

AgFax: Midsouth Cotton

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Here is this week's **AgFax: Midsouth Cotton**, sponsored by the staff of **Syngenta Crop Protection**, maker of **Centric®** insecticide and other products designed for Delta cotton production.

OVERVIEW

Treatments for thrips continue on a somewhat wider basis this week. Drier, hotter weather is helping bring the cotton along after all the rain earlier this month.

These reports were made Monday afternoon and Tuesday.

CROP REPORTS

Angus Catchot, Mississippi Extension Entomologist: "Things are fairly quiet. A big part of our cotton is at the 3-5 leaves. A lot of thrips are moving as wheat dries down. A few treatments are being made. All of our cotton planted early is pretty much past the thrips stage. Seed treatments and in-furrow applications mostly seem to be holding."

Mark Tackett, Manager, Terral Agri Service, Oak Grove,

La.: "Our crop is mostly at 2-4 true leaves. In an 8-day period we had 5.5" of rain, and that waterlogged everything. With sunshine and hot weather now, fields are drying down. Some of the cotton I'm looking at has probably grown 2" in the last 4 days.

"We've sprayed every acre for thrips. Seed was treated with insecticides. But with all this rain, I guess it didn't hold. We've been about 2 weeks behind with Roundup, also due to the rain, and fields got wooly. Every acre has been sprayed, and the growth is dying back."

Bobby Phipps, Missouri Extension Cotton Specialist, Portageville, Mo.: "Almost all of the crop is planted, and the early crop was replanted. Plant health is excellent. The wheat is drying down very fast, so thrips should be a serious problem shortly."

Gary Wolfe, La-Ark Agricultural Consulting, Ida, La.: "A third of our cotton has just started squaring. We had some thrips. Temik and other in-furrow applications really didn't work that well. We added Orthene to

Roundup on just about everything. DPL 555 is slow to grow off, anyway, and with poor growing conditions this year, we decided to minimize as much of the other stress as possible."

Bob Griffin, Griffin Ag Consulting, Jonesboro, Ark.: "Thrips have broken loose since the middle of last week. At first we were just spraying older cotton, but we're now treating nearly anything at the 2-leaf stage and bigger. We'll probably spray 75-80% of that cotton, regardless of what it had at planting.

"Frankly, I don't believe some of these products are working as good on thrips as they did a couple of years ago. That goes for Temik as well as the newer materials. We planted some cotton 10-14 days ago in ideal moisture, and materials used at planting should be controlling thrips, but they're not. I've got a few fields with 30-40% western flower thrips, which we had to deal with 2 years ago. But a lot of what's slipping through now are tobacco thrips, and we ought to be able to control those with planting materials.

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"We're also making some Centric applications at pinhead square. This has pretty much become a standard approach to deal with early plantbugs that appear a week or two after squaring starts. These plantbugs use to be covered with our boll weevil treatments, but eradication eliminated those treatments. We're also finding spider mites on field edges."

Ronnie Bibb, Jimmy Sanders Seed Co., Hollandale, Miss.: "Crops look really good. We got 4-5" of rain out of the last systems, but it didn't come all at one time, so we were fortunate from that respect. So far, we haven't had to abandon any of our over-the-top treatments on Roundup Ready cotton, although we got in by the nose on a couple of fields.

"We've made an application for thrips on everything, including where we had Temik, Gaucho or Orthene. It's a numbers game. We've got a lot of thrips, and it doesn't matter what went on the seed or under it -- they're having an effect. There's no reason to let them keep chewing on the crop."

Bert Falkner, Ind. Consultant, Land Service, Aberdeen, Miss.: "We're off to a pretty nice start. Everybody has gotten rain. We do have a good many thrips. We've had to spray a considerable number of acres that were treated at planting. There's no trouble now controlling them.

"With all the heat, cotton is growing well. We've got a little cotyledon cotton, but most is at second to fifth true leaf. We're trying to finish Roundup work on a lot of cotton that's at fourth leaf.

"On some, we're just finishing first application, and we'll probably run out of time on a few fields before we can get across it again. Intense rain in some areas worked

against us. Parts of Calhoun County got 6" of hard, heavy rain two weekends ago."

Lee Rogers, Rogers Entomological Service, Steele, Mo.: "For the most part, cotton planting is finished, although it took until this week to wrap it up in the Steele area where we've got somewhat heavier soils. Across all the crop I work, there's about a 4-week difference between the earliest and latest planting.

"With all the rain and cold weather last year, the Steele area had the worst start anyone could remember. Yet, it was the best finish anyone had ever seen -- both extremes in the same year. One of my growers is 92 years old, so he's seen a lot of crops, and even he said it was the best year he'd ever had. The heat units in late September and October really helped make the crop."

Carl Hayden, Chicot County Extension Agent, Lake Village, Ark.: "Cotton looks good. Just about all of it has been sprayed for thrips, no matter what was used at planting. With all the rain, it wasn't growing much and couldn't stay ahead of thrips. Now, with better conditions, it's moving past the point that thrips matter."

Chism Craig, Tennessee Extension Agronomist-Cotton, Jackson, Tenn.: "We're inching toward the end of planting. Some growers are finished, but I know of growers who have 100-400 acres to replant.

"Thrips are picking up pretty good. A consultant in Lake County told me today (Tuesday) that he's treating quite a bit of cotton. There's a tremendous amount of wheat around him, and it's drying down. His counts doubled since last week."

Sandy Stewart, Louisiana Extension Cotton Specialist, Alexandria, La.: "Cotton looks like it's actually doing okay. It's growing real well. People are finishing some replanting. Generally, we've got cotton from 5 to 6 leaves, with some up to 7. The biggest challenge now is to get glyphosate out and stay on label. That's where the rush is this week.

"There are a few problems with thrips, but most of our cotton has grown through it. Smaller cotton could still be vulnerable where thrips are moving out of wheat."

ALSO THIS WEEK

In his consulting firm's weekend newsletter, Roger Carter of Clayton, La., reported that his area is still rebounding from the heavy rains a couple of weeks ago. "Several thousand acres of cotton have been lost due to the soggy conditions, flooding, etc. And several more thousand that were planted immediately in front of the last rains are not up to a stand on the light soils."

Chuck Farr, Crawfordsville, Ark., consultant, said in his email report Monday that the rain will shift at least a few more acres from cotton to soybeans, and winds are delaying herbicide treatments. "Some cotton stayed in the sack and will not be planted, and other fields that have been planted and replanted and yet need to be replanted again will (now go) to soybeans. These acres are limited but are out there...Eight straight days of 15-25 mph winds have kept all herbicides in the jug and sitting on airstrips. Winds are not even calm at day break or in the evenings."