

AgFax: Midsouth Cotton

Overview:

Most areas report strongly fruiting cotton. Rains in June and heat have helped push the crop. Some irrigation has started to help maintain moisture. Bollworms are becoming a factor in some areas. Aphids have crashed through much of the region.

Insect Reports:

Blake Layton, Mississippi Extension Entomologist: "As we speak, the fungus is taking out the aphids. It's already done its job in our southern growing areas and has moved into northern Mississippi now. In the boll weevil eradication (BWE) areas, we're finding whitefly. No infestations have been reported, but you can see them in fields. Based on last year, we probably can expect them to build. In the southern areas, it's time for the July budworm and bollworm flights. We anticipate some heavy infestations on non-Bt cotton, and we wouldn't recommend pyrethroids if you think you have budworms at all."

Ron Seward, Tennessee Extension Entomologist: "Aphids are the hot topic right now. Applications are going on to knock down some of the

heavier infestations. Where aphids are building, people are trying to judge whether to spray or wait for the fungus. I received reports all day Thursday about populations crashing in our southern counties. Fungus appears to be involved, but we don't have confirmation back on samples we collected. Outside the BWE areas, weevil numbers and damage are still building. We continue to get some overwintering weevils and find early square damage in some spots after 2-3 applications. We're anticipating some hatchout in 7-10 days, based on when this started. Plant bugs seem to be at a low level right now. Nymphs are developing, but we don't know yet if they are in large numbers. In BWE areas, we continue to get some weevil movement that is triggering malathion applications. In the next few days, 12% to 15% of the BWE areas could require

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treatments. Trap trigger numbers have been adjusted up a little to avoid flaring other insects. It looks like we've knocked down worms over the last couple of weeks. No significant egg counts are evident."

Mark Tackett, Terral Agri Service, Oak Grove, La.: "We have moderate plant bugs in cotton, and nearly everyone is treating at least some. Most are treating with Lorsban to change up chemistry. Some fleahoppers are present. That's just about all we're finding. Aphids are steadily declining. Our highest egg counts are 5% to 6%. We haven't made a worm application all season. Insects here are running about two weeks behind and cotton is about two weeks ahead. I'm advising our growers to start throwing on the water and disregard the calendar or when they think they normally water. Normally, we don't start watering for another two to three weeks. We're applying Pix to just about everything."

Tucker Miller, Ind. Consultant, Drew, Miss.: "It's been kind of quiet and until today (Thursday), we weren't picking up much of anything. White eggs have started show-

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ing up in the 3% to 5% range, and I suspect we're just starting an egg lay. I anticipate treatments going on the first of next week if this runs at a normal pace. I haven't had enough eggs in a concentrated area yet to run a kit. Plant bugs are real low except in spots next to corn. We're seeing a few more spider mites on edges and along weedy areas, but we hope the rain keeps them down."

Trent LaMastus, Ind. Consultant, Cleveland, Miss.: "In Humphreys and Sunflower Counties, we started picking up eggs and worms Wednesday and Thursday. Where we're treating, worms are running in the 5% to 15% range. Eggs run from 2% to 3% up to 15% to 20%. It's pretty striking how we're finding them in the older cotton that's been blooming three weeks. In a field near Indianola Wednesday, there were heavy counts in an older field. In an adjoining field that had only been blooming a week, it was hard to find a worm. It was like there was a wall between the two fields. We're picking up whitefly in BWE areas. If we treat worms, we'll probably add something for whitefly so they don't build up like last year. We're finding plant bugs near corn or in BWE fields that didn't require as many malathion treatments. We've treated several hundred BWE acres for whitefly and, if things don't shape up, we will treat more fields. Where we've used Kelthane by ground, control has been good. Where we treated some by air with Kelthane, we'll have to treat again."

Ralph Bagwell, Louisiana Extension Entomologist, Winnsboro, La.: "Worms are scattered right now. It's not as general a situation as we might expect at this time of the year. It appears to be bollworm. I looked at one field today treated with a pyrethroid, and it looked pretty clean. Everybody is going with straight pyre-

throids with no reports of failures yet. We're not finding that many eggs in a lot of these fields and haven't run a kit yet. There are some plant bugs close to corn and a scattering of weevils, but not much else."

Robert Wells, Technical Services Consultant, Farmland Technical Services, Dermott, Ark.: "We're finding a lot of small worms, 1-2 days old, and we're spraying for that. Counts are running 5-7 on 14 row feet. If we go strictly by trap catches, they're bollworms, but we're doing some tankmixes just in case. Any time we've run straight pyrethroids, we've found that there generally were enough budworms to justify a tankmix. A few growers started watering before July 4, and others started irrigating Monday morning."

Bob Griffin, Ind. Consultant, Jonesboro, Ark.: "Aphids are gone. We're starting to get worms, and I think they're predominately bollworms, according to trap results. We're using pyrethroids. Plant bugs are scattered around. The first field generation of weevils is coming out, and we're treating a few fields. Where we have plant bugs, we're going with Vydate at 1:12. Where we don't have weevils, we're applying Fury at 1:34 or Baythroid at 1:60, and we're using the same rates on worms. Cotton is fruiting up well and blooming."

Bill Brooks, Crockett Farmers Co-op, Alamo, Tenn.: "We've sprayed a lot of plant bugs the last two weeks and still have some fields we're retreating, but that's winding down. Aphids have been flaring up in a few fields. We've had reports of moths and egg lays in counties around us, but we haven't picked up significant eggs in this area, only 1% to 2% in an occasional field. We have a strong beneficial population working on aphids. About 30% to 40% of our fields are blooming."

Gus Lorenz, Arkansas IPM Coordinator: "Aphids have crashed or are on their way out through much of the state. Some pockets were still active, but the problem is mostly behind us now. We've seen a jump in moth trap counts the last week in most areas. It was interesting because counts jumped simultaneously in the north and south. Usually, counts jump in the south first, then flights move north. A good deal of conventional cotton was sprayed in SE Arkansas last week, and counts this week were 5 larvae on 20 row feet at .25" or smaller on Bollgard cotton, according to reports. Larvae were being found in red blooms. In Woodruff County, bollworm moth counts went from an average of 30 on June 29 to 341 on July 6. In Jefferson County, fields this week were reaching threshold for bollworm treatments."

Mississippi DD-60 Accumulation

Location to 7-8-99	PD* 4-25	PD 5-12
Greenwood, MS **	1095	938
Lyon, MS	1228	1060
Onward, MS	1198	1022
Stoneville, MS	1275	1099
Stoneville norms	1170	1028

Tennessee DD-60 Accumulation

Location to 7-8-99	PD* 4-20	PD 5-1
Jackson, TN	1052	967

*Planting Date

**Readings for some days are unavailable

Sources: Mississippi Delta Research and Extension Center
Weather/GIS Center;
Ron Seward, Tenn.
Cooperative Extension Service

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