

AgFax: Midsouth Cotton

From Looking South Communications, Owen Taylor, Editor

May 6, 2003

Here is our first regular issue of *AgFax: Midsouth Cotton* for 2003. Our thanks to the Midsouth cotton team of Valent U.S.A. Corporation for once again sponsoring our early and mid season reports.

We welcome your comments and suggestions.

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OVERVIEW

As we closed out this report Tuesday night, Midsouth weather conditions ranged from too dry to too wet.

Storms raked through Arkansas, Missouri and Tennessee on Sunday and Monday, spawning deadly tornadoes and damaging winds. Rainfall ranged from 2" to 6" in many places. Center pivots were blown over in a couple of locations in northeast Arkansas.

But it remained dry in parts of Arkansas, the south Delta and southern Louisiana. Planting stopped in

several southern Louisiana parishes, and corn was in jeopardy.

The following reports were made Monday and Tuesday.

CROP REPORTS

Ralph Bagwell, La. Extension Entomologist, Winnsboro, La.:

"We're a good bit through with planting, maybe as much as 80%, and 70% of the crop is in good shape. Planting conditions have been fairly positive. Some areas, though, remain dry. Parts of Catahoula, Rapides and Avoyelles Parishes haven't received significant rainfall in 6-8 weeks. It's gotten too dry in those areas to continue planting, and we expect that some corn will be lost.

"Nothing is happening with pests, but with drier conditions any materials put out for planting aren't going to be that effective because they won't be moving into the plant. Thrips could become a problem."

Joe Townsend, Ind. Consultant, Coahoma, Miss.: "Planting progress varies from area to area, depending on where rain fell in the

last week. Overall, we're 70-75% planted, although some growers aren't half finished yet. It's a whale of a good start, so far. I don't know of anyone even thinking about re-planting. Temperatures have been up there, and we haven't had that many bad rain events to slow things down.

"The conditions are good for the weeds, too, and we'll be making Roundup applications earlier than normal except where we used Valor in soybeans and cotton. We looked at all our fields and decided that the only ones that don't need to be treated right away are the ones with Valor. They're still clean."

Claude Bonner, Ind. Consultant, Cotton Specialists of Ark, Inc., N. Little Rock, Ark.: "We're kind of struggling with some of this cotton. It's been dry, and some fields were planted dry and probably a little too deep, so all that is trying to come up now. We missed the bigger rains that some people have had. Even though we've caught a couple of light showers in the last week, we could

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

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still use another rain.

"I haven't seen that much cutworm activity, and seedling disease is scattered. Morningglories are starting to come up, and we're encouraging our growers to come in with an early Roundup treatment at a high rate to keep them from getting any size on them."

Dale Wells, Ind. Consultant, Cotton Services, Inc., Leachville, Ark.: "We're 50-55% done, and we were clicking right along until the storm this Sunday. A tornado came through and tipped over about 6 pivots, including 3 that belong to my growers. We got hail with it, but we don't have a lot of cotton up yet. It dinged up some cotyledons, but I don't think it will hurt us in the long run. We feel pretty good about the way the season is starting."

Trent LaMastus, Ind. Consultant, Cleveland, Miss.: "It will take a rain to get a lot of cotton up or provide enough moisture that we can start planting again. Everybody has pretty much quit because they ran out of moisture. We're 70-80% planted and 65% either emerged or coming up.

"So far, there's nothing out of the ordinary with pests. But we've got a few thin stands and will consider treating cutworms if the plant populations drop much more. We haven't treated

yet because it looks like the worms have about cycled out, plus that cotton was planted dry, and we've got seed that still could germinate.

"The odd thing we're finding are sugarcane beetles in high numbers in some isolated areas in Humphreys County. They're not to the point yet that they're generally threatening stands, but it won't take much more pressure in some spots before we'll consider treating."

Gus Lorenz, Arkansas Extension IPM Specialist: "We don't have enough cotton up yet to really talk about it. Rain has been a factor in some areas. We'll have to see how much damage northeastern Arkansas sustained over the weekend, and now the southeastern part of the state is getting pounded in some places. In those areas people will be waiting for it to get dry enough to start planting again."

David Skinner, Ind. Consultant, Starkville, Miss.: "On the eastern side of Mississippi not much planting has taken place yet north of U.S. 82. In Noxubee County planting is further along, and I looked at some cotton today (Monday) that's at one true leaf."

Reynold Minsky, Ind. Consultant, Lake Providence, La.: "We've got a pretty good stand on 90% of what's planted. Stands are

weak on the rest. We haven't had any big problems, so far. For some reason we did have to spray thrips on one farm. The plants had Temik under them, but there maybe wasn't enough rain to activate it."

Michael Boyd, Extension Entomology Specialist, Portageville, Mo.: "We got a pretty general rain Sunday night and then more on Monday. Amounts varied. Caruthersville got 3", but here at the center we got less than 1". Sikeston didn't get any.

"Overall, we're probably less than half planted. Growers held off on quite a few fields until we got into May, and now we're dealing with this wet spell. Compared to last year we're probably behind, although last year the early cotton got caught by that wet, cold period."