



The University of Georgia  
**Cooperative Extension**  
 College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

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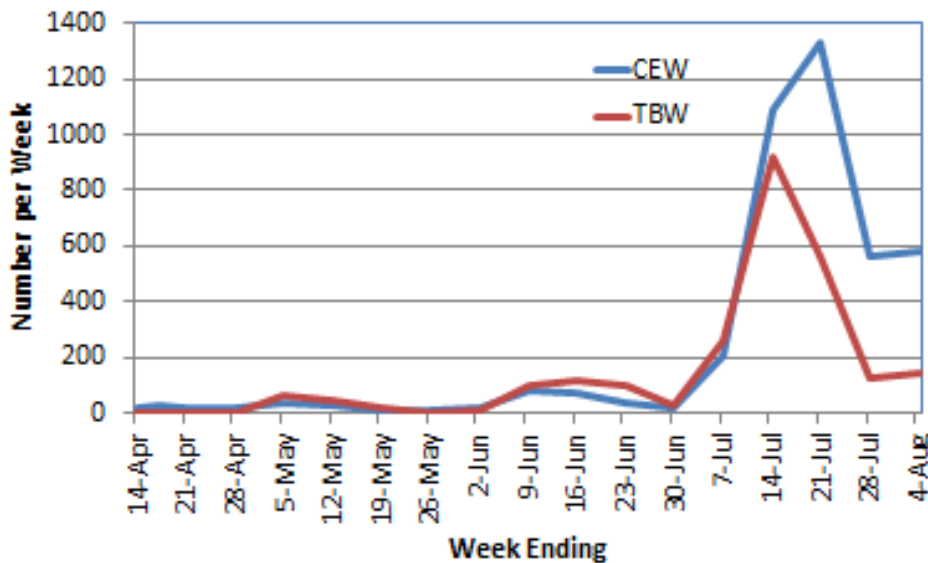
**COTTON PEST MANAGEMENT NEWSLETTER #6**

**COTTON SITUATION:** The Georgia Weekly Crop Progress and Condition Report for the week ending August 1<sup>st</sup> listed the crop as 85 percent setting bolls which is ahead of the 5-year average of 74 percent. Crop conditions have declined recently and the crop is now rated 33% fair, 36% good, and 8% excellent. Extended hot temperatures and dry weather in some areas have accelerated this crop towards cutout.

**INSECT SITUATION:** We have received reports of several insect pests infesting cotton (corn earworm, tobacco budworm, stink bugs, fall and beet armyworms, soybean loopers, spider mites, and whiteflies). With pest such as spider mites and whiteflies it is important that growers are aware of their presence even if below threshold levels.

**Corn Earworm:** Pheromone trap captures were lower during the last week for both corn earworm and tobacco budworm. Both CEW and TBW complete a generation in about 4 weeks, thus we would anticipate trap captures in Tifton to increase next week. We have also heard reports of increased moth activity in more southern counties which would also suggest trap captures may increase in Tifton next week. We typically observe caterpillar infestations

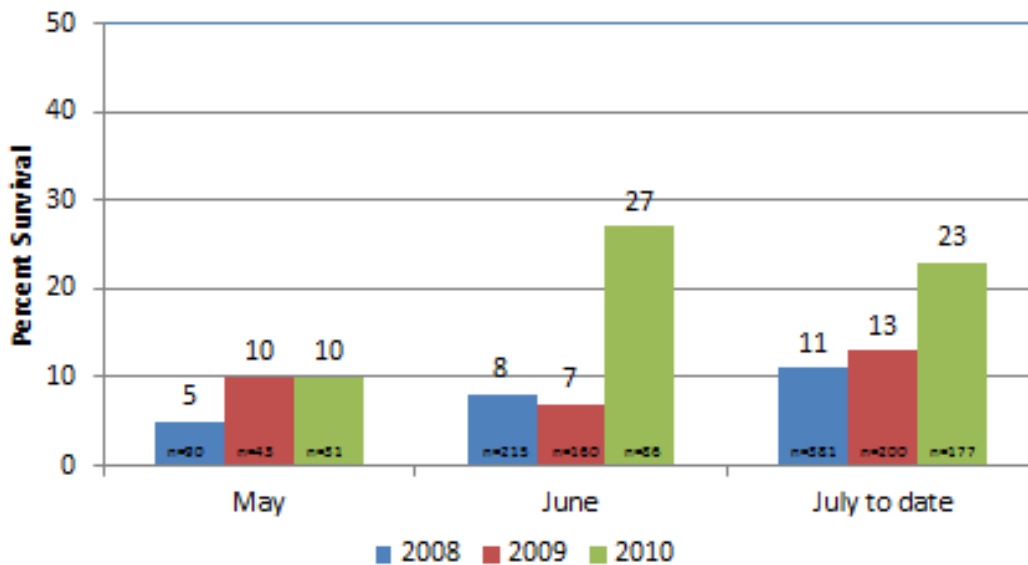
**2010 CEW and TBW Pheromone Trap Captures  
 RDC Pivot (Tift Co. GA)**



in more southern counties before counties to their north. With that said, these are just 2 traps on the Tifton Campus and do not represent the CEW and TBW situation for the state of Georgia. The only way you can really know the situation on your farm is to scout. Be sure scouts are monitoring all Bt cottons for CEW. Bollgard II and WideStrike are not immune to CEW damage. When CEW larvae greater than ¼ inch in length are found in Bt cotton, they are often associated with blooms and dried bloom tags. Treatments should be promptly initiated if 8 CEW larvae ¼ inch in length or greater are found per 100 plants.

Below see a chart illustrating results of our CEW susceptibility monitoring program using the Adult Vial Test in Tift County GA for 2008-2010. Note that survival in pyrethroid (cypermethrin) treated vials is somewhat elevated compared with the previous two years which suggest reduced susceptibility. Pyrethroids continue to be a good option for CEW control and we have not heard of field control problems in Georgia this season. However, this is not the time to cut rates of pyrethroids, use the higher end of labeled rates. In addition to elevated survival in AVTs, high temperatures we are experiencing make controlling insects more difficult in general.

**CEW Adult Vial Test 5 µg cypermethrin  
Tift County GA 2008-2010**



**Stink Bugs:** Stink bugs have been the most common insect pests requiring treatment to date. We are observing more of a mixed population of southern green and brown stink bugs. Infestation levels are varied by location; don't assume all fields need to be treated. Scout and treat fields which exceed the boll injury threshold.

**Soybean Loopers:** We have received a few reports of soybean loopers infesting cotton. We would expect Bollgard II and WideStrike to provide good control of loopers; however Bollgard will not provide acceptable control. Treatment for soybean loopers should be based on defoliation and maturity of the crop. If larvae number 8 per row foot, treatment is often needed.

**Fall Armyworm:** We have received scattered reports of FAW from several areas of the state. Populations are lower when compared with 2009 however some fields have required treatment. The threshold for FAW is about 2X that used for CEW. Fall armyworm is a difficult pest to scout for, infestations are often found in the lower to mid canopy. This behavior also makes FAW a difficult pest to control with insecticide. Coverage and penetration down in the canopy is extremely important when targeting FAW with insecticide sprays. Small FAW larvae appear very similar to small CEW larvae and cannot readily be distinguished in the field. However, small FAW larvae often etch or feed on the inner surface of boll bracts and the presence of this type of feeding suggests you have some level of FAW in the field.



Figure 1. Etching on boll bracts by small FAW larvae.



Figure 2. Large FAW larvae typically chew into the basal areas of bolls.

**Spider Mites and Whiteflies:** Although relatively few spider mites have required treatment, they are still present in several areas and must be managed. Low populations of silverleaf whiteflies have also been observed in some isolated fields. Be especially observant for SLWFs in hairy leaf cottons. The presence of spider mites or SLWFs in a field should influence decisions you make for other pests. Only apply insecticides based on thorough scouting and appropriate thresholds. Also avoid treatments likely to flare these pests.

**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

Putting knowledge to work

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES, COLLEGE OF FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES, WARNELL SCHOOL OF FOREST RESOURCES, COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SCIENCES

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