



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

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COTTON PEST MANAGEMENT NEWSLETTER #9

COTTON SITUATION: The Georgia Weekly Crop Progress and Condition Report for the week ending July 31st listed the crop as 88 percent squaring and 61 percent setting bolls. Crop conditions have improved during the past couple of weeks but continue to vary significantly across the state depending on the frequency and amount of rainfall events and/or irrigations.

INSECT SITUATION: Stink bug and corn earworm numbers have increased in some areas but in general populations are still below normal. We received reports of fields being treated for both stink bugs and corn earworm; so we need to be scouting closely. Spider mites linger at low levels and silverleaf whiteflies are present in some localized areas.

Corn Earworm: Corn earworm infestations are light to moderate depending on location. We have received a few reports of larvae “sizing up” on Bt cottons. If CEW larvae reach ¼ inch in length, it is likely they will continue to develop and damage multiple fruiting sites. Scouts should pay close attention to blooms, bloom tagged bolls, and small bolls near the uppermost white bloom. When escapes occur in Bt cottons this is the area of the plant we typically observe them. Treatment is recommended when 8 larvae (¼ inch in length or greater) are found per 100 plants; we are aware of a few fields which have required treatment.



Small CEW larva (left), 3-4 day old CEW larva (center), and large corn earworm larva (right) in white bloom. Once corn earworm reach ¼ inch in length (3-4 days of age) on Bt cottons, they will likely survive.

Stink Bugs: Reports of economic levels of stink bug damage have increased during the past week. Damaged boll percentages are still relatively low but are triggering insecticide applications during the 3rd, 4th, or 5th week of bloom based on the “Dynamic Threshold”. Weeks 3, 4, and 5 of bloom are a critical time in terms of stink bug management. Scout and treat accordingly.



Populations of southern green stink bugs (above) have been low to date. However, the situation could change, especially on this late crop. Most stink bugs observed to date have been brown.

Silverleaf Whitefly and Spider Mites: Silverleaf whiteflies (SLWF) and/or spider mites can be found in some fields. Although neither of these pests is common, both can be troublesome and expensive to control. They both require management with the objective of avoiding and not aggravating the problem. The presence of SLWF or spider mites in a field should influence decisions made for other pests. Only treat other insect pests when necessary and avoid insecticides prone to encourage SLWF or spider mite buildup.



Silverleaf whitefly adults.



Spider mite infested plant.

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

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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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