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SoyFax: Midsouth

May 10, 2001

Here is our first edition of *SoyFax: Midsouth* for 2001. Thanks to Valent USA, which is sponsoring a portion of this season's soybean reports.

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Overview:

While planting is just gearing up in some areas, a large part of the crop has already been seeded in Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi. Scattered showers fell across our coverage area since Sunday, but planting progress has slowed in parts of the Midsouth due to dryness. This issue also includes a report of possible interest from coastal Texas.

Crop Reports:

Keith Normand, Extension Agent, St. Landry Parish, Opelousas, La.: "We have a little bit of the crop planted but need more moisture to get it going. Some of the early MG IVs planted in the

first half of April are doing good. We're seeing more milo this year, with the acreage coming out of soybeans but more especially out of corn. In the last 2-3 years, several growers have had trouble getting rid of corn due to suspected aflatoxin. The market isn't that good for milo right now, but at least you can dump it at the elevator and don't have to bring it home."

Ross Wood, Certified Crop Advisor, Almyra Farmers, Almyra, Ark.: "Soybean planting really hasn't broken loose yet. Very few beans have gone in the ground. We got .3" rain early in the week, and that's going to increase planting over the next 4-5 days."

Wayne Dulaney, Dulaney Seed Co., Clarksdale, Miss.: "A lot of the soybean planting shut down due to lack of moisture. In some rice fields there hasn't been enough moisture for weeds and grass to germinate. Anywhere from 60% to 75% of the soybeans were planted early. The planting that's left includes wheat beans and cases where seed growers are waiting

until after May 1 to improve seed quality. We've also booked some rice that wasn't expected, and part of that is for acreage where soybeans had been planned. But since the farmer is going to have to water up whatever he plants, some are switching to rice. This has been a long, dry stretch for this time of the year. We're monitoring armyworms in wheat and have sprayed all our seed production fields. We've been checking soybeans for armyworms but so far the treatments in wheat are holding them down."

Scott Holder, Helena Chemical Co., Cleveland, Miss.: "Soybean planting is 75% complete, and folks are waiting to finish up. But they lost the moisture and had to quit. We got some rain early in the week but could use more. We're spraying our first shot of Roundup now on Roundup Ready beans and applying some Conclude behind Squadron. The most advanced stands are at 3rd and 4th trifoliolate."

Cecil Parker, AgriServices Ltd., Vidalia, La.: "There have

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been saltmarsh caterpillars coming out of the wheat into some of the MG IV soybeans. We've stripped some edges and also buffered some cotton. We'll probably combine this wheat in 7-10 days, and I imagine we'll see some saltmarsh caterpillars and armyworms come out in good numbers. Overall, we don't have many beans up yet. The early ones look good now, but we've mostly been waiting for rain."

Dan Bradshaw, Crop Aid Agri Consultants, El Campo, Texas: "We got 3.5" to 5" of rain Sunday and Monday, and it's going to be a big boost for the soybeans. It was getting pretty dry. For reasons I can't explain, we have some already starting to bloom, even though they're only 6" to 8" tall. We've seen that with a variety that usually doesn't start blooming until day 35, but blooms showed up in one field on day 26. We've been concerned about saltmarsh caterpillars because high numbers are coming off other vegetation, but so far we haven't found any real pressure in the beans."

Gus Lorenz, Arkansas Extension IPM Specialist: "We're finding small grasshopper nymphs but in amazingly high numbers in the Lincoln County area. Counts are running at least 10 per square foot, and it's getting to the point that a few growers will have to take them out. These are MG V beans at V1 to V2. That area had grasshopper pressure last year. We've seen that grasshoppers can come back worse after one year of drought and especially two years of drought. We've had a pretty dry situation now for three years, and we think that's driving this. We're also getting reports in Lonoke and Jefferson Counties about severe grasshopper infestations in milo."

Craig Massey, Area IPM Specialist, Brownsville, Tenn.: "We're

starting to find grasshoppers in some of our early soybeans. We got eaten up with grasshoppers last year. It's nothing to be alarmed about yet but not exactly the way I hoped the year would shape up, considering that the winter was colder than we've had in the last few years."

Alan Blaine, Mississippi Extension Soybean Specialist: "We're 80% to 90% planted, based on progress since the last crop report. The Delta is ahead of the hills mainly because it caught breaks in the weather. Problems I've seen in the last 2 weeks have been mainly associated with no-till and, it appears, burndown treatments made too close to planting or at planting. I've seen problems with sugarcane borers, and there have been sporadic sprayings for bean leaf beetles."

"Grasshoppers have started showing up. Orthene has been our mainstay on grasshoppers, and we've used some pyrethroids. We're also looking at Dimilin, which has an appropriate label now. Early populations are high enough that we're trying to take out these first generations so we don't have to deal with grasshoppers throughout the season. We started spraying some last weekend."

"We're also having sporadic cutworm problems, though we haven't sprayed, yet. Every call I've gotten about insects so far has related to no-till fields. Soil moisture is okay where we've gained stands, but we will have to start watering some irrigated fields if it doesn't rain before long. We've got a lot of plants starting to bloom in the Delta. We're advising growers to watch Roundup Ready fields for opportunities to delay spraying in early production fields and maybe get by with one treatment. There are some seasonal differences where beans

were planted early. Weeds emerge and grow sporadically and aren't as much competition in these fields. We've been back to some fields for the second week and still haven't treated."

Walter Morrison, Louisiana Extension Soybean Specialist: "A good portion of our crop is planted, more so that I can remember for this time of the year. About 50% was planted early, meaning anytime in April and into early May. Historically, most of our beans aren't planted before May 10. About a third of the planted acreage has emerged. We've had spotty rains so far this week, from 1" to 1.5". Where farmers haven't planted yet, most are waiting for moisture. Saltmarsh caterpillars are showing up in spots."

Lanny Ashlock, Arkansas Extension Soybean Specialist: "By today (Wednesday) we're estimating that 40% of our crop -- about 1.3 million acres -- has been planted. That's the greatest percentage of acres planted by this date in recent years, based on the 5-year average. The early plantings are mostly in IVs and even IIIs, and this is evidence that more growers are moving toward the early soybean production system (ESPS) approach. The bean leaf beetle has been reported and 40% defoliation warrants control measures. Also, there's significant fall armyworm pressure in wheat, and we could see pressure in young soybeans as wheat matures and worms look for new feeding sources."

[Lanny Ashlock's full weekly report is available at: agfax.com/soy/ashlock.](http://agfax.com/soy/ashlock)