

# AgFax: Midsouth Cotton

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Here is our first regular issue of **AgFax: Midsouth Cotton** for 2005.

**This marks our tenth year of publishing AgFax.**

Our thanks to the **Midsouth Cotton Team of Syngenta Crop Protection** for once again sponsoring our early and mid-season issues.

We also deeply appreciate the consultants, dealer reps and Extension workers who provide the information that goes into each report.

We welcome your comments and suggestions.

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## OVERVIEW

There's nothing wrong with this season that some warm weather couldn't cure. Much of our coverage area, though, has felt only a hint of spring. People were still scraping ice off their windshields in West Tennessee this morning, and heat units

have been scarce.

Seed are going into the ground in places, but the pace is expected to pick up later in the week as conditions warm up.

These reports were made Monday and Tuesday.

## CROP REPORTS

**Charles Denver, Denver Crop Consulting, Watson, Ark.:** "Cotton looks good, but it's been pretty chilly. Three of the last five nights the low has been in the 40s, with daytime highs in the lower 60s. That's not good cotton weather. Maybe 90% has been planted. Rainfall Friday night ranged from nothing up to 2.5 inches."

**David Skinner, Ind. Consultant, Starkville, Miss.:** "Almost none of our cotton has been planted yet. My biggest grower in the Delta hasn't planted a seed yet. He said he didn't need to do any practice planting this year and decided to wait until the weather gets right. Most of my other growers are sitting

still, too. There's a slight chance of rain Wednesday, then temperatures are suppose to move into the 80s after the middle of the week. If that happens and the weather stays open, everything will be running by Thursday. With one week of good conditions we could probably get the crop planted. That's not too late, but we do need to start now."

**Dale Wells, Ind. Consultant, Cotton Services, Inc., Leachville, Ark.:** "Things are moving real slow. We started planting some last week and maybe have 15% planted now. Some cotton is up, but it's struggling. A few growers in the area were planting hard and heavy today (Monday) but my clients are holding off today and maybe will hold off tomorrow, too. Nobody wants to replant if it can be avoided."

**Bill Brooks, Crockett Farmers Co-op, Alamo, Tenn.:** "Everyone is itching to

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start planting, but it's too cool and wet. A few fields have been planted here and there. I've gotten a report about some seed rotting in the ground. There also are some quarter- to half-inch sprouts. I hope those will be okay, but it's going to be cold over the next few nights. The safest place for seed right now is in the bag."

**Harold Lambert, Ind. Consultant, Innis, La.:** "Right now conditions aren't too bad. We do need a rain, though. At one point we were too wet, but this area missed the most recent systems, so now we're too dry. Cotton that's up is mostly in the cotyledon stage, with maybe a few true leaves out there. We also have a lot of seed sitting in dry soil where we thought there was enough moisture."

**Allen McKnight, Delta Ag Consulting, Greenville, Miss.:** "A little over half our cotton has been planted, and it's just beginning to come up. Most of it will be up in a few days if temperatures get warmer, but it's chilly now. Some fields have got a lot of grass and other escapes, so we'll be coming in with Roundup, probably with a pyrethroid for cutworms. The bulk of the crop, though, isn't up yet, and a good part of it is still in the bag. There have been times lately when we wish that it was all still in the bag."

**Tom Barber, Mississippi Extension Cotton Specialist:** "A lot of the Delta – maybe 65% to 70% — has been planted. People are rolling hard and heavy where it's dry enough. It should warm up toward the weekend, and as fields dry up we'll see more equipment run-

ning. It's interesting that I haven't had a complaint yet about a stand failure. The fields I've been in with emerged cotton look good. A few pockets have been planted in the hills, but a wide area in that part of the state got an inch of rain last Friday, so that stopped most activity."

**Sandy Stewart, Louisiana Extension Cotton Specialist, Alexandria, La.:** "The USDA says we're about 65% planted. The biggest cotton I've seen is at four true leaves, but a lot is stuck at cotyledon or struggling to push out those first true leaves. With this cool weather it's growing off slowly. The forecast calls for warmer weather later in the week, and that could help jumpstart things.

"I've been concerned about the effect the wind and cold weather would have, but I feel better about things after looking at a lot of the cotton. I haven't observed any terminal bud damage. Some of the cotyledon leaves are a little ragged, but warmer weather will perk up those plants pretty quickly.

"Ralph Bagwell (Extension entomologist) sent out an advisory Monday about an egg lay that was being reported in a number of areas. He hasn't absolutely confirmed that these are cabbage looper eggs, but that's the suspicion. If they are, then we may have to make applications next week

**Bill Robertson, Arkansas Extension Agronomist-Cotton, Little Rock, Ark.:** "With the cold temperatures, some people pulled back from planting and others kept going. Where cotton has emerged it generally looks okay. One grower said his

plants are okay, just shivering a little. There may be cotton that needs to be replanted, but nothing that I've heard about, so far. A little cotton was planted when we got a break in the weather early in April, and some of that came up better than cotton planted later. Overall, planting progress is mixed. In a few areas people have just about wrapped things up, while growers in other locations are just getting started good."

**Chism Craig, Tennessee Extension Agronomist-Cotton, Jackson, Tenn.:** "A small percentage of our crop has been planted. We're really just getting started today (Tuesday) with what will be the main part of our planting. Luckily, it was too wet yesterday for anyone to do much. Cold weather has persisted. It was 35 to 37 degrees in the area last night, and Jackson set a record low. One person told me he scraped ice off his windshield."

**Bobby Phipps, Missouri Extension Cotton Specialist, Portageville, Mo.:** "A quarter or more of our cotton has been planted. After the rain last Friday, some areas are still too wet today (Tuesday) but people are back in the field in drier locations. Where cotton is up, a lot of it looks like you would expect after all this cold, wet weather. If we have a week of good weather that will help the cotton that's up and give us time to get a good deal of the remaining crop planted. I've got to say that, overall, the mood of our growers is very positive. They had good yields last year, and attitudes are upbeat."