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# MiteFax: SJV Cotton

[Owen Taylor](#), Editor (888-327-6329)

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Here is this week's *MiteFax: SJV Cotton*. MiteFax is once again sponsored by the California Cotton Team of [Syngenta Crop Protection](#) as a service to growers, PCAs, industry personnel and Extension workers. We welcome your suggestions and comments.

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

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## OVERVIEW

Cooler, wetter weather looms just ahead, but it's mostly seen as a bump in the road – provided weather forecasts late this week prove correct. Temperatures will drop some, but nobody seems to expect threatening conditions.

Otherwise, the crop is off to a better start than anyone can remember. It's a little spooky, isn't it?

The majority of the crop is in the ground, and large parts are up and growing. Some miticide treatments are cranking up in the lower valley, and Staple and glyphosate applications are in progress. And April is only halfway over.

The trick this year will be to think ahead, as Bob Hutmacher and others continue to point out. Compared to recent years, everything should happen sooner. There continues to be some optimism that the drier, warmer conditions early in the season could translate into lighter lygus pressure. Pete Goodell, IPM cotton advisor, said today he will begin his annual lygus survey in May after the effect of late April rainfall is clearer.

We will be including our degree-day tables in a couple of weeks.

The following reports were made Thursday and Friday.

## CROP REPORTS

### *Bob Hutmacher, Extension Cotton Specialist:*

“Except for some fields in the northern valley, we've got a large part of this crop planted. It could be as much as 85%. I've been trying to line up cooperators for our remaining trials, and it's difficult to find growers who aren't through planting.

“We’re moving into what may be a more normal weather pattern, with temperatures in the upper 60s to lower 70s and lows in the mid 40s. It shouldn’t be cold enough to cause any chilling injury problems. I am getting calls from people who are sounding us out on whether to plant right now or hold off. I guess one immediate consideration is that there’s a chance for rain, and will they be planting in areas prone to crusting?”

“There’s a sense in some growers’ minds that they’re late, but that’s only in the context that it’s been unseasonably warm and a lot of cotton was already planted in March. With our own plots that haven’t been planted, we expect to wait through the weekend and then plant early next week. We’ll delay a little just to get past the predicted rain, but we won’t hold off another 7-10 days.

“We tend to expect at least one drop in temperatures during planting, but it more commonly happens in late March. Nothing in the forecast indicates this will be a dramatic cool-down.

“Some people are putting sprinklers over weaker stands or to compensate for moisture lost to the wind. A lot of people are capping off, which is good. I don’t expect a lot of replanting.

“The penalty with having an early crop like this is we have to pay attention to it earlier. This will be an atypical year, and first irrigation may be somewhat earlier and we’ll also need to check sooner for squaring and retention. But if that’s a problem, it’s a good one to have.”

**Kevin Lehar, Crops Manager, Woolf Enterprises, Huron:** "All of our cotton has been planted, and it’s all up. I’ve been growing cotton for 15 years, and this is probably the earliest I’ve ever been able to make

that statement. Some Pima is starting to push the third true leaf already. We put Temik or Thimet on every acre at planting, and that seems to be taking care of the small amount of thrips out there.

“We’ve started our Staple applications. A little of that is going out, and we’re starting on some of the earliest Roundup Ready Acala. This week we also began a little cultivation.”

***Pete Goodell, Extension IPM Entomologist, Kearney Ag Center, Parlier:*** “One thing that’s looked positive so far is that people are doing a good job of keeping the Westlands retirement land clean. Between cultivation and sheep, it looks good, especially compared to how some of it was last year.

“Overall, there aren’t many viable (wild) hosts out there. That’s what I’m seeing, and PCAs from different parts of the valley seem to feel that way, too. We’re not finding lygus yet, and cotton really won’t be susceptible for another 4-5 weeks, and by then they could be mostly gone.”

***Dale Deshane, PCA, Supervised Control, Bakersfield:*** “There’s a good chance for rain in the next few days, and after that’s behind us we’ll start spraying some Zephyr, probably by the end of next week. That will be in our earliest cotton, and it’s a small amount of our total acreage. It’s growing quickly, and those fields are pushing third node now, so coverage won’t be a problem.

“Mites were showing up about two weeks after the cotton emerged. They’re not hurting the plant, but they are pushing onto the true leaves. In about another week the plants will be big enough, and we can do a good job of cleaning them up. In our cotton at Buttonwillow we haven’t seen any mites yet, but a lot of that has barely come up.

“On most of our cotton south of Bakersfield we’re just finding mites on the cotyledons. They’re not bad anywhere, just present. We did start treating mites in almonds 10-12 days ago. I saw my first whitefly in melons on April 12. That’s probably a little early. But I only found one whitefly on one plant and, as hard as I looked, didn’t see another one.”

**Nick Groenenberg, Indep. PCA, Hanford:** “We’ve got good looking stands all over, and we’re waiting now for the weeds to come up so we can start our Staple or Roundup applications.

“The crop really looks healthy. We had a tough start last year, and it was the first year a lot of growers used Quadris in-furrow, and it made believers out of them. This year I don’t expect to see those same dramatic results, but I still think it was a good idea.”

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USA Office: 601-992-9488, Fax: 601-992-3503  
Email: [owen@agfax.com](mailto:owen@agfax.com)  
(Editorial)  
Email: [laurie@agfax.com](mailto:laurie@agfax.com)  
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