

# AgFax: Midsouth Cotton

**MAY 16, 2007**

Here is this week's AgFax: Midsouth Cotton.

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Owen Taylor, Editor (888-327-6329) [owen@agfax.com](mailto:owen@agfax.com)

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## OVERVIEW

Much of our coverage area received at least some rain Tuesday afternoon and night. The driest areas this month have mainly been in West Tennessee and the hills of eastern Mississippi. It was too early to tell if thunderstorms would hold together long enough to bring relief to those areas.

**Planting is winding down** across much of the region.

**Emergence and plant development** have been good, according to most reports.

**Pressure from thrips varies.** In some areas, they remain light. But wheat is drying down, and thrips are moving into cotton.

## CROP REPORTS

**Joe Townsend, Ind. Consultant, Coahoma, Miss.:**

"Our cotton is anywhere from still in the sack to fourth true leaf. Maybe 5% to 10% is still unplanted. We're having to spray for thrips. Numbers really jumped since late last week. On Thursday, we found 1 per 5 plants. Today (Monday), it's 5 per plant in places, and that's regardless of what was used at planting or as a seed treatment. Wheat is really ripening up, and I'm sure they're leaving it for cotton. Highest numbers were closest to wheat fields. No cutworms or armyworms are turning up and, except for thrips, our cotton is devoid of insect problems."

**Steve Schutz, Ind. Consultant, Coushatta, La.:** "Cotton is up and some is at second leaf. There are no real insect problems. We're finding thrips here and there, but most everyone used Avicta-treated seed, and some even put down Temik. We've had moisture, so that helped with activation. We've had springs lately where it remained dry and Temik never got going, but that hasn't been a problem this year. I've only seen an aphid now and then. Weed control is progressing well. This is about as good a start as you could want."

**Victor Roth, Roth Farm Service, Malden, Mo.:** "Anything planted after April 23 has had very favorable conditions – timely showers, along with good daytime and nighttime temperatures. A field or two had to be replanted or replanted in spots, but we're off to a positive start, overall. Our cotton ranges from 2 true leaves to just busting out of (Continued)

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the ground, so the crop isn't scattered over too much time. We're finding occasional thrips. Temik and seed treatments are holding well. First Roundup treatments will go out this week. It's a long way from a bag of cotton seed in the shed to a stand of cotton in the field, but I would say that we're right where we need to be."

**Claude Bonner, Ind. Consultant, Cotton Specialists of Ark, Inc., N. Little Rock, Ark.:** "There still are a few folks trying to plant, but we're nearly finished. A lot of cotton looks pretty good. Some later fields came up quickly. We've had quite a few showers, and most everybody is trying to catch up on herbicide applications. Most of our cotton is Roundup Ready or Roundup Flex, but we could still have some weed issues if those applications aren't made in a timely fashion. I think most people will use a residual, either with Roundup or after the first Roundup application.

**Scott Gifford, Gifford Crop Consulting, Manila, Ark.:** "Cotton really, really looks good. We're spraying a few thrips here and there, but that's all, and even they aren't a widespread situation. We're through planting, and 90% to 95% of our cotton is up."

**Allen McKnight, Delta Ag Consulting, Greenville, Miss.:** "Cotton is up now. We had big rains around Leland and lost some. It rotted before it could come up, and some spot planting was required. But as a percentage of the crop, it wasn't that much. We've got everything lined up to spray for thrips today (Monday) and tomorrow. We're finding pretty heavy numbers in cotton that ranges from first to fourth true leaf. A lot of immatures showed up over the weekend. Some applications will go out by air, while others will be made with hooded sprayers.

"We're trying to get the second shot of Roundup on the older cotton and the first shot on younger cotton. Areas around Leland and Arcola have been getting frequent showers, and we haven't been able to make applications when we would like. Everywhere else, we're either okay on moisture or getting a little dry."

**Tom Barber, Arkansas Extension Cotton Specialist:** "I'm amazed at how well the cotton is growing off. Warm temperatures and showers have been helpful. A Delta & Pine Land rep told us today (Tuesday) that he had no replanted fields. We've been around Marianna today and up to Forrest City, and a lot of cotton is at 2 to 4 true leaves, and some I saw Monday at Pine Blue was at 5 to 6. There are still a few fields being planted south of Lonoke and south and east of Pine Bluff.

"Frank Groves (cotton verification coordinator) and I are estimating that we're maybe 90% planted. Pressure from thrips has been light, based on what I'm seeing. Cotton has been growing fast and busting through the stage where it would be vulnerable. With the current temperatures, cotton plants could be adding a new node about every 3 days, so timing herbicide applications will be critical as fast as this crop is moving."

**Sandy Stewart, Louisiana Extension Cotton Special-**

**ist, Alexandria, La.:** "We've had some weed control calls and things of that nature, but nothing terribly unusual. Everything is relatively quiet, and cotton is in pretty good shape. There's been a little replanting, but nothing widespread. Cotton is growing out nicely, and we've had favorable conditions for development. We're moving into that crunch period when everyone is trying to make those 2 Roundup applications.

"Insects are pretty quiet. But with all this wheat drying down, I've got to believe we will see thrips in cotton. The decision about whether to spray still should be based first on how well cotton is growing and how quickly it can move past the vulnerable period."

**John "Kim" Kimbrough, Ind. Consultant, Pro Tech Ag, Lexington, Miss.:** "Cotton is up and looks good. There aren't too many bugs on it, so far. I guess all the prophylactic treatments are working."

**Chris Main, Tennessee Extension Cotton Specialist:** "The last USDA report put us at 61% planted, but by this Friday we could be bumping 80%, depending on what the weather does. Moisture varies across our production area. As a whole, though, we could use a good 1 to 2 inches of rain. We're running 7 to 8 inches behind on year-to-date rainfall totals in many areas, so things are getting pretty dry. At least it's warm and dry, so growers are planting down into moisture and getting good, quick stands. It looks like we'll get rain tonight (Tuesday), and that could hurt on a few acres if soils crust over. But most cotton planted lately has emerged in 4 to 5 days. We planted research plots last Thursday, and they're already up to a stand.

"Thrips are light, and nothing else is really hitting bad. I'm seeing a little rhizoctonia but nothing widespread."

**Angus Catchot, Mississippi Extension Entomologist:** "Most of the Delta has caught rain, and we got a hard rain at Stoneville when I was there this afternoon (Tuesday). I hope it moves all the way across the state. Some areas in east Mississippi are still dry, and planting has stopped there until it rains. I'm between Greenville and Indianola right now, and water is standing in the middles.

"Thrips are really heavy in the Delta, especially around wheat. Treatments are holding them off for the most part. Numbers, though, are high, and folks have been watching the plants and looking for damage. In the hills, thrips are relatively light. We've had calls about fairly high numbers of yellow stripe armyworms in soybeans and cotton. We're watching them in soybeans to see if they hit our defoliation threshold: 30% before bloom and 20% after."

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