

AgFax: Midsouth Cotton

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Here is this week's *AgFax: Midsouth Cotton*, sponsored by the **Midsouth Cotton Team of Syngenta Crop Protection.**

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OVERVIEW

Good rains have fallen across the lower two-thirds of the Midsouth since last Friday. But the upper part of the region remains dry.

Pivots are running in north Arkansas and Missouri, and polypipe will begin rolling out if rain doesn't come soon. Showers were still popping up as we closed this issue Tuesday night. But the main part of the weather system had already slipped into central Alabama.

CROP REPORTS

Charles Denver, Denver Crop Consulting, Watson, Ark.: "Since Friday night we've gotten 1.5 inches of rain pretty generally from Pine Bluff south, and areas around Watson received up to 3 inches. The

rain got us out of some real problems. We had to have it, and it was worth some pretty serious money to our growers. All our cotton has been planted, and some was replanted due to hail. Enough rain fell to get any ends up that still hadn't emerged. Thrips are about it in terms of pests right now. Plantbugs are just starting."

David Skinner, Ind. Consultant, Starkville, Miss.: "We're knee-deep in mud in places today (Monday). Cotton wasn't hurting, but corn was rolling up. The rain will help cotton from slipping into a stressed situation, and it also should get things moving where growers sidedressed. That cotton will take off now. We've had to spray a lot of thrips, and so far we've been able to add a quarter-pound of Orthene to the Roundup without having to make a special trip. Cotton has been in the ground so long that treatments wore out. In some cases we only got 7-10 days of good activity. Where cotton grew out quickly, the seed treatments did well, but not where

seed sat in the ground too long."

Allen McKnight, Delta Ag Consulting, Greenville, Miss.: "Rains over the weekend were well needed and well timed. Totals mostly ranged from 2 to 3 inches. We're picking up thrips in younger cotton. Most of the other cotton looks pretty clean. Nearly all our cotton is Roundup Ready this year, and we've gone with a quarter-pound of Orthene with the second shot of Roundup."

Bobby Phipps, Missouri Extension Cotton Specialist, Portageville, Mo.: "It's dry as a bone up here. Some of our late-planted fields don't have enough of a root system, and they're hurting. Corn is suffering, too. Nothing is happening, it's just so dry. There's no real weed or insect pressure. Cotton is just sitting there. It's kind of eerie. A few weeks ago I thought this was the best crop we've ever had, but now I think that's over for cotton as well as soybeans and corn."

Continued on next page

Control your weeds from start to finish

For optimum control of troublesome weeds in Roundup Ready® (RR™) cotton, Syngenta recommends a herbicide program beginning with Sequence® applied at the two- to four-leaf cotton growth stage.

For control of morningglory spp., nutsedge, sicklepod and other weeds, apply Envoke® post over-the-top after the fifth leaf stage.

Finish with Suprend® as a post-directed through lay-by spray for control of many common weeds and grasses.



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We've lost a good deal of our early potential."

Victor Roth, Roth Farm Service, Malden, Mo.: "We're treating some fields for thrips. I'm doing this with some reluctance because we tend to pay for it later. Red spider mites are waiting for their chance. But cotton is just hanging out there. We can't do anything about the weather, but at least we can treat thrips and take some stress off the plants.

"It didn't rain over the weekend, not a drop. Rains went north and south of us, and I don't think my growers got any. We've already started watering corn. Anybody with a pivot on cotton is running it now, and everything has been circled at least one time. One grower just told me he was going to start rolling out polypipe. Nobody really wants to do that, and there's no flurry of activity yet, but it's heading that way."

David Hydrick, Hydrick's Crop Consulting, Inc., Jonesboro, Ark.: "We missed the rain. It's been 3-4 weeks since significant rainfall, and cotton plants have absolutely shriveled up on some of this old gumbo.

"We need a rain, although we've still got as good looking a crop as I've ever seen at this point. Cotton is mostly still growing, and you've really got to tug on cotton plants to pull them up now. Our crop ranges from cotyledon to 6-8 true leaves. We're getting ready to string out polypipe after the second Roundup applications. I've worked here since 1993 and have never seen it this dry. People are comparing this to 1980.

"We're kind of at the tail end of thrips pressure. Spider mites are an issue now. I've treated about 800 acres, so far, for mites. We're striping fields with Zephyr where it's an option but also spraying whole

fields where necessary. Every day I'm recommending treatments on 2-3 more fields. I made my first plantbug recommendations today (Monday).

"Marestail is horrendous in places. Most of my growers used 2,4-D and Clarity with Roundup, and we've had to come back with Ignite to clean up some messes. Where Clarity didn't give a total kill the plant sent out suckers from the bottom, which is worse because you end up with 3-4 main stems instead of just one. Where growers went with Roundup alone for a burndown, marestail is solid. Growers who still have baroffs are shaving beds as narrow as they can."

Tucker Miller, Ind. Consultant, Drew, Miss.: "Everybody in my area received a good rain since Friday except around Quitman County, and there's at least a chance they will get rain today (Tuesday). Tallahatchie, Leflore and Sunflower Counties all received 2 to 2.5 inches. It's really helped.

"Our cotton ranges from 2 leaf up to 7-8 leaf, with pinhead squares on a majority of it. Most of our seed treatments worked well, so we haven't made wide scale thrips sprays. Plantbug treatments have only been protective sprays in isolated spots where they were coming out of setaside ground and into field edges.

"We're gearing up to go underneath with weed control and some banded Centric or Trimax treatments in squaring cotton, and our first plant growth regulator applications will start next week.

"We had to turn on pivots in spots to help get a stand or activate Sequence."

Bill Brooks, Mid-South Farmers Cooperative, Alamo, Tenn.:

"We're dry and missed all the rain this weekend. We're not critical but could certainly use a rain. Cotton looks fairly good, and some is at fourth true leaf. We've already sprayed once with Roundup and added something for thrips, mostly with Orthene.

"We've had places where everything held pretty good in terms of thrips, but we've also had to spray in places behind all the regular seed treatments and systemics. Lack of control was mainly due to dry and cold conditions. It seems like the later cotton had more trouble with thrips than the earlier fields."

Alvin Minsky, Salesman/Consultant, Raley Bros., Monticello Gin & Elevator, Monticello, La.: "Our cotton ranges from fourth node to ninth node and squaring. Until the last couple of rains we were heavily spraying thrips. Aphids have been kind of light, so far, but I expect that things will be picking up in the next couple of weeks between aphids, plantbugs and Pix applications."

Les Goodson, Cotton Services, Inc., Leachville, Ark.: "It's being reported that this is the driest May on record for Arkansas, and we got no relief over the weekend in this area. We've spun just about every pivot in the program one time. No polypipe has been used yet. Cotton is still a little too small. But if we don't get rain in the next week then everybody will be rolling it out.

"We're going out with our second shot of Roundup. The crop still looks pretty good if we can just keep thrips off it. We're putting out our second treatment now, and some fields may need 3. We're seeing spider mites here and there, and I think a rain would help with those."