

August 4, 2005

COTTON PEST MANAGEMENT NEWSLETTER #10

COTTON SITUATION: The Georgia Weekly Weather and Crops Report for the week ending July 31st listed the crop as 75 percent setting bolls. Cotton continues to develop at a rapid pace and blooms are near the tops in some early-planted fields.

INSECT SITUATION: Boll feeding bugs such as stink bugs continue to be the predominant pests in most areas. Populations of boll feeding bugs are moderate to high in many areas. Remain vigilant with bug scouting and treat when needed. Tobacco budworm and corn earworm are sporadic with infestations ranging from low to moderate. Fall armyworm, beet armyworm, southern armyworm, and soybean loopers have been reported in low populations.

Boll Feeding Bugs: Stink bugs and plant bug species (tarnished and clouded) continue to be observed infesting cotton in many areas. Both southern green and brown stink bugs have been reported. Stink bug species makeup varies from area to area. Be sure scouts are observant for stink bugs and other boll feeding bugs. This will aid in insecticide selection if treatment is needed.



Note the discolored or “dying” bracts on bolls (left) that have been severely damaged by stink bugs. The image on the right is the same bolls that have been opened. When severe internal rot occurs we sometimes observe these “dead” or “dying” bracts.

Tobacco Budworm and Corn Earworm: Populations remain sporadic for both TBW and CEW. However, egg and worm counts have picked up during the past week in several areas. On non-Bt cotton, we have had reports of poor control of TBW with pyrethroids. If TBW is present at treatable levels, a non-pyrethroid insecticide should be used due to the threat of pyrethroid resistant TBW. Supplemental pyrethroids have been needed for control of CEW in Bt cotton in some areas.

Fall Armyworm: Fall armyworms (FAW) have been reported at low levels in some areas. The key to successful control of FAW is early detection. Pyrethroids at high rates provide good control when larvae are small (less than $\frac{1}{8}$ inch in length). Typically these small FAW are found feeding in blooms or on the inner surface of boll bracts low in the plant canopy. Unfortunately, FAW are often not detected until they are much larger. Control of larvae $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in length or greater is difficult. The threshold for FAW is about 2X that of CEW and TBW. Treatment is suggested when 10-20 FAW are found per 100 plants. A high rate of a pyrethroid is a good option when FAW infestations are detected early. However, if larvae are large a pyrethroid tank-mixed with another FAW insecticide should be considered when populations are high. It is unlikely we can eliminate FAW from fields that they infest. Good coverage is critical for acceptable control since FAW often infest bolls in the mid to lower canopy.



Fall armyworm adult (top left) and large FAW larvae feeding in the base of a boll (top right). Small FAW larvae often etch the inner surface of boll bracts (bottom).

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,

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