

AgFax: Midsouth Cotton

Overview:

Our contacts late last week continued to cope with a wide range of planting dates and crop sizes. Some areas are in a lull between intense thrips pressure and the main start of pinhead treatments. More insect pressure is being reported. Square initiation seems to be starting lower than normal in some fields, three contacts reported this week.

Novartis gained a Section 18 label for Denim, its new worm material, for three states (more information on page 2). Also, Extension workers say it appears likely that a Section 18 will be approved for Pirate.

Field Reports:

Blake Layton, Mississippi Extension Entomologist: "We're seeing heavier than normal aphid numbers for this time of year. It's not bad yet, but I expect more treatments next week. We've also had several reports of unusually high egg counts, something in the 70% to 80% range on some of the more mature cotton and assume that this time of the year they are tobacco budworms. Overwintering populations appear to be higher than last year based on pupae in the soil and

trap results. South Delta growers need to be aware that some eradication treatments may cover part of some larger fields, so that leaves untreated portions open to plant bugs. We're catching beet armyworm moths at noteworthy levels, even as far north as Tunica County. Catches are running 20-30 (per trap per week). That's well below counts that generally translate into thresholds in the field. But the mild winter and dry conditions could favor beet armyworms this year."

Mark Cascio, Cascio's Cotton Consultants, Monroe, La.: "We've treated first-generation budworms with Tracer in our older non-Bt cotton. All but about 1,000 acres of my cotton is Bt, so we're mainly dealing with plant bugs and overwintering weevils. We're mostly using Bidrin and will try to save Orthene for later. We treated one field for aphids 10 days ago with Provado and a silicone surfactant. They're showing up on corners and individual plants, but I don't see any major problems yet."

Eddie Dunigan, Consultant, Dunigan Brothers, Inc., Black Oak, Ark.: "We're in between things. We just moved out of our thrips situation, and we're now doing some overwintering weevil

treatments with Vydate along borders and known areas. Some mites developed, but we've held off on treatments. It rained where we had the biggest problems. We are sidedressing Temik along dusty lines and field borders hoping that will help control mites."

Roger Leonard, LSU Research Entomologist, Winnsboro, La.: "Thrips remain high in some areas where we didn't have rainfall. While they're declining, they still pressure late cotton. Older cotton has grown past them, and treatments for weevils and other pests are helping. Aphids are literally exploding in some areas where OPs were used for thrips. It's general across the state and highest in older cotton. Treatments have gone out. Field control failures have been verified with some OPs, and we expect Furadan clearance in northeastern Louisiana late this week or early next week. Lygus and fleahoppers are moving into field borders as native vegetation dries down. A few treatments have been made, and materials are being used in weevil applications that offer control, too. Some ULV Malathion treatments are going out. We hoped these would be held back until the first
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field generation, but weevil pressure has been high enough that some consultants are accepting the chance of flaring other insects to get weevils under control. Weevils are present in pinhead square cotton, and traps are still catching relatively high numbers outside the eradication zone. Bollworm and budworm activity is sporadic in some areas in older cotton. Some Larvin and a little Tracer have been put out. Treatments are reported in Tensas, Madison and Catahoula Parishes. We're beginning to recover some from early season injury, but seedling disease is starting to take out plants where it girdled them. Wind or cultivation is enough to break them off, even some 8-node plants. I'm getting calls about it from all over the state."

Gus Lorenz, Arkansas Extension IPM Coordinator: "Pinhead square treatments have started, and some fields are being strip treated for weevils. We still have high thrips populations on some young cotton, and treatments continue. Everybody is seeing aphids but not the blow-ups reported in Louisiana and Mississippi, although we do expect that to happen due to all the thrips treatments. One thing that impressed me this week was the early fruit set in many fields. I'm seeing it set on the fifth node very regularly and some even on the fourth."

Ron Seward, Tennessee Extension Entomologist: "We're in a lull. A few pinhead treatments have started, both inside and outside the eradication zone, and a few cleanup treatments are being made for thrips on late fields. Pinhead treatments will be in full force inside and outside the eradication area next week. Light aphids have been reported, and we're holding our breath as we move toward more boll weevil treatment activity. We have potential for two pinhead treatments inside the eradication area, and there's enough weevil pressure that two probably will be needed outside the area, too."

Joe Townsend, Consultant,

Coahoma, Miss.: "Older cotton is drawing tremendous plant bug and weevil pressure. We're using Malathion, Bidrin, Provado and Orthene, depending on the pest and situation. More and more aphids are showing up, and we will be at treatment levels in older cotton a couple of weeks earlier than normal. I'm encouraging my farmers to mow or spray border vegetation to reduce plant bug habitat, something that seemed to reduce pressure in the past. I'm picking up 50 plant bugs per sweep in correopsis."

Mike Sartor, Sartor's Ag Consulting Service, Inc., Clinton: "We started spraying plant bugs, and these next 2-3 weeks are critical. We really need to watch closely around corn. Aphids are beginning to pick up but nothing at threshold levels. We're not seeing anything with worms yet that concern us. Our cotton ranges from third true leaf to 14 nodes. Average squaring is sixth node, but on Suregrow 125 stacked gene I'm seeing it at fourth node. I counted three times to make sure."

Charles Allen, Extension Entomologist, Monticello, Ark.: "We're trying to get thrips behind us. Better growing conditions are helping. We have some aphids spotting around. Where we've been doing trials in the Grady area, we counted 200 aphids on some 6 true leaf plants. About 75% of the plants didn't have aphids, but then you could find five plants

with 1,000. One field was treated for worms in Desha County earlier. Weevils are coming out of the woods in droves. Some areas are picking up 20 per trap per night. Treatments are going out as soon as cotton hits pinhead."

Denim Section 18:

A Section 18 has been approved for Denim (emamectin benzoate) for Arkansas, Oklahoma and Mississippi, according to a statement released Thursday by Novartis Crop Protection.

For Arkansas and Oklahoma, it covers beet armyworms. In Mississippi, the label applies to both beet armyworms and tobacco budworms.

A maximum of 750,000 acres of cotton may be treated for control of beets and 400,000 acres of cotton for budworms in Mississippi. Arkansas and Oklahoma will have 200,000 and 150,000, respectively, for beet armyworms.

Louisiana and Texas are considered likely to receive Section 18s similar to Mississippi's. Other states in the Southeast are applying, as well.

Application rates are 6-8 ounces per acre (0.0075-0.01 lb. a.i./acre) and not to exceed 3 applications per acre. Total treatments can't exceed 24 ounces of product per acre. A 5-day application interval and 21-day pre-harvest interval must be observed. Other restrictions apply.

Mississippi DD-60 Accumulation

Location to 6-10-99	PD* 4-25	PD 5-12
Lyon, MS	665	497
Stoneville, MS	704	528
Stoneville Norm	608	466
Onward	654	478

Tennessee DD-60 Accumulation

Location to 6-10-99	PD* 4-20	PD 5-1
Jackson, TN	539	454

*Planting Date

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