



Cotton Insect Newsletter

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Edisto Research & Education Center in Blackville, SC

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Status of Cotton Crop

The rain over the 4th of July weekend was very much welcomed, and, by now, most are left wanting more. If we can get into a pattern of regular rainfall, things could turn around in a big way. As of 6 July 2008, the USDA NASS South Carolina Statistical Office had our progress at 40% squaring, behind the 5-yr average of 56%. Only 1% of the state's cotton crop was reported to be in excellent condition. The remainder was reported as 22% good, 47% fair, 20% poor, and 10% very poor. About 4% of the crop is setting bolls, behind the 5-yr average of 6%. These are observed/perceived state-wide averages.

Status of Soybean Crop

The USDA NASS South Carolina Statistical Office had our conditions for soybeans at 20% very poor, 30% poor, 36% fair, 13% good, and 1% excellent.

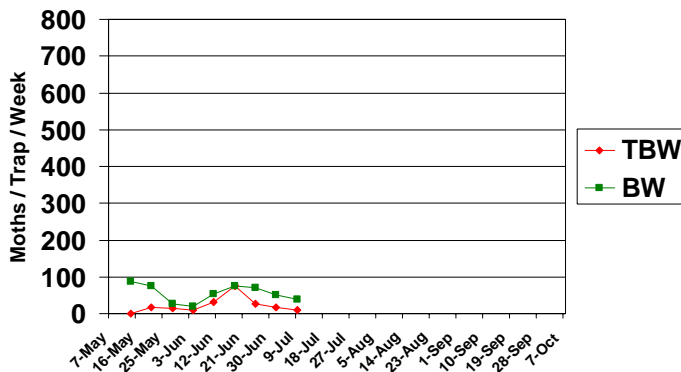
Tobacco Budworm & Bollworm

Captures of adult tobacco budworm (TBW) and bollworm (BW) in pheromone traps at EREC for this season and last season are pictured below. The scales on the 2008 and 2007 charts are the same to illustrate where we are compared with last year. I expect bollworm captures to increase next week and start to look like the peak we observed last year.

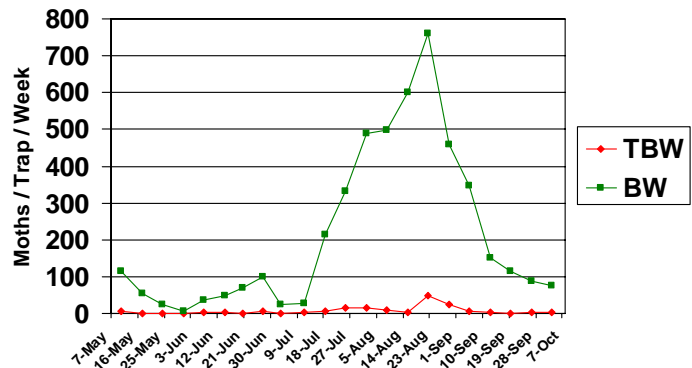


Bollworm (left) and tobacco budworm (right)

Pheromone Trap Capture SC - 2008 (EREC)



Pheromone Trap Capture SC - 2007 (EREC)



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News from Above the Lakes

No news this week. Please send me your observations and comments!

News from Below the Lakes

Tommy Walker, Extension agent in Hampton and surrounding counties, reported that he is seeing a few fields with building populations of aphids and is keeping an eye on these. He also reported that all of the cotton in his area is in need of more rain. Some fields are "on the bubble" in terms of deciding whether or not to keep managing them or just watch them until more rain causes a change in crop condition. "Cotton can recover and set a decent crop in 3-4 weeks assuming continued rain, but a few fields have bloomed out the top and the terminal has suppressed - so these plants will need maybe 3 weeks to re-grow a terminal and begin to set squares plus 3 more weeks to bloom those squares. That total time of six weeks from today is August 20th which is getting close to our last effective white flower date of August 28-30. Fortunately, many more fields still show 5 or more nodes above white bloom and have a fighting chance to set a crop. Completing weed control and scouting for insects is critical in these fields."

A consultant in the Calhoun County area reported the following observations: "...egg counts are starting to rise. Had some fields with 30%. Also aphids starting to show their sticky heads. Some fields rated as medium today. A lot of Pix being applied on DPL 555 where moisture is good."

Another consultant in the Springfield area reported that he is seeing aphids in spots with dripping honeydew. He has been seeing about 10 bollworm/tobacco budworm eggs per 100 plants. He is seeing many tobacco budworm moths and is concerned about the non-Bt cotton he is checking. At least one of his Bollgard II fields has been treated for tarnished plant bugs. This field is surrounded by corn. It is not surprising to see numerous plant bugs in this situation. Corn harbors many plant bugs that can move into adjacent crops. We continue to notice increasing numbers of stink bugs as well.

Free Aphid Fungus Detection Service Terminated

I have been informed that the Cotton Aphid Fungus Sampling Service in Arkansas that was supported by Cotton Incorporated has been discontinued. After thoughtful discussions, it was decided that the service would be terminated. Over the years interest in the service had declined for various reasons. Last year they had less than 25% of the sample kits returned, so they basically had no choice but to discontinue it. I was informed that if cotton aphids again become a serious perennial pest over large areas of cotton, the service could be brought back. That would really depend on various groups expressing a distinct need for it again.

This year watch for populations of aphids to "crash" during the last week of July – the usual beginning of epizootics.



Need More Information?

Log on to the following webpage to view important cotton management recommendations, data, and historical cotton insect newsletters: <http://www.clemson.edu/scg/ipm/cotton.html>

Sincerely,

Jeremy K. Greene, Ph.D.
Cotton Entomologist



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