

AgFax: Midsouth Cotton

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

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Here's 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 crop protection products designed for Southern cotton.

OVERVIEW

Rains Monday brought relief to parched areas in south Louisiana where very little planting progress has been made. But that same storm system further delayed planting in the upper Midsouth, which was soaked and flooded in May. Some cotton acreage may shift to beans where rainfall will further delay planting. Aphids are building in some areas, and treatments are underway. Plantbug treatments have started, as well.

These reports were made Monday and Tuesday.

CROP REPORTS

Bobby Phipps, Missouri Ext. Cotton Specialist, Portageville, Mo.: "It rained and turned cold on

Monday in Missouri. Most of the cotton has been planted, and much of it was planted last week, including a lot of replanting. Overall, the crop is in very poor condition. Flooding, hail and diseases have been a problem.

"Thrips are moving into the crop as the wheat dies down. We have had to spray some of the early cotton. Some of the older crop is beginning to grow. Probably half of the crop has the Bt gene. Early catches of budworm have been high. Michael Boyd (Extension entomologist) said that the catch is beginning to decrease."

Cecil Parker, AgriServices, Ltd., Vidalia, La.: "We just got a rain (Monday afternoon), maybe an inch in some locations. But we didn't get it in all parts of the parish. The south end, which has been our driest area, didn't get any.

"We're not doing a lot in cotton. A little plantbug work is underway around corn, and we're adding something for thrips where we're spraying some of the small cotton. Aphids are building in some of our older and our younger cotton."

Ralph Bagwell, Louisiana Ex-

tension Entomologist, Winnsboro, La.: "We got beneficial rains Monday, and the nice thing was that it rained in some areas that have been the driest. Where we've got later planted cotton, the little plants really kicked in and started growing. We're still dealing with thrips in young cotton, and Orthene or something like it is being put out with Roundup.

"More people are getting indications of aphids. So far, not a lot of treatments have been made, but people are finding them. A few plantbugs are present, too, and we're seeing some combinations go out to pick up both aphids and tarnished plantbugs. We're getting a little eggglay, predominately tobacco budworms."

Charles Denver, Denver Crop Consulting, Watson, Ark.: "Rainfall has been spotty, from .3" to 1.5". Generally speaking, it was needed. Thrips are being treated a little, and that's about it in cotton except for Roundup treatments."

Phillip McKibben, McKibben Ag Services, Mathiston, Miss.: "We're through planting cotton. A

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couple of guys took the failed planting payments on some acreage. We got 15" of rainfall in the first 3 weeks of May, then we measured another 1.5" to 2" Monday. It's going to be several days now before we can get into the fields again, and there's more rain in the forecast into the weekend.

"We're certainly not in as bad a shape as we were 3 weeks ago. We got nearly all our cotton sidedressed and have been applying Roundup. Thrips have gone through the roof in the last 4-5 days, and we're treating a lot of 4-leaf cotton that looked pretty good until a week ago until thrips started taking it away. We could time a lot of treatments with Roundup, but in some cases we already had made our second Roundup application."

Gus Lorenz, Arkansas Extension IPM Specialist: "Aphids are showing up in southeast Arkansas, and treatments are going out in spots. Also, we're seeing *Heliothis* activity on small non-Bt cotton. In some fields they're at or just below treatment levels. This is happening pretty widely, mainly on non-squaring cotton.

"We're strongly advising against treatment right now. If there's no fruit and just some leaf damage, why disrupt beneficials? While it's not good to see populations building early, this could work to our advantage if beneficials reduce numbers now. That could cut some pressure later. Where we've found these populations and rechecked a few days later, numbers were going down."

Tucker Miller, Ind. Consultant, Drew, Miss.: "We're just starting a little plantbug control with Centric or Trimax, and some Pix is going in with it. The cotton has just started growing good. With our 5599 and 555 we need to get some Pix on the plants while it's at the 9th to 11th node. Plantbugs

are still fairly low, but around corn we'll treat and get the Pix out, too. Rainfall ran .3" to .6" on Monday."

Jon Tate, Ind. Consultant, Indianola, Miss.: "Rainfall Monday ranged from .7" to 2.5" through our area. We weren't hurting for moisture, but we wouldn't turn it down. Right now, we're trying to get over a lot of this cotton with Pix. We're seeing a little aphid activity. Some of it could turn into a problem in the next week or so if it continues building.

"Our cotton is running 6-10 nodes, and we should have some blooms by next Tuesday. It's a good looking crop right now if we can hang onto it."

Scott Stewart, Extension Cotton Entomologist, Jackson, Tenn.: "A lot of our cotton is just coming out of the ground, and some early cotton is going to put squares on soon. The phone just started ringing today. Some of it's odd things, like what to do in non-Bt cotton for webworms. We're also getting questions about plantbugs. It's been really quiet up until this week.

"A few fields are still being treated for thrips, particularly near wheat that's drying down. On the whole, thrips have been light to moderate, but conditions haven't been what we needed to outrun them. In early June we're usually seeing 90-degree days.

"We got rain yesterday (Monday). It would have been considered a good rain if we'd needed it, which we didn't. This may push some intended cotton acreage into beans. Several growers said they wouldn't plant after June 5, and this rain will delay them past that point. Some consultants asked me today how much they should charge to scout soybeans."

Bob Griffin, Griffin Ag Consulting, Jonesboro, Ark.: "We've gotten everything planted, and now we've gotten more rain. It rained about 1.5"

over a fairly wide area. I don't think it will mess us up much, though.

"We're treating thrips, either with Bidrin or Karate Z. Also, we're treating a few plantbugs with Centric, as well as putting out Pix on some fields. Cotton is anywhere from just out of the ground to the 10th node. We've still got some ratty look stuff, but a lot of fields are improving quite a bit.

"Thrips are being treated in cotton at the 3-4 leaf stage. It's just been sitting there, not growing, and it all had Cruiser or Gaucho. Thrips are building and coming out of wheat, and we've had severe pressure in some fields for 2-3 weeks. If cotton had been growing normally, we probably wouldn't have treated."

Reynold Minsky, Minsky Consulting Service, Lake Providence, La.: "Cotton is fruiting well. We're applying 8 oz/acre of Pix to all our 555, 5599 and 1218. The rest is getting 2 oz/acre. Showers have been around, but no big amounts. A couple of places may have gotten an inch.

"Plantbugs are the predominate insect, but aphids are being treated, too. We don't want to stop this cotton. We're trying to make one treatment work for both, either with Trimax or Centric.

"This morning I counted 7 squares on some 555. It's slow getting started but then fruits well. Our goal is to get 16-20 oz/acre of Pix on it before it blooms. We fully expect to see plenty of blooms on some of our earliest cotton by June 15. We're still fighting thrips in some late fields, and it doesn't matter what we have under them. Ditchbanks and wheat are maturing, and they're holding a lot of thrips."