



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

November, 2009

The end of another production season is just around the corner as peanut, pecan and cotton harvest wind down and soybean harvest gets full swing. It's been a season of challenges but also a year of learning for all. Our wet spring had a greater impact than anticipated on all crops and the pigweed issue is *real* and will continue to present some challenges down the road. However, despite these challenges, we have still made some pretty good crops. Most of what I will be mentioning in this newsletter are issues that I have observed throughout the year. As we start the round of production meetings in January, I will be asking UGA specialists to spend time on these topics with the likelihood of seeing these same issues next year. I appreciate what each of you do and wish you well as we put the 09' season in the books.

Regards,

James

Peanuts



The two big topics here are variety and white mold. I will throw in a third towards the end that we don't know we have until we harvest the crop. We had several new varieties planted this season in the county. Some looked good and others fair to not so good. The only true distinction I can make this year is that the larger seeded GA 06, FL 07, GA 07W need to be planted on irrigated land or blessed with timely showers. They have high yield potential but want achieve this potential without calcium and water. Tiftguard, AT 215, and AP 4 I have mixed opinions on. The only two older varieties- GA Green and GA 02C performed as years past in dryland situations in terms of yield but may have been hit harder by disease. GA Greener looked really good at one dryland location but until we see it across more acreage, I would still be conservative. Hopefully, as all the data is compiled from this years' Official Variety Test trials, we can narrow the field to a couple or three varieties.

White mold cost us some yield this year. I think the thing to remember here is that when conditions become favorable i.e. vine growth, moisture, temperature, humidity, and field history, we have to use the stronger white materials, 20+ gallons of water and be timely to help avoid what we have seen across several fields this season. Nighttime sprays will also help considerably. Lastly, the “burrowing bug” has shown up again this harvest season. They can be observed during the season in a field but a lot of times go unnoticed. Most often their injury is noticed during the grading process which results in the cleaning of a load and if that doesn’t work they fall into the Seg 2 class which costs dearly. The fields that I have observed the damage in have been conservation tillage fields or a lot of chicken litter had been applied. They seem to prefer high residue fields but they have also been known to cause problems in conventional fields too. More later.....

Tobacco

I am hopeful that the marketing/contracting issues will work themselves through in the next few weeks and we can move on with plans for the upcoming tobacco season. I am sure emphasis will remain on quality and grade. MH residues will also be a focal point. With these in mind, be sure soil sampling is done to determine nutrient values and inputs as fertility management can play direct role in the before mentioned. Spotted wilt is just something we have had to learn to contend



with. Predicting infection from one year to the next is nearly impossible but taking the precaution of using the combination of Actigard and Admire is advisable every season for us. Our Tobacco Production meeting is scheduled for January 5th at 12:00.

Pecan

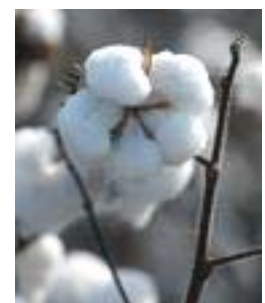


Scab issues and a dry spell through nut fill both took a toll on this season’s “on” year crop. Pecans didn’t seem to size up well probably due to moisture stress and premature defoliation within some varieties. Leaf anthracnose (leaf scorch) appeared in many orchards this year. It is commonly associated with some form of stress on trees and the water logged soils this spring may have resulted in the aggressive development of the disease. We may not see this problem next season

and scab control measures are also effective in reducing the amount of leaf anthracnose. It will be interesting to see how close to the 90 million lbs estimate we get for Georgia.

Cotton

We may not quite reach last years county average of 775 lb/acre but the way things are looking at the tail-end of harvest I believe we will be close. A month or so ago I think we may have been deceived as we looked at fields that were under heavy pressure from stemphylium leaf spot and in the middle of a dry spell. Bottom line is that we may not break any records on the later planted cotton but it will perform better than expected.



With the way the futures on cotton is looking right now(can change though) and depending on what happens to peanut prices a little later, we may see a shift to more cotton acreage next season.

I have already had several discussions on variety selections for next season. Those that took some of the DP&L 555 have that in place. Those that experimented with some new varieties this year have some idea for next season. What I am waiting for is the Official Variety Trials to come out and compliment this with what I have seen/heard this year. I suspect there will only be a couple of varieties that will have 3 years of data. A lot of the new stuff will only have two years. However, we should have enough information to make some good choices.

Soybeans



Across the areas that I travel, I want feel like we have a really good soybean crop to harvest. At least it has looked that way all season. We just need the weather to cooperate to get them out of the field. Asian rust was detected in Pierce and Ware Counties the first week in October. I suspected it in a couple of fields, sampled the fields and then watched them defoliate out in period of several days. Fortunately, our crop had made and we had no impact. As you have noticed or will notice at harvest, fields treated with a fungicide tend hold a green stem & stalk longer which may make it tougher on a combine. This is one of the down sides to this preventative treatment for Asian Rust. On the other hand, this disease can be very destructive if it hits at the right time.

Blueberries

Our blueberry fields went into this fall in pretty good shape overall. There were some leaf spot issues in a few fields and a little rust on certain varieties in a place or two but overall in Pierce and Ware County things are fine. A lot of our plantings will be approaching 3rd leaf and up until this point our disease programs have been justifiably minimal in some cases. However, as our stands progress in production, our disease and insect programs must also to maintain quantity and quality. I would encourage each of you attend upcoming blueberry meetings locally and in Savannah to further your knowledge in these two areas.



I checked out the chill accumulation hours the other day at the Alma weather station to see where we stood. From October 1-November 17 we have accumulated 35 hours for 2009. In 2008 during this same time period we had 84 hours, 2007-80 hours and 2006-61 hours. As you can see, we are behind based on years past. I will revisit this in next months' newsletter.

Cattle/Forage



One good thing for the cattle folks this year in comparison to last is that winter pasture inputs aren't quite as high as they were last year. We need some rain and cold weather at this point to get our winter pastures where they can be grazed in a few weeks. At the cattleman's meeting last week, the speaker did an excellent job of tying in the importance of quality winter grazing pastures and the need for mineral supplementation. Of course, our target nutrient now for winter grazing is magnesium. Cattle should consume 1oz. of magnesium oxide per day to avoid

grass tetany and this is provided in Hi-Mag minerals which contain 13-15% magnesium. Overall, there were lots of discussion on numerous side topics and I would encourage each of you to attend and become involved in the association.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Dairy Meeting	December 8, 2009 at 6:30 p.m.
Dairy Tour	December 9-10, 2009 at 8:30 a.m.
Tobacco Production Meeting	January 5, 2010 at 12:00 p.m.
Cattle Meeting	January 5, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.
Peanut Production Meeting	January 7, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.
Cotton Meeting	March 16, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.
Soybean Meeting	March 23, 2010 at 12:00 p.m.
Cotton/Peanut Disease Meeting	March 23, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.

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



Check out our 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

