

AgFax: Midsouth Cotton

Owen Taylor, Editor (owen@agfax.com, 888-327-6329)

July 1, 2003

Here is this week's issue of *AgFax: Midsouth Cotton*, sponsored by the Midsouth staff of Valent U.S.A. Corporation, maker of Orthene®, Select®, Cobra® and other products designed for Southern cotton production.

OVERVIEW

Tropical storm Bill came ashore Monday, but most of the region missed the heavy rains. Showers related to Bill did fall in Mississippi, mainly east of I-55 and in a band through the Delta. Scattered showers also developed late last week through the Midsouth.

Field work never stopped in many locations. And irrigation has started, in fact, in some fields.

A few more hints of aphid fungus were reported. Also, several people noted high stinkbug counts in cotton.

These reports were made Monday and Tuesday.

CROP REPORTS

Bob Griffin, Griffin Ag Consulting, Jonesboro, Ark.: "This crop is moving fast. Some cotton planted a

month apart — on about April 14 and May 14 — is only about 2 weeks apart now in typical development. I've got 3 fields of doublecrop cotton planted on May 29-30 that have gained 2 to 2.5 nodes in 4 days. They went from 3 to 3.5 last Monday to 5-6 on Friday. We have a lot of fields averaging 9 NAWF at 1st bloom and some at 10-11, so there's a lot of horsepower under this crop.

"We started treating worms in a little conventional cotton in the last couple of days, going with Tracer. We've just about finished pinhead square treatments with Centric and are shifting over some now to Orthene."

Charles Denver, Denver Crop Consulting, Watson, Ark.: "We're mostly putting out Pix. Cotton is growing rapidly. Treatments for plantbugs and aphids are being made here and there, and we're starting a few worm applications on non-Bt cotton.

"As far as growth goes, DPL 451 is giving us the biggest challenge. This variety really wants to grow. We had a little of it last year, but it seems to be much more aggressive this season. We're increasing both the rates and frequency of Pix applications.

"I'm seeing what appears to be a little aphid fungus, especially in fields closer to the Louisiana line."

Phillip McKibben, McKibben Ag Services, Mathiston, Miss.: "Aphids have really blown up in the last 7-10 days. Due to all the weather delays, part of our crop had to be planted late, and we treated a lot of 4-5 leaf cotton because we couldn't afford any more delays. In some older cotton that's close to blooming I've found what appears to be the fungus, and that's encouraging.

"Plantbugs have been spotty up until the last few days. They seem to be moving into cotton now. Square retention has been running well over 90%, but we're starting to see some effect as plantbug counts go up. We treated the worst spots last week and will probably treat more this week."

Reynold Minsky, Ind. Consultant, Lake Providence, La.: "Insect pressure is still relatively mild. We're treating some plantbugs with Orthene. Aphids are still hanging around, but they've subsided somewhat. We've made 2 applications of Intruder on most of our acreage. We're holding back right now on additional treat-

Continued on next page

ORTHENE®

AgFax: Midsouth Cotton is sponsored by the Midsouth Cotton Team of Valent U.S.A. Corporation as a service to cotton growers and industry professionals. *Orthene* is a registered trademark of OMS Investments, Inc. <http://www.valent.com>



ORTHENE® For Plant Bug And Stinkbug Control

Orthene provides outstanding control of plant bugs throughout the season. Research verifies that *Orthene* controls tarnish plant bugs resistant to other organophosphates and is a cost-effective insecticide for fleahoppers. *Orthene* remains an outstanding tool for controlling stinkbugs, too, a fact that ag professionals have recognized for more than 20 years. And with new technologies like Bt cotton it still fits into a logical, cost-effective IPM program. It's versatile and effective. No wonder *Orthene* has been trusted in cotton for more than 20 years.

AgFax: Midsouth Cotton is published by Looking South Communications, 142 Westlake Drive, Brandon, Miss. 39047.

Phone: 601-992-9488, Fax: 601-992-3503. E-mail: owen@agfax.com. Editor: Owen Taylor. *AgFax* is free to growers, consultants, dealers and other qualifying cotton industry workers. ©MMII Looking South Communications

ments, hoping the fungus helps soon.

"Retention is probably 94%. If anything, the crop looks better now than it did this time last year."

Jon Tate, Ind. Consultant, Indianola, Miss.: "We've had spotty showers today (Monday), no more than .2" anyplace I've been. We're hoping for a good rain. If it doesn't rain, we'll be watering on the Fourth of July.

"Our crop is into heavy bloom, with 10,000 to 20,000 blooms per acre on a huge amount of cotton. We applied Pix on everything and are glad we did. We're off to a beautiful start, other than in the low places. Except around corn, retention is about 99%, and we're one node ahead of where we were this time last year.

"We're treated some aphids and have made plantbug applications around corn, and that's about it in terms of pests right now. Beneficial counts have been pretty good."

Ralph Bagwell, Louisiana Extension Entomologist, Winnsboro, La.: "We're in a little bit of a lull with insects. Aphid numbers dropped off, but they seem to be coming back now. Fungus is out there and in some locations may be taking them out. In other areas folks are trying to decide whether to spray. Letting aphids build isn't something you'd necessarily want to see, on one hand. But as populations increase, you speed up the promotion of epizootics.

"We began picking up a scattering of light egg lays Monday, and this may be the front end of a bollworm flight.

"Also, we're treating quite a few cotton and soybean fields for stinkbugs, and it's a strange mix of species. One of the predominate ones we're finding in north Louisiana is the dusky brown stinkbug. It's unusual to see it there. It's far more common in south Louisiana. Along with the dusky brown, we're dealing with rice stinkbugs and finding spined soldier stinkbugs, which are a predator. Normally,

we don't experience stinkbug pressure in cotton until August."

Scott Stewart, Extension Cotton Entomologist, Jackson, Tenn.: "In the southern part of the state it appears that we've got populations of clouded plantbugs building just like we did last year. The question we're mainly having to consider is how to count these.

"They seem to be able to do a little more damage than tarnish plantbugs and perhaps take off somewhat larger squares. We have limited data on this insect, but we're at least suggesting that you count it as 1.5 tarnish plantbugs when considering thresholds. Aphids are light and spotty. A few fields have been treated. Worms are running 5-6% in a lot of cotton."

Cecil Parker, AgriServices, Ltd., Vidalia, La.: "We're primarily putting out Pix. Scattered plantbugs are around, and we're doing a lot of border sprays. A good deal of cotton was treated last week for aphids, and populations have really come down.

"There aren't a lot of worm treatments in the non-Bt cotton. We're seeing some older worms move through it now. Also, we're finding a few stinkbugs in cotton. They're not at treatable levels, but they are turning up as we sweep."

Tucker Miller, Ind. Consultant, Drew, Miss.: "The tropical storm missed us, but we got a little rain on the southern end of our territory the day before it moved inland. Areas around Indianola and Greenwood got 1" just as we were about to start irrigating. We're fixing to start irrigation where we didn't get rain.

"Overall, the crop looks better every day. Except for later planted fields, most is blooming. Plantbugs have been a concern the last couple of weeks, especially around edges adjoining corn. We've been using Centric, Trimax, Bidrin and Orthene to hold them back. We're also picking up a little higher number of stinkbugs than

in the past. They're mostly browns.

"Aphids are light to moderate. Centric and Trimax for plantbugs minimized pressure. We've also seen more spined soldier bugs than we usually come across."

Mike Sartor, Ind. Consultant, Sartor's Ag Consulting, Clinton, Miss.: "We need a rain, but I don't think we're going to get it, or at least not enough. Cotton is fruiting well and retention is good. We don't have a lot of insect pressure. We're treating a field or two now and then for plantbugs and aphids.

"We do have scattered fields that will be a challenge later. In some, we'll be defoliating one end and still putting Pix on the other end where we had to replant. It's still not growing out as much as we would like.

"Also, we're putting nitrogen on some fields that are obviously running out of N. Part of this is due to denitrification. And with all the rain, a lot of nitrogen leached below the root zone so plants can't pick it up. We're applying 30 lbs/acre of actual N. We don't want to put too much out, then have a rejuvenated root system that taps into what we put out earlier."

Mike Williams, Area Entomology Specialist, Starkville, Miss.: "Insects are pretty quiet in our hill counties. A few plantbugs are being treated. So far, we haven't picked up any aphid fungus.

"With our trap lines through the Delta, we're seeing bollworm counts down some and budworm counts up slightly. It's about time for a budworm blip, although we may not see a lot because it's been so wet. We caught boll weevils during the 2 previous weeks north of Grenada but none this week.

"In NE Mississippi our crop is a solid month behind, which is kind of a scary thing to consider if it turns off real dry. We simply don't have much of a root system now."