



THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
Colleges of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences & Family and Consumer Sciences

AG BRIEFS

Monthly Newsletter from the Pierce County Extension Office

August, 2008

The 31 days in August is a critical time for us on all crops from a disease and insect perspective. Rainfall or irrigation becomes crucial for cotton, peanuts and soybeans as pods and bolls begin to advance towards maturity. Our corn crop is drying down and we should be in the middle of harvest in a couple of weeks. I have been commenting on stink bugs and their potential threat to our crops over the last few months. If you will walk 5-10 feet into most any corn field, you will notice deformed and stunted ears from early stink bug damage. If you go another 35 to 40 feet in the field, this damage typically decreases. With this being said, cotton and soybeans, in close proximity to corn fields, should be monitored closely for stink bugs and worms (more comments later). Entire fields rather than borders can be impacted. As I travel throughout the county and through other parts of the state, I realize how fortunate we have been when it comes to moisture. Our crops as a whole are clean and look good. This says a lot for our agriculture community and for the jobs each of you are doing, especially considering the economic challenges of today and next year. As always, I appreciate what each of you do and look forward to working with you.

Regards,

James L. Jacobs



Cotton

Our cotton crop is in overall good shape with the exception of sporadic infestations of stink bugs (brown & green), fall armyworms and corn earworms earlier on. Fields should be monitored closely and treated as warranted. In fields where both stink bugs and corn earworms are at threshold levels, a tank-mix of a pyrethroid and a low rate of an OP (Bidrin 4 oz) is a good option when brown stink bugs are observed. Pyrethroids alone will provide good control of green stink bugs but are only fair on brown stink bugs. Fall armyworm populations are sporadic in cotton right now and are difficult to control. Diamond at 9 oz/acre works well on fall armyworms. IF fall armyworms and corn earworms are present a pyrethroid will be needed. Pyrethroids are only good on very small fall armyworms (<1/8 inch in length). Take home point - know what insects are or are not in the field before you spray. It can save you money and make you money in the end.

Peanuts



In 90% of the fields I have walked, pre-emergence herbicides are doing their job. “Coffee weeds” and Texas panicum are going to come in most cases. Don’t be fooled by the yellowing of tropical spiderwort (becoming more widespread) and bristly starbur from previous herbicide treatments.

They will bounce back. Besides pigweeds, these are the ones to watch and plan for next season. We do have some pre-plant or early post-plant materials that will help in their control. Cadre or the alike should hold things from this point with the exception of some 2,4-DB and grass herbicide needed later. We should be focusing more now on timely and effective fungicide programs. You all have seen the list and the numerous products. They all will work and in my opinion it’s not so much what you apply but when and how. With current conditions, it will be hard to stretch programs to 17-21 days unless the fields are carefully scouted. **Conditions are favorable for white mold.** Our best looking fields can be the ones that get hit the hardest. Night time or early morning soil-borne fungicide programs have received a lot of attention recently. In trials last year, these sprays looked really good for white mold suppression. If substantial white mold pressure is present in a field, you may want to look at this. If this is not an option, then be sure to get the material to the soil by using 18+ gallons of water. Systemic leaf spot materials may be needed in order to maintain good leaf spot control. Loopers can be expected in a couple of weeks. Observe numbers, size and amount of vine growth to determine if sprays are needed. A total of ½ lb. Boron is needed when plants hit the bloom stage. There are lots of products that can be used to supply Boron needs and some that offer manganese. Calcium is important for pod fill and development on all varieties but is particularly important for large-seeded varieties -C99R and 02C. If Ca levels are in question, pull a 3 inch pegging zone sample to check.



Soybeans

Asian Rust is in Georgia but its not spreading fast or close to us at this point. It is in a number of counties in Florida in kudzu and in soybean sentinel plot in Jefferson and Gadsden Counties. It is likely it will move closer any day now. Hopefully, we can make it to the R2 or R3 stage before a fungicide is needed or we may end up spraying this crop a couple of times with a fungicide. Strobilurin fungicides (Headline & Quadris) have a protective window of at least 3 weeks. Triazoles (Folicur, Orius, etc.) have a protective window of 2 weeks. The section 18 for the use of Folicur or generic tebuconazoles **has** been granted to the Bayer Company and should receive a Georgia label soon. Call me for more information on this Asian Rust issue. Dimilin and Boron applications are common also at the R2 and R3 stages of production. I found very small loopers and a few small Green Cloverworms last week in some fields while looking at some foliage that had been fed on. Grasshoppers were the main culprit and I found the worms with the shake cloth. Other worms to look out for are Corn Earworm and Velvetbean Caterpillar. Unless things change, stinkbugs will be a problem through pod fill. It doesn’t take many to trigger a spray, see below. Oh, the small yellow spots on the leaves that you may have noticed are downy mildew. Research shows that downy mildew is not a major yield threat for soybeans.

Threshold Using Shake Cloth

CEW	2 (Avg # per 1 ft of row)
Green Clover worm	10 (Avg # per 1 ft of row)
Soybean Loopers	8 sm, 6 lg (Avg # per 1 ft of row)
Stink Bugs	1 (Avg # per 3 ft of row thru pod fill)
Velvetbean Caterpillar	8 (Avg # per 1 ft of row)



Tobacco

Good crop but a tough year thus far. Blue mold stayed around a little longer than expected and ran better than 1/2 of the stalk at some sites. With the increase in air flow following the first picking, it seems to have slowed down. Sucker control has been a major issue with afternoon showers cutting into dry-time and this could be a problem down the road. On a positive note, county-wide losses from Tomato Spotted Wilt Virus were minimal with the exception of a couple of places. This makes two years in row that we have stayed out of the 45-50% loss column from spotted wilt. Overall, the crop appears to be holding well in the field at this point. The impact of adequate rainfall in combination with lowered inputs on certain types of soils has created a need for additional foliar fertilizer in a couple of places. This may not be necessary for all fields and again rainfall, amount of N&K applied, soil type and condition of the crop are factors to consider when deciding if something else is needed.

Pecans

Looks like we will have a decent crop again this year as growing conditions have been favorable. Scab levels are up and down depending on what variety and where you are located. With the showers and the heat, be observant of nuts and leaves to head off a late season scab run. Scorch mites have been observed in some orchards but at low levels and should be monitored closely. Beneficial insects help to keep mites in check. In orchards where chlorpyrifos materials are routinely sprayed, beneficial insect numbers are typically low and therefore should be monitored more closely for insects. Spittlebugs reappeared last week in some orchards but should not be a problem.



Blueberries

Weeds, insects and disease (virus?) could be a concern in many fields at this time. Once one gets behind on a weed control program in blueberries, it is hard and expensive to catch up. With the Chateau (use as a partner with other pre-emerge materials) now available for use in blueberries, broadleaf control can be improved. Grasses and sedges are still a major challenge though, and timing of grass herbicides is critical with both the initial application and the follow-up. Poast with crop oil is effective on Bermuda, Texas Panicum, crabgrass and sandbur but weak on sedges. Select and Fusilade are also labeled but for use on **non-bearing plantings**. Hopefully, we will have a material labeled this winter to work on the sedges. Flea beetles or metallic beetles are really bad in some new plantings.

Grasshoppers are also contributing to the damage but leaf feeding beetles are the major concern. A post-harvest application of Imidiazinon, Diazinon, or Malathion should knock them back. Septoria leaf spot is in many fields and can be controlled by a number of materials. The degree of septoria infection and the presence of other pathogens should narrow the field of fungicide selection. There are some weird things going on with the foliage in both old and new plantings (isolated places). By weird, I mean not leaf spot, not insect and not herbicide but something that has not been very common in the past or noted. With increased acreage, this is expected to happen as more things tend to get noticed and basically we have more acres for something to jump on and spread. What has popped up this week and last week is powdery mildew. Early signs are moderate leaf curl with a white film on the under side of the leaf. Late signs are yellowing, curling, and leaf drop. DMI (Orbit & others) fungicides are less expensive and will control powdery mildew and leaf spot. As a final note here I will reiterate a comment from Dr. Brannen in regard to diseases and propagation. Consider using fewer bushes for cuttings, while taking more cuttings from each bush. This will require that the bushes be dedicated for cuttings with yield loss to be expected **but it's easier to inspect a couple of hundred bushes versus several thousand if a problem arises.**

Cattle/Forages

Cattle prices have dropped off and the cost of feeding them continues to rise, nothing new. I don't know how much winter grazing will be planted this fall with increased input cost but I would highly encourage soil sampling and the following recommendations as closely as possible or as much as the billfold will allow. Hay supplies should be adequate but are expected to cost more this winter. If hay is going to be the primary feed for this winter, I would recommend taking a few hay samples to see where things stand and supplementing where needed. For the next several months, a cattle producer must use a sharp pencil and examine cost in an effort possibly to stay at the break-even point or be just above. We have always seen the cattle market move up and down over the years but with much lower and consistent production costs. There is no clear answer here. Some will reduce herd size in an effort to reduce the amount of winter grazing, hay, etc. Others may maintain current cattle numbers and try to get by with less winter grazing and depend more on hay. In the cattle business, everyone's situation is different, it changes, and it's year round. Really, when it comes to cattle production or forage production in Pierce County right now, I look forward to having someone ask me if and what they should spray for armyworms in a pasture or hayfield. I can answer these. Finally, I would make the assumption that cattle producers probably want see the amount of peanut hay rolled this year as in years past. Like everything else, its value to next years row crop has greatly increased.



****The mention of trade names throughout this newsletter is not an endorsement for one product over another.****



We now have a website for Pierce County Extension. Our website address is:

<http://www.caes.uga.edu/extension/pierce/>

The website provides information on Agriculture, 4-H, and Family and Consumer Sciences