



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

June, 2008

A lot has been going on this spring and it has been hard for me to find time to sit down and type up a newsletter. Some of the information may be after the fact but the rest should be current. Overall, I think the crops are off to a really good start if we can keep getting some showers along and along. From what I have seen early on across all crops, I do expect weed and insect issues to be prevalent this year. Scout fields closely this year and be timely with control measures if needed. As always, I appreciate what each of you are doing and hope that you will have a successful growing season.

James L. Jacobs



Peanuts

Seeding rate should be 6 seed/ft for single row and 3 seed/ft for (each) twin row. With the increase in the price of seed, going much over this can get costly. Valor is an excellent herbicide but has a few precautions. The main two are to be sure that the tank is clean if you are using the tank for other crops and secondly apply immediately after planting but no later than 2 days after planting. A week or so after the crop has fully emerged; it's not unexpected to see some flecking on the leaves where Valor treated soil has been splashed on the leaves. It will grow out of it. The second thing you may see is some Thimet or Phorate burn if you have used it. You won't see this with Temik and again it will not hurt a thing. Headline has been the most effective fungicide labeled on peanuts for the management of leaf spot. A 9 fl/oz rate, 38-40 days after planting has worked well over the years. I will have something put together shortly for management beyond this point. We are going to have to plan and carry through with programs that target preventing disease problems to avoid added production costs and yield losses-more later. In a few peanut trials this year, I am looking at fertility, early-morning soil-borne applications, and prescription fungicide programs that will hopefully help us the following year.

Tobacco

At week six, the crop is fairing pretty well. Spotted wilt numbers have increased at some locations but overall the disease looks manageable right now. Hornworms were unseasonably early this year but seem to be taken care of. Split worms have also shown up in several fields. One generation has cycled out but according to my traps, moth flights are increasing and I would expect them to be back in a couple of weeks. I have a trial set up and hopefully can get some control information this year. I won't say we necessarily cut back on fertility inputs this year but rather dropped off the extra. Beyond observations for disease and insects, keep an eye on the overall appearance of the plant for any nutritional problems. From the soil samples and fertilizer programs, I wouldn't expect any problems but since things were done a little different, we need to make sure it works. Tissue sampling is available if there are questions. Blue Mold has shown up in a couple of fields this year. Our cooler temperatures have prompted this and the upcoming warmer temperatures should handle the problem.



Soybeans

Last year, our soybean crop got hammered by lesser corn stalk borers shortly after emergence. Lorsban granular is the only product that will help with this situation. It wouldn't surprise me to see some damage this year but hopefully not to the extent of last year. Asian rust was all around us last year and we probably actually had some that was not detected. I think we were proactive in spraying our fungicides and this really helped the crop. The one thing that I learned last year was not to give up on the crop. Remember-they bloomed hard and then all of a sudden the plants kicked the blooms and we thought it was over. In the end, they came out and made a fair crop. Our optimum planting period for soybeans is from May 10 to June 10. Final stands should be somewhere between 85,000 and 100,000 plants per acre. After the 10th of June, plants have reduced growth, branching, and nodulation. This will be the first year I have had the opportunity to look at a test plot with Group 4 soybeans. The two major concerns with this group of beans are nematodes and harvest. Since they are planted early, heavy nematode pressure can stunt growth and impact stand. The harvest concerns come in because you have to pay close attention to the maturity of the pods with less emphasis on the condition of the plant. Group 4 beans won't wait on you.

Corn

Corn earworm damage or "budworm" damage is low but evident in several fields across the county. Control measures should be considered when 30% of the plants in a field are infested. I haven't seen anywhere close to the 30% yet. Earlier plantings typically have fewer problems with fall armyworms and corn earworms versus later plantings.



Aflatoxins are probably the most important mycotoxins found in corn from Georgia. Drought and temperature stress, nitrogen deficiency, insect damage to ear, physical damage during harvest, inadequate drying before storage, holding wet corn on trailers without ventilation and insect damage during storage favor the production of mycotoxins. As the growing season progresses, take note of insects, fertility, and moisture. Watch the ears on some of these varieties for adequate husk cover. Hopefully, we won't have any problems with aflatoxin this year but these observations will help to figure it out if we do.



Cattle & Forage

Seeded bermudagrass varieties generally have low yields and low forage quality when compared to improved hybrids. However, sprigging an improved hybrid bermudagrass is expensive and risky, especially where small acreages drive up the cost per acre. Producers often find that planting seed is the most feasible establishment option.

Three potential seeded bermudagrass varieties are *Cheyenne*, CD90160, and KF-194. *Cheyenne*, a seeded bermudagrass cultivar, has exceptionally good persistence, is winter-hardy in Georgia, and consistently performed well in yield trials throughout the state. The forage quality (protein, fiber, and digestibility) of *Cheyenne* is quite similar to Coastal, but it is slightly lower than CD90160 and KF-194. *Cheyenne* has not been a prolific seed producer.

CD90160, a seeded bermudagrass cultivar, is most often sold in seed blends such as Vaquero, Gaucho, Sungrazer Plus, and Sungrazer 777. When grown alone, this cultivar matches the yield, winter-hardiness, and persistence of *Cheyenne*. CD90160 has also shown to have higher protein (increased by 20%) and digestible nutrients (increased by 14%) than *Cheyenne*.

KF-194 is often sold in seed blends such as Sungrazer Plus and Sungrazer 777. Like CD90160, this cultivar also matches the yield, winter-hardiness, and persistence of *Cheyenne*. KF-194 shares the high forage quality characteristics of CD90160.

Cotton

Thrips are an early season pest of cotton that initiate feeding on the cotyledons and then in the terminal bud of developing seedlings. In-furrow insecticides or seed treatments are effective suppression materials for thrips. Under dry environmental conditions, the plant up-take of systemic insecticides may be limited allowing for a little more damage than normal. The 1-2 leaf stage is the most critical in terms of affecting yield and as the plant grows (4-5 leaf) it becomes more tolerant. Scout fields carefully after emergence. Spray applications for thrips after the 5th leaf, unless absolutely necessary, may do more harm than good by reducing beneficial and encouraging other pests.



If you look on the map that contains those counties with confirmed glyphosate resistant pigweeds, we are not on there - yet. I do suspect will have some fields with these in them and for those that attended the Cotton Meeting this winter, you know what one resistant female

pigweed plant is capable of producing. Be pro-active and integrate herbicides with different mechanisms of action into the program. In a year or so, DP&L 555 will no longer be an option for us in terms of varieties. This will be the second year I will have a chance to get some data on potential varieties to fill the void.



Pecans

Yellow aphids can appear throughout the crop season. Our beneficial insects normally do a good job of keeping them in check and scouting is important before a spray decision is made. After July 1, treat orchards if numbers exceed 20 per compound leaf. Keep in mind that yellow aphids are going to be there and trees will normally tolerate low levels of yellow aphid pressure. Black aphids are the ones we should pay close attention to. They can exist in low numbers in the orchard throughout the season also but its when nymphs start showing up with adults that one should be getting ready to spray. After July 1, treat when 15% of terminals show these kinds of populations.

Blueberries

Chateau herbicide received a label last month for use on high bush and rabbit-eye blueberries (both bearing and non-bearing). One of the major restrictions for the use of this product is that no more than 12 oz. of Chateau per calendar year and to avoid direct and indirect contact of foliage or green bark. I know that weeds are an issue right now, especially on 1 year or less plantings. Grasses are the most consistent weed from site-to-site and grass herbicides are available for control applied as directed sprays. Applications of Select herbicide has in the past, caused leaf curling in high bush plants. I would prefer to handle broadleaf weeds on a field-by-field basis because of the diversity of species. In the coming months, you will probably read different articles from specialists related to disease problems and fertilization. The short is not to over fertilize or push these plants too hard in the fall of the year. Tissue sampling really needs to accompany a fertigation program to avoid problems.



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.