

AgFax: Midsouth Cotton

Overview:

Rain fell over the last 7-10 days in most areas that needed it. In some parts of the Midsouth — notably, central Arkansas — persistent rain has delayed field work and treatments. Two of our Arkansas contacts this week also noted more nematode stunting than normal.

Aphids are being treated in a number of areas, especially in the southern half of the region. But we're also hearing that the pest in some cases isn't building as rapidly as expected. No confirmed fungus has been reported, though one Louisiana consultant says he's finding what may be signs of it.

Insect Reports:

Ralph Bagwell, Louisiana Extension Entomologist, Winnsboro, La.: "We still have aphids, and quite a few fields are being sprayed. One thing that's curious is that in some fields where we would have thought aphids would have exploded, populations have remained steady or actually declined sharply. We're not seeing high numbers of beneficials and fungus doesn't appear to be present. This is the case in a field here and there, not something widespread. In some fields treated early for aphids, populations are building

back. We continue to have some worms on a spotty basis. Plant bugs are showing up next to corn, but that's about the extent of where we're finding them."

Gus Lorenz, Arkansas Extension IPM Coordinator: "We're seeing increases in moth numbers in a few places in the south. Everybody who treated last week with Tracer and Larvin had pretty good luck on budworms. Plant bugs are exploding in some southern counties with counts as high as 5-8 on 3 row feet. Aphids continue building but haven't exploded, which may be due to the rain. They are particularly bad in the SE and SW corners, and the Section 18 for Furadan has been activated in SE Arkansas. We're catching a few beet armyworm moths in traps. It's not an alarming number but high for late June. The big thing we're seeing right now is rootknot nematode damage, which I think is related to that two-week period when cotton wasn't growing and thrips were bad. Plants couldn't build enough roots to compensate. We're seeing stunting in different areas. People are sidedressing Temik to see if that helps. Some growers have been really hurt."

Mike Sartor, Ind. Consultant, Sartor's Ag Consulting, Clinton, Miss.: "Cotton is fruiting well. We're

picking up aphids and have sprayed several places, starting week before last and into this week. We're not letting them go long this early in the year. We're applying Bidrin at 1:20 plus methyl at 1:12. Our most consistent treatment has been Furadan at 1:16. We're taking care of plant bugs as we spray for aphids where it's needed and have made some separate plant bug treatments. We've got so much corn that we're making a second treatment 7-9 days later. A few eggs are present. We've sprayed a little non-Bt for what we think were budworms."

Tony Anderson, Manager, UAP-Midsouth, Tallulah, La.: "There's still no worm pressure. We're still treating aphids. The rain, I think, helped hold them back for a little while, but they're flaring again. In Tensas, Madison and East Carroll Parishes, treatments are pretty widespread, mainly with Furadan and Provado. Most areas received good showers in the last week, though a few areas still need rain. A lot of Pix is going out now."

Dale Wells, Ind. Consultant, Cotton Services, Inc., Leachville, Ark.: "Over the last 7-10 days, we've picked up 5-6" of rain. We probably will get into the field before Saturday. The main

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problem right now is plant bugs. We've treated around 1,500 acres. We've got aphids building in fields, though they remain relatively light and spotty considering the number of thrips treatments made earlier. They're just now starting to spread out. We're watching a couple of field with the idea they will be treated soon. We're also finding a surprising number of beneficials considering some of the treatments we've made. We're starting Pix applications, which were delayed last week by the rain. Retention is pretty good, above 95% in most fields. But we have some fields that have taken it on the chin due to plant bugs coming out of ditches at a time when we couldn't spray."

Harold Lambert, Ind. Consultant, Innis, La.: "We've finally gotten moisture and, in fact, have a little too much in some places. In the last 10 days, the drought has pretty much ended, I hope. It's pretty quiet. In a few places we're having to go after plant bugs where they're taking some squares, mostly near corn. In other places, they're conspicuously absent. We're in the first week or two of bloom and are watching for stinkbugs next week on the chance they'll try feeding on young bolls. A few aphids are present in places, but in the last few days in Pointe Coupee Parish I've started seeing what might be fungus, and I'm hoping that gives us some relief."

Russ Patrick, Tennessee Extension Entomology Specialist, Jackson, Tenn.: "False chinch bugs — which look like tiny tarnished plant bugs — are a problem right now in grain sorghum, and we need to watch for them in cotton. They took out several rows in a research plot here. I've never seen them in this number. We're finding worms and eggs and still have plant bugs. We're reminding people that if plant bugs are at threshold don't count on eradication treatments because they may not spray when you need it. Weevils are coming out. A few aphids are present. There's a scattering of sub-threshold yellowstriped armyworms."

Claude Bonner, Ind. Consultant, Cotton Specialists of Ark, Inc., N. Little Rock, Ark.: "We've had rain, rain and more rain, and it's creating a lot of problems with eradication treatments, weed control and our plant growth regulator program. Overall, the crop is doing fairly well but growing a little too rapidly. Pigweed seems to be growing about 6" a day. We need to address some plant bug and boll weevil problems, too. We've had 4-5" of rain in the the last week, and it's created a real bottleneck. We're seeing a few eggs and a few bollworm and budworm moths. We don't anticipate much trouble until next week when we historically get our late June or early July flight. About 30% of our fields have enough rootknot nematode activity to be a concern. We're sidedressing 5 lbs. of Temik. Some varieties appear to have a bit more tolerance than others. We're seeing plants this week that are a third of the size they should be, with severe galling of the root system."

Jon Tate, Ind. Consultant, Indianola, Miss.: "We're ranging from 8-9th node up to early bloom on maybe 30% of our acres. Bollworms have been giving us some trouble in non-Bt cotton along tree lines. We tried Leverage, but control wasn't what we expected, and we're not sure if it's a coverage problem. We're coming back with Tracer. It's a small amount of

acreage in several fields, but enough to be a real pain. Beyond that, we're getting along pretty good. Eradication has taken care of plant bugs so far except a little around corn."

Wade Worley, Ind. Consultant, Sumner, Miss.: "This has been a pretty slow week. We had a little flurry of budworms last week and sprayed all the older cotton with several different materials. Everything gave good results. We're finding very few eggs. Right now, we're just dealing with plant bugs here and there and watching aphids build on us. Aphids are building pretty quickly, especially after the last Malathion treatment, which seemed to take out more beneficials than previous ones. We're considering aphid treatments next week."

Charlie Stokes, Monroe Co. Extension Agent, Aberdeen, Miss.: "We've finally gotten a fairly widespread rain to jumpstart the crop. It had been kind of sitting there for a couple of weeks after the thrips had left it and some plant bug pressure developed. A couple of plant bug applications were needed on some acreage, and treatments are still being made, though we may be on the downhill side now. Worm pressure has been light. My trap line continues to have light numbers for bollworm, budworm and beet armyworm moths. I'm also seeing a lot of beneficials, which is encouraging."

| Mississippi Degree Day accumulations to 06/22/00 | | *Planting Date |
|---|-------------------|---|
| Location | PD* 5-7-00 | |
| Tunica | 715 | Sources: Mississippi Delta Research and Extension Center; Weather/GIS Center; Russ Patrick, Tenn. Cooperative Extension Service |
| Lyon | 788 | |
| Vance | 776 | |
| Stoneville | 845 | |
| S'ville Norms | 736 | |
| Onward | 798 | |
| Tennessee Degree Day accumulations to 06/22/00 | | |
| Location | PD* 5-1-00 | |
| Jackson | 748.5 | |