



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

September, 2009

We are getting into the short rows for the 2009 cropping season and it's been one unpredictable season. If we can get another 40-45 days of an occasional showers, highs in the 80's and lows in the upper 60's, our cotton and peanut crops will fair pretty well. The soybeans I have walked through and looked at have set a good crop. Our corn crop is sort of a hit or miss on yield depending on the amount of worm damage and how wet your fields were earlier during the growing season. The tobacco crop took the brunt of the damage from excessive rainfall in April and May with about 50% of our crop not making it to harvest. We have had some challenges this season and it will be important to stay on top of this crop until harvest. As always, I appreciate what each of you do and if I can be of assistance please contact me at 449-2034 or 281-4926.

Regards,

James Jacobs



Peanuts

The 2009 peanut crop is progressing well considering the challenges faced early this season. For the most part, white mold and leaf spot pressure are marginal at this time although there were several fields that suffered some big hits earlier in the season. It's critical at this time that we monitor fields closely for disease development. Heat, humidity, moisture and canopy closure provide ideal conditions for white mold. Fungicide programs vary from chemistries used to timing of application (daytime versus nighttime). A water volume of 20+ gallons per acre is also advantageous at this point. Provost and Convoy have worked well in fields with early white mold pressure. The same appears to be true for nighttime applications of generic tebuconazole + chlorothalonil or Provost or Convoy.

I have looked at a number of fields and had several calls on yellow streaks or spots in the field. These situations are sometimes hard to nail down. It could be manganese or it could be low areas which have resulted in poor root growth thus poor nodulation or it could be inoculation or it could be the age of the

crop and nut set. Most of these situations are thought to be addressed through a couple of applications of manganese. Most have learned from experience but I do want to mention it's always a good idea to follow the label on tank-mix partners and use the jar test if unsure. Some things will mix and others will not.

Foliage feeding pressure from fall armyworms, beet armyworms and soybean loopers have varied from field to field and should be addressed likewise. Again, take note of worm numbers, species, amount of foliage present and the amount of foliage fed upon when scouting to determine treatment. With the obstacles we have faced with falls, beets, southern armyworms and corn ear worms in other crops, it's a good idea to check fields weekly.



Corn

I am not sure but I don't think many people have seen the amount of worm pressure in past years that we have experienced this year. Corn earworms and fall armyworms have been present since this crop was knee high and have not let up. Fields that were able to be planted in April have injury but a great deal less than our later planted fields. To say that one variety stood the pressure better than another this season would be difficult. Bt-trait corn fared better under the heavy worm pressure than non-Bt trait corn in later planted situations. We'll see more and hear more on these Bt-trait corn varieties this coming winter. Some non-Bt fields were treated with an insecticide in an attempt to suppress fall armyworms which were going into the side of ears. These treatments should have been effective on reducing numbers outside the ear but impact on yield, I'm just not sure. The true picture will come when the combine hits the field. There will be lots of discussions during the winter meeting months about this crop season that will hopefully aid in the decision process for next season.

Soybeans

As a whole, our soybean crop looks good at this time. Worm pressure is low to moderate depending on location at this time. Also be mindful of stink bugs, worms hit the foliage and stinkbugs hit the pods, normally. Here are the numbers if using a ground cloth: Based on average number per 1 foot of row - Green cloverworms -10, Soybean loopers - 8sm, 6 lg, stink bugs .33 bloom to mid-pod & 1 mid-pod to maturity, velvetbean caterpillar 8.



On September 8th, Asian Soybean Rust was confirmed in soybeans in Jeff Davis County so it is close. R1 through R6 (bloom through pod fill) are critical growth stages when Asian Soybean Rust can impact the crop. The R6 stage is denoted as the following- **Full seed-pod containing a green seed that fills the pod capacity at one of the four uppermost nodes on the main stem.** Some of our fields are nearing this point and others are behind. Fungicide options include the use of Strobilurins(ex. Headline and Quadris, etc.) and Triazoles (ex. Folicur, Orius, Uppercut, etc.). Strobilurins are for use as protectants only and will last for 3 weeks. Triazoles have both protectant and limited curative properties but last for 2 weeks. I just wanted to make you aware of the proximity of this disease and our options.

R6 Stage





Cotton

Again, we can talk about fall, corn earworms and stink bugs. Just like other crops, there may not be treatable numbers in all fields. This is where scouting comes in. We run the risk of stink bug damage potentially every year and can see more fluctuation in worm pressure. We have several treatment options for both so just call. Stemphylium and Cercospora leaf spots are showing up again. Stemphylium was very common last year following a period of hot and dry weather conditions in combination with a heavy fruit set. The lack of potassium uptake during these periods is a key promoter of Stemphylium leaf spot. Headline is labeled for control of foliar diseases and boll rot in cotton. I have a few spots in the county where we have treated with some Headline but have also left some untreated to determine any yield difference. Previous research trials have shown that plants appear healthier and cleaner but there are still some questions on yield responses. From what I have seen thus far, I think the timing of the application may contribute greatly and also wonder on the possibility of foliar K applications in comparison (timing here too). Sandy soils under hot, dry conditions seem to be more prone to Stemphylium leaf spot.

As DP&L 555 exits the market, variety selection will get interesting. I have seen a number of varieties planted this season and have heard the likes and dislikes of most. There are a number of variety tests out there this season at the University level and company level so there should be an abundance of information for the coming season. I know that yield is the bottom line but one's overall management program including variety selection directly impacts yield. By this I mean fertility management, weed management, growth management and insect management. Put some thought into this as we finish out the '09 crop and information becomes available for the 2010 crop.

Pecan

Our pecan crop in Pierce and Ware Counties has a lot of variation. Some orchards have set a good crop, others moderate, and some poor. Scab pressure has been high in some orchards particularly in those with a lot of 'Desirable' trees. I have seen some nut casebearer and shuck worm damage - really not significant. Yellow and black aphids hit early and then have made another run in some orchards and/or specific varieties within an orchard here in the last couple of weeks. Scorch mite pressure was associated with certain varieties within an orchard and treated accordingly.

A sort of confusing factor this season has been the presence of a leaf scorch that has showed up on leaves. It's similar to scorch mite injury and we should have some more information on this through the meeting season. Lastly, we do a pretty good job of monitoring fertility inputs in an orchard through soil sampling. Several of you did pull some tissue samples in August to get an idea of any further crop needs for this season but I would encourage those who might not be seeing the foliage or seeing foliage problems or the crop they think that they should to pull some samples to check on N, P, K and micros.



Pasture and Hay Fields

As with the other crops this season, pastures and hay fields have seen a great deal of pressure from a mixture of fall and southern armyworms. Baythroid, Karate, Lannate, and Mustang Max materials have worked well as a knockdown. Dimilin was also effective this season when applied early.

Besides common Bahia grass, crabgrass and sandbur (aka sandspur) are two weeds that are becoming a nuisance in some of our hay fields. As those who have the problem know, our post emergence options are limited to say the least. However, I am hopeful that we may see some materials labeled this fall to be used as a pre-emergence material to help with these two weeds. I think the weed problem and growth problems in general may be related to two things. The first is the extended drought we had in 2007. Fields declined rapidly and have had to re-establish deep root systems to be competitive with weed species. The second thing may be related to fertility. Bermuda grass likes potassium but K is one of the three major elements that have become pricey. An all nitrogen program without much P & K and micros will grow hay but not at the same rate or volume as a well balanced fertility program. Remember, you're taking nutrients out of the field after each harvest.

Blueberry

From my standpoint, concerns of the '09 production season started in January. Warm temperatures in early-mid winter had several southern highbush fields "waking up" a bit early. This in turn forced us to make a decision on whether to frost protect or not on some cold and periodically windy nights. Even today I still don't know what the right decision was but think that we will wait a little later this year for turning on the overhead. If we see the same warm conditions this winter, we may want to consider running our overhead during the warmest part of the day to promote evaporative cooling across the field. With rabbiteyes, we made a crop for the most part but got caught with some rainy weather that hurt the crop and delayed harvest. Ya'll know the marketing situation better than I do for both crops so I'll leave that alone.



Soil sampling and tissue sampling are really important to maximize yield. We spend most of time worrying about weed issues and may have a tendency to over look fertility because it has become as simple as filling a tank and flipping a switch. Sampling can determine and prevent deficiencies and help prevent over fertilization of N, P, and K.

*****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