

May 24, 2007

COTTON PEST MANAGEMENT NEWSLETTER #1

COTTON SITUATION: The Georgia Weekly Crop Progress and Condition Report for the week ending May 20th listed the crop as 41 percent planted which is significantly below the five year average of 66 percent. The drought is bad, enough said.

INSECT SITUATION: Thrips infestations are moderate to heavy depending on location. Grasshoppers are sporadic and isolated but a concern in some areas. A few reports of false chinch bugs have been received.

Scout Schools: Three cotton scouting schools are scheduled at this time. The dates, location, and contact for each are listed below. The program will start at 9:00 a.m. at each location.

Tifton	(9:00-3:45)	June 4, 2006	Contact Debbie Rutland	(229) 386-3424
Jeff Davis Co.	(9:00-12:00)	June 13, 2006	Contact Tim Varnedore	(912) 375-6648
Midville	(9:00-12:00)	June 14, 2006	Contact Will Duffie	(706) 554-2119

Thrips: Thrips populations have been moderate to high on cotton planted prior to mid-May. We would expect thrips populations to be lower on late May and June planted cotton. Seedlings are susceptible to thrips feeding up to the five leaf stage. Seedlings are most susceptible to thrips in terms of yield loss during early stages of development (cotyledon-2 leaf). Once seedlings reach the five leaf stage and are growing vigorously, treatment is rarely justified. Automatic application of insecticides with glyphosate should be avoided. In many instances, insecticides applied at the 5-leaf stage have little impact on yield and potentially may flare other pests such as aphids and/or spider mites. Fields should be monitored for the presence of damage and active thrips populations. The presence of immature (wingless) thrips suggests the preventive insecticide (if used at planting) is failing.

Grasshoppers: Grasshoppers are a troublesome pest and are typically associated with a dry winter and spring. Economic infestations are almost always observed in reduced tillage fields. Grasshoppers survive the winter as eggs deposited in the soil. The lack of soil disturbance in reduced tillage fields favors survival and emergence of nymphs. Grasshoppers may feed on foliage but a more serious concern is when grasshoppers feed on the main stem of cotton seedlings. Grasshopper feeding on the main stem resembles cutworm damage (be sure to look for cutworms under residue and in the soil near damaged plants); however grasshoppers often will only chew partially through the main stem. Stem feeding may kill young seedlings or weaken plant stems so that plants tip over and are not productive. In fields infested with grasshoppers emerging cotton should be monitored closely. Due to the droughty

conditions grasshoppers are in search of anything green. Control of grasshoppers is recommended when plant damage is occurring, grasshoppers are present, and plant stands are threatened. Nymph (wingless) grasshoppers are relatively easy to control with insecticides. However control of adult (winged) grasshoppers is more difficult. The highest labeled rates of pyrethroids should be used for control of adults. Dimilin, which is an insect growth regulator, provides good control of nymphal grasshoppers and has provided good residual activity in field demos. Dimilin will not control adult grasshoppers.



Grasshopper damage to seedling cotton stems. Grasshoppers often do not completely chew through the stem.

INSECT UPDATES: Check the **Cotton Insect Hotline (1-800-851-2847)** for updates on current insect conditions. The Cotton Pest Management Newsletter and additional cotton production information is also posted on the UGA Cotton Homepage at: <http://www.ugacotton.com>

Sincerely,

Phillip Roberts
Extension Entomologist