and Genetic Resources of the Hellenic Agricultural Organization – DIMITRA, Thermi, Greece. His research field is on agricultural entomology. He is an active member of the Hellenic Entomological Society for more than 10 years and in the current period 2020-2021 he serves as a vice-chair. He authored two University textbooks and more than 40 peer reviewed research papers. Dr Andreadis is keenly interested in investigating the behavior and chemical ecology of tripartite relationships between insects, plants, and microorganisms with the ultimate goal to develop effective novel tools that attract and trap insects in terms of integrated pest management.

How serious is the problem of pink bollworm in Greece? What is the estimated range of economic damage (%)?

Nowadays, pink bollworm is not a serious threat for Greek farmers. Only occasionally and in specific areas there might be some issues, but in general the situation with PBW is “under control”. The estimated range of economic damage is less than 5%

How serious was the pink bollworm in earlier times compared to what it is in recent years?

Indeed, the PBW in earlier times (i.e., 15 years ago) was a major issue. The estimated range of economic damage at that time was as high as 15-20%. Nowadays, as mentioned already, it is not considered as a major issue anymore. However, another lepidopteran species *Helicoverpa armigera* has taken over PWB causing big losses to the farmers, which sometimes can be as

high as 50%. Almost every alternate year farmers are having to face great losses due to the attack of *Helicoverpa armigera*.

Have there been any recent innovations for PBW management from research institutes in Greece?

As far as I know, no there aren't any recent innovations for PBW management from research institutes in Greece. This is due to the fact that PWB is not a serious threat anymore.

Is there any concerted mission programme or a campaign to control or eradicate PBW in Greece?

Yes, there is an annual IPM mission programme that is utilised in the areas (Prefectures) where cotton is cultivated. This programme is managed by state authorities and relies on the monitoring of all major pests of cotton and where appropriate the recommendation of using chemicals for control of PBW. This programme appears to work well in the case of PBW.

What in your opinion are the most important management strategies?

Monitoring PBW populations with pheromone-based traps for early detection and thereafter recommendation for any appropriate control measure (such as use of chemicals) in terms of IPM are the most important strategies

