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SoyFax: Midsouth

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Here is this week's *SoyFax*, sponsored by the Midsouth field staff of **Syngenta Crop Protection**.

We welcome your comments and suggestions.

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OVERVIEW

Parts of the upper Midsouth remain critically dry. While some rain developed Tuesday night, showers were mostly scattered and inconsequential compared to the moisture deficit that now exists. Worst-case situations are still in NE Arkansas, SE Missouri and the north Delta of Mississippi.

Thousands of acres of soybeans remain unplanted or have failed to emerge from dry seedbeds. One of our contacts said late Tuesday that he saw a gin lot in Coahoma County being watered with a traveling gun, presumably to keep grass alive.

Areas that depend on surface water for irrigation are in the tightest spot. Rivers and creeks have been

drawn down and backup reservoirs pumped dry in some cases.

One polypipe dealer in north Mississippi said he had "never sold so much polypipe so early." Pipe manufacturers had already said the next round of inventory would cost more, he added. Reasons given, he said, included higher oil prices and worldwide demand for plastic resins.

CROP REPORTS

Carl Hayden, Chicot County Extension Agent, Lake Village, Ark.: "Soybeans are growing good. There are no major pest problems. Weeds are being cleaned up. A few acres were being watered up before it started raining 10 days ago. About 1% of our crop hasn't been planted yet, but it should be dry enough now to finish up. We've got beans blooming and podding and in all stages of growth."

Craig Massey, UAP-Midsouth, Somerville, Tenn.: "Soybeans are growing off quickly. We've made the first shot of Roundup on a lot of fields, and plants are covering the middles.

Except for isolated spots that we've had to spray for flea beetles, we're not finding any pest issues."

John Raymond Bassie, Ind. Consultant, Bassie's Agri Service, Cleveland, Miss.: "A lot of soybeans planted on March 4 need water badly. They're 12-14 inches tall, and some started podding 2 weeks ago this past Friday. We've got fields planted 2 weeks after those that are 20 inches tall now and blooming. Roundup is going out on beans, but that's about it in terms of treatments. A lot of polypipe is being rolled out."

Gus Lorenz, Arkansas Extension IPM Specialist: "Growers keep asking about treating thrips on soybeans. This is a field-by-field call and it has to be based more on common sense than anything else. Research hasn't shown an advantage to treating thrips on soybeans because in normal conditions the plants quickly grow past the point that thrips have an effect. We've been

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There are a lot of confusing recommendations on how to control soybean rust, but effectively managing rust requires 2 modes of action, both a triazole and a strobilurin.

Quadris® + Tilt® delivers this two-way control to cure early stages of rust infestation that may be present in your field, plus prevent rust from further infecting your crop.

For more information about how to protect your fields from the threat of soybean rust, visit:

www.soybeanrust.com



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putting out tests over the last couple of weeks to look at that again, and in 3 studies we saw initial reductions in numbers. But 14 days later we couldn't see any difference between treated and untreated plots.

"But you also have to take into account whether thrips are causing significant seedling death. There are cases like that where spraying will be justified. What we should avoid is simply spraying because of symptoms. With enough rain, plants quickly outgrow symptoms."

Angus Catchot, Mississippi Extension Entomologist: "In the last 3-5 days we've started picking up more three-cornered alfalfa hoppers and beanleaf beetles. This seems to be the case more in the hills, but we're also finding increases in parts of the Delta. At the North Farm (Mississippi State campus) the numbers have really increased since 5 days ago. Until these numbers starting jumping, the three-cornered alfalfa populations were about as low as I've ever seen them."

Gerald Daniel, Ind. Consultant, Clinton, Miss.: "The rains since Memorial Day have brought up a lot of beans that were lying in dry soil. If it hadn't rained I'm not sure what we would have done."

Steve Schutz, Ind. Consultant, Coushatta, La.: "We've had spider mites on some of our soybeans in Arkansas, and they've hurt us in places. Plants were at second trifoliolate and drought stressed. There was no way to irrigate, and we couldn't justify doing anything. We're hoping the humidity this week will help some. Thrips have been rough on some of our soybeans, as well. We came close to spraying, but we kept

hoping for a rain, knowing that would take care of the problem. Once it did rain and plants started growing, everything was okay.

Alan Blaine, Mississippi Extension Soybean Specialist: "We still have areas in north Mississippi that are in dire need of rain. The other thing we've been dealing with has been stand thinning, mainly due to environmental stress and related disease problems. This has occurred from Memphis to the south Delta, and a few fields have been replanted. I think we've about seen the last of it now. Plants reached the point of no return, aborted root systems, went into severe wilt and died.

"In our verification program we urged many of our growers to water in mid May, something we rarely have to do. People were resistant and said plants were too small to water. But where growers put on water, based on what was needed in the soil profile, there was none of this pronounced plant loss. Plants didn't slip into environmental stress and were viable when it did start raining. In most cases neighboring plants will help fill in gaps and offset at least part of the lost potential.

"Still no rust. Our recommendation continues to be to hold off and try to get by with one fungicide treatment. We're hoping to get as much growth on the plant as possible before spraying. Because we're working with small plants this year due to stressful early conditions, we're also now looking at holding off the treatment until R4 instead of our typical fungicide timing at R3.

"This is a 2005 deal only, not something we would likely recommend next year. It's been dry, which is not conducive to rust development, plus we have had no confirmed rust

yet in the Midsouth this year, so I'm comfortable with the approach. Plants will be far enough along that we should be able to protect virtually all the leaf area and reduce the chance of needing 2 applications. If this idea makes a grower uneasy then, by all means, he should go ahead and spray at R3."

David Lanclos, Louisiana Extension Soybean Specialist: "Sporadic planting is still underway, but hit or miss thunderstorms are developing in enough areas to keep people from finishing. In some spots, we actually need things to dry up a little. Plants are showing early symptoms of waterlogging. A couple of days of sunshine would cure that.

"No rust. Stinkbugs are showing up at threshold in some areas. Populations include green, brown and red shouldered. The red shouldered is still limited to the southern part of the state. We're getting to R3 on our oldest beans and can't afford to let stinkbugs stay out there."

Chris Tingle, Arkansas Extension Soybean Specialist: "Soybeans look nice south of the Arkansas River. Repeated rains have really helped.

"But it's a different story above the river. The farther north you go, the more depressing it becomes. People are using the term 'economic disaster' to describe what they're facing if it doesn't rain soon. Some people are flushing to bring up beans or watering ahead of planting to put moisture in the soil. A lot of surface water has been depleted on rice and soybeans. Some of our biggest production counties are right in the middle of this drought. About 40% of our crop looks great, but the other 60% is in a critical period."