

AgFax: Midsouth Cotton

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

JUNE 14, 2005

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

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

OVERVIEW

Rains last week helped on a wide basis, but parts of the Midsouth remain critically dry. More insecticide work has started. Mites remain a nagging problem. Some aphid applications have been made, and plantbugs are being sprayed.

CROP REPORTS

Joe Townsend, Ind. Consultant, Coahoma, Miss.: "Some places got rain in the last week, but an awful lot of our area is still in a severe drought. Pivots are running and some furrow irrigation has been going, too. You've got to dig down a foot in many fields before you find enough moisture to roll a ribbon of soil in your fingers. Generally, cotton is holding up well, but we'll be

in trouble if we don't get rain before it starts blooming.

"We're spraying quite a few plantbugs in certain fields, and in places we're also spraying stinkbugs, both browns and greens. We're into our second plantbug applications in a few fields. Control is pretty good because there's been no washoff."

Herbert Jones Jr., Ind. Consultant, Leland, Miss.: "Areas surrounding Washington County got good rainfall amounts last Thursday and Friday, but a large part of the county, itself, missed it. It's been about 2 weeks since a lot of my fields received rain. Growers are starting to irrigate beans, but cotton is hanging in there. With cotton, we've about decided to hold off another 10-14 days and see if we can catch enough rain.

"Cotton is running 4-8 squares and looks good. About half our growers have started directed spray work. We're applying Pix on stronger ground. A few spider mites have been bothering us, and we spot-

treated. The rain a couple of weeks ago lowered spider mite numbers. Very few aphids are around."

Claude Bonner, Ind. Consultant, Cotton Specialists of Ark, Inc., N. Little Rock, Ark.: "We've been struggling a little with this crop. Cotton on ground with higher clay content has had about the hardest time. A lot didn't want to come up, and when it did rain we got more than we needed. Those plants don't have much of a root system and they're going to be hard to manage.

"The season started out abnormally dry, but we're in pretty good shape in terms of soil moisture right now. We may start watering some next week. We've already watered quite a bit. Some irrigation started a month ago, and growers turned on pumps 4-6 weeks earlier than they ever had. Depending on the situation, our farmers have had to water cotton both before and after it was planted or before it came up and after it emerged. Everywhere we watered, it seemed to help."

Continued on next page

Effective Insect Control with Centric®

Get better control with **Centric**.

Centric® provides fast-acting, long-lasting control of many common pests such as aphids and plant bugs. The new standard in cotton insect control, **Centric** outperforms and outlasts competitors with its unique mode of action. And, unlike others, **Centric** has minimal impact on beneficials.

Turn to **Syngenta Crop Protection** for this and other innovative solutions, backed by one of the most knowledgeable Southern cotton teams in the industry.



©2005 Syngenta Crop Protection, Inc., Greensboro, N.C. 27419-8300. Important: Always read and follow label instructions before buying or using this product. Centric® and the Syngenta logo are trademarks of a Syngenta Group Company. syngentacropprotection.com

Gus Lorenz, Arkansas Extension IPM Specialist:

“Mites continue to spread and are now becoming a problem in SE Arkansas. Aphids are building statewide, but they’re a little ahead of the curve in SE Arkansas. I saw several fields Thursday and Friday with scattered hot spots. A couple of field had severe infestations. There has been a little flurry of yellow striped armyworms in south Arkansas. This is our second round with them. Highest numbers were 1-3 per row foot.

“Over the weekend we had a slight increase in bollworm moth counts. After that big spike early in the month my worry is that we may get into a situation with rolling numbers. You spray, then come back a few days later to find more eggs and small larvae.”

Gary Wolfe, La-Ark Agricultural Consulting, Ida, La.:

“We haven’t had significant rain since April 10. It’s pretty tough. We can irrigate about 40% of our cotton. The crop still has potential, but without rain soon it will decline quickly. If it doesn’t rain in a couple of weeks we will probably quit spraying in a couple of places. In one field where we have a pivot over clay we applied an inch of water 3 times to get cotton up. It was that dry.

“We’re spraying about every 10 days to keep secondary pests off cotton. It’s mostly been aphids, but we’re now spraying mites in places. Aphids are mainly in fields with dark clay. We haven’t had a bad outbreak yet. We’re using a little better polypipe so we can run over it with small tractors and do most of the application work, ourselves. We run water, let soil dry out and then spray again.

“Plantbugs have been averaging

10-15% before treatments, and 10 days later they’ve been up to 10-15% again. We aren’t seeing the massive numbers that are more typical here, and the dry weather is helping hold them down, I suspect.”

Lee Rogers, Rogers Entomological Service, Steele, Mo.:

“We finally got some much-needed rain. Generally, everyone got an inch, but totals in places were up to 5 inches. We’re just coming into our fleahopper and plantbug period, and we’ll start spraying this week. The mix seems to contain more fleahoppers than plantbugs. Spider mites have been terrible in the last few weeks, but the rain knocked them down a bit. In the last 2-3 weeks they were as bad as I’ve seen them anywhere. We sprayed a few fields, but for the most part we’ve been trying to hold off for a rain.”

Mike Edwards, Edwards Entomological Services, Water Valley, Miss.:

“We started getting spotted showers about 10 days ago and are in good shape now in terms of soil moisture. With these additional heat units, everything has kicked off and is looking better. We’ve started treating some of our older cotton for plantbugs and aphids. We began picking them up in Grenada County. We haven’t treated any yet in Yalobusha or Lafayette Counties, but plantbug numbers are coming up. About 75% of our cotton has started squaring. We’ll begin plant growth regulator applications on a wide basis next week.”

Angus Catchot, Mississippi Extension Entomologist:

“We’re still dealing with mites in places. This started in the Delta, but I found treatable populations in the hills last week. Plantbugs are really picking

up in places, and treatments are going out. Aphids are showing up in a few places. They’ve been spotty in the Delta, but a few treatments have been made. I just left a field in the hills where aphids were increasing and fairly uniform.”

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

“We continue to see aphid populations building. It’s surprising how few people are spraying in situations where they might reduce pressure early by adding something to herbicide applications. In our current environment, we will see heavier aphid populations across many fields by next week. We’re probably still 2 weeks away from finding the aphid fungus. We’re seeing a few plantbugs, as well.”

Scott Stewart, Extension Cotton Entomologist, Jackson, Tenn.:

“Cotton is generally doing well. Rains in the last couple of weeks have pushed the crop along. It’s moving out of the thrips window. Spider mites, though, are lingering. And now we’re getting into the plantbug window. People are trying to decide whether to add something to their Roundup. We don’t have an epidemic, but there may be more plantbugs than we normally have at this point.”

Bobby Phipps, Missouri Extension Cotton Specialist, Portageville, Mo.:

“We have gotten scattered rains, and they’ve really helped. However, some areas missed the showers. Thrips and seedling diseases are the lightest I have seen in years. It looks like we will have 425,000 acres this year. This is 10% more than last year.”