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SoyFax: Midsouth

April 18, 2002

Here is our first issue of *SoyFax: Midsouth* for 2002.

Planting is just starting on a wide basis in our coverage area. For this week's issue, we contacted a number of key Extension specialists for updates.

We welcome your comments and suggestions.

Owen Taylor, Editor

owen@agfax.com 601-992-9488

Crop Reports:

Allen Hogan, Louisiana Interim Soybean Specialist: "In our major corn production area in central Louisiana the intention was to increase corn substantially, but it's unclear whether that is happening due to weather delays earlier. Some areas in that part of the state received 4" to 5" of rain during the first weekend of April, and that delayed work.

"In the last report it still looked like intended soybean acreage would be similar to 2001 -- about

650,000 acres. The wet weather in March may have had some effect on early plantings of MG IVs, but that's about the only thing that might change the final acreage downward.

"At the winter meetings we heard a number of questions about disease resistance in soybeans. In 1999 and 2000 there was generally less aerial web blight, even in the southern part of the state where you usually think of it as being bad. But last year we had wetter conditions and more pressure."

Richard Klerk, Interim Arkansas Soybean Specialist: "With the rain over the last few weeks, things have been slower than most farmers want. Some planting is starting up, though we've probably planted 5% or less of the anticipated crop. People are still pushing to finish rice and corn.

"We planted an MG 3.9 this week in a verification field in the Arkansas River Valley. It's the earliest variety we've ever planted in

a verification field. This may present the best opportunity to make a profit in that field. Early planting and early varieties were a hot topic at our winter meetings.

"Last year with the warm, dry spring there were some 40-bu/acre yields with some MG IIIs and early IVs. Several people are playing with MG IIs this season and even some MG Is. In the verification program, we'll be doing more early fields than in the past. We would have been even earlier with some of our fields except for the rain."

Jim Griffin, Louisiana Soybean Weed Specialist, Baton Rouge: "Most people, I think, have finished planting corn. Weather has held things up on a pretty wide basis. This area picked up 4" to 5" of rain early in the month and then we got another inch early last week.

"One question asked a lot over the winter was whether there is a need for a soil-applied herbicide in Roundup Ready beans. We've been

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researching this question and have found that use of a soil applied herbicide may eliminate the need for a second Roundup or glyphosate treatment in some seasons.

"Depending on the year, application of a herbicide at planting can delay weed emergence and growth and under the best conditions in our research has allowed the grower an extra 3 to 5 days to make the Roundup application. In a large operation where time constraints exist, this extension of the application window may be significant.

"We have also worked with Roundup tankmix partners, including Classic, Reflex, and Blazer, to enhance the control of big sesbania and running morningglories. If these weeds get too large, Roundup alone is ineffective.

"We've also looked at Valor as a soil-applied treatment and have been impressed with its activity on some of the harder to control broadleaves, including sesbania and morningglories.

"Use of Valor in a Roundup Ready system may be just what the doctor ordered. We have seen very good results where Valor has been applied at planting at 1.5 to 2 oz/acre. Also, based on pricing at around \$4.75 to \$5 an ounce, Valor may be very economical for use in either Roundup Ready or conventional systems.

"Another good fit for Valor is in combination with Roundup as a burndown treatment. Valor brings to the table excellent broadleaf weed control without antagonizing the grass control with Roundup. Use of Valor in combination with Roundup preplant would also provide some residual control to boot. Valor is probably one of the better things to come along for soybean

growers in several years.

"We can still do a good job in Roundup Ready beans without a soil applied herbicide and without a tank mix partner for Roundup, but the grower will need to be on top of things and be sure that the first application is made to weeds that are small when they are easier to kill."

Alan Blaine, Mississippi Extension Soybean Specialist: "We got cranked up for planting about last Thursday, and people are hitting the high spots, and it should be running wide open by late this week as things dry up. By the end of this week we could have a quarter of the crop planted. Those who did burndown treatments early have the advantage right now.

"Vegetation is actively growing with all the sunshine and heat this week, so it's wicking a good deal of moisture out of the ground. If you haven't burned down yet, you'll be dealing with bigger weeds to kill, plus they will dry out the ground to the point that there will be less moisture for emerging soybean plants.

"Should you use a residual this season? We spent the fall and spring putting out residual materials in different combinations. Growers are going into the season with more options, I think. We're excited about what we've seen with Valor.

"When we've priced out some of these other materials -- especially the generics -- we're also finding that you can put out a higher rate this year for not a lot of money. The price makes them so attractive that it might be tempting not to use a residual. But a residual will help broaden the spectrum of a

Roundup program, heat it up and make it go faster.

"Right now, time is money, so you may need this boost if you've waited to burn down vegetation. It still boils down to the bottom line, and that's why people probably are going to look closely at some generic alternatives.

"Where you've failed to burn down early, it's imperative that the burn down be as fast as possible to stop these weeds from wicking valuable moisture.

"In that situation, there are some options to go with Gramoxone and something mixed with it, like Valor, Goal or metribuzin or even Harmony GT.

"Where using Gramoxone, water volume and coverage are the keys to control. Do not use flood tips. Or, if you do, make sure the droplet size is adequate for good coverage. If you've made the treatment correctly, you've pretty much got the job done in about 48 hours, and you can come back with a post treatment of Roundup on Roundup Ready beans.

"With a minimal amount of rainfall, a residual material might let you get by with one post treatment instead of two. Last year, we got by with no post treatments on some fields where we had a residual. We found that any rate over 1 oz/acre with Valor gave us some residual control.

"We're also encouraging growers not to overdo it on seeding rates. As seed size changes, recalibrate planters. Trimming 1 seed per row foot on an 1,800-acre soybean crop is about enough to pay for a new planter in one year. If it only takes 6 seed per foot, why plant 8?"