

July 28, 2005

**COTTON PEST MANAGEMENT NEWSLETTER #9**

**COTTON SITUATION:** The Georgia Weekly Weather and Crops Report for the week ending July 24<sup>th</sup> listed the crop as 61 percent setting bolls. Cotton is developing at a rapid pace. Many areas could use a rain.

**INSECT SITUATION:** Not much change in the insect situation since last week. Caterpillar pests, including tobacco budworm, corn earworm, and armyworms are spotty and sporadic. Boll feeding bugs are being treated on cotton that is blooming in many areas.

**Tarnished Plant Bug / Clouded Plant Bugs:** Adult and immature tarnished plant bug (TPB) and clouded plant bugs (CPB) have been observed during the past week. We have also observed some “dirty” blooms in a few areas. “Dirty” blooms are the result of plant bugs damaging a large square. When small squares are damaged by plant bugs they are often shed. However, when larger squares (greater than 10 days of age) are fed upon by plant bugs, they may not be aborted. These damaged squares ultimately appear as “dirty” blooms. In fields where we have observed “dirty” blooms, either immature TPB, CPB, or both have been present. Although we do not have a published “dirty” bloom threshold, treatment should be considered if 10-15 percent “dirty” blooms are observed.

Tarnished plant bug nymph



Clouded plant bug nymph



Large square damaged by clouded plant bug (will be a “dirty” bloom).



“Dirty” bloom.



Photos by Ron Smith, [www.ipmimages.org](http://www.ipmimages.org)

**Sample Quarter-Sized Bolls (Stink Bugs):** Bolls approximately the diameter of a quarter should be evaluated for callous growths or warts on the inner surface of the boll wall and/or stained lint. If bolls the diameter of a quarter are not present (i.e. early bloom), sample the largest bolls available. It is important that bolls of the correct size are scouted each week. Our experiences have indicated that a decrease in damaged boll counts will be observed seven days after bugs are controlled when the appropriate size boll is sampled. If scouts are sampling bolls that are too large, it is likely that old damage will be observed (damaged boll counts will not be significantly reduced). Scouts should also be observant for bugs when walking fields and doing other routine scouting procedures. Additionally, consider shaking plants in several areas of the field to aid in determining which boll feeding bugs are present.

**Corn Earworm and Tobacco Budworm:** Mixed populations of tobacco budworm and corn earworm have been reported from many areas. Populations have been light to moderate and sporadic. Individual fields or farms may require treatment whereas neighboring fields or farms have very low populations. This is why we scout all fields.

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

Sincerely,

Phillip Roberts  
Extension Entomologist