



## *Cotton Insect Newsletter*

Letter #12

Edisto Research & Education Center in Blackville, SC

20 July 2006

### *Newsletter Archives*

Previous newsletters for 2006 are archived at <http://www.clemson.edu/edisto/cotton/cotton.htm>. Please distribute hard copies or electronic newsletter files to all interested, and please provide weekly input for the newsletter. Your observations and local knowledge are important – email or phone in your comments to me!

Jeremy Greene

[greene4@clemson.edu](mailto:greene4@clemson.edu)

803-284-3343

### *Crop Situation*

On 16 July 2006, the USDA NASS South Carolina Statistical Office reported our progress as 87% squaring, ahead of the 5-yr average of 75%. About 28% of the crop is setting bolls, just ahead of the 5-yr average of 23%. About 2% of the state's cotton crop was reported to be in excellent condition. The remainder was reported as 46% good, 45% fair, 7% poor, and 0% very poor. These are observed/perceived state-wide averages.

### *News from Above the Lakes*

David Gunter in Darlington County reported that “The (aphid) fungus is definitely in Darlington County, although spotty. Although pretty tough in places, aphids seem to be more under control this week for where the hot spots were last week, beneficials have really come on strong in those places. Crop looking pretty good overall, just would like some rain to go along with this hot weather.”

### *News from Below the Lakes*

Carl Sanders, consultant, is finding enough bollworms to treat. Aphids are still bothersome, and plant bugs continue to feed on young bolls. He is starting to see some green stink bugs.

Dr. Mike Sullivan has reported moth captures and heliothine egg numbers on the rise in Bamberg County. He reported this morning that one bollworm trap in upper Bamberg County has caught 140 bollworm moths in 3 nights. He caught only 1 tobacco budworm moth in a trap baited for budworm.

Tommy Walker in Hampton County reported that he had no trouble finding 100 bollworm eggs per 100 plants in cotton near Brunson. Aphids are still lingering in most cotton down his way; however, he had one aphid sample from a field in lower Hampton County come back with a report of 84% infection with the aphid fungus. That is good news. Hopefully, our aphid populations will crash very soon.

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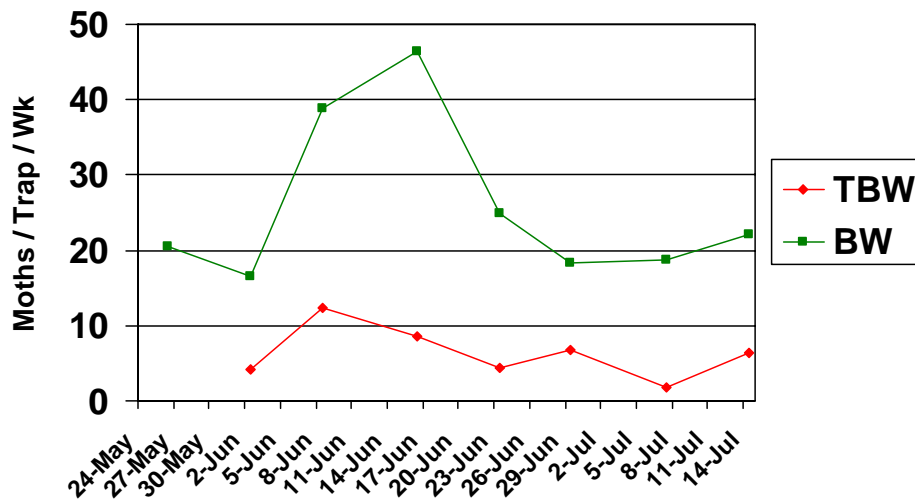
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### Tobacco Budworm & Bollworm

Trap captures at the Edisto Research & Education Center near Blackville, SC are shown below through 14 July. So far this week we have caught more than 50 bollworm moths in one trap in particular, so we are definitely seeing the beginning of another flight.

**Pheromone Trap Capture (EREC - 2006)**



### Aphids

I sent in samples of aphids to the University of Arkansas for examination for the aphid fungus. Those samples were from here at EREC and came back as 4% infection for one field and 0% for the other. Perhaps the dry weather is preventing the fungus from causing an epizootic in our high populations of aphids. So much cotton is under tremendous stress from the heat, drought, and feeding from sucking insects. In the past, I have seen data set after data set that basically indicated that aphid treatments did not pay almost all of the time. However, this year might require a different approach. My advice at this point is to consider everything that might make a difference to the bottom line. First of all, where are we with the naturally-occurring fungus? Is a field of aphids near you with a high rate of infection? Are aphids really hurting cotton at this point? To be completely honest, I have always been of the camp of not treating for aphids. However, in many situations this year, I must admit that they might be causing some economic harm because of the additive stress of drought and insect feeding. Also, anyone who scouts cotton will agree that finding other insects that do cause significant injury is very difficult when there are so many aphids on the plants and so much honeydew to navigate through. Scouting or shaking plants covered in aphids is difficult and aggravating. So, after considering everything, come down on one side of the fence or the other. Treat or hold your ground. If yield potential is still high for a field that is still

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covered in aphids, and no incidence of the fungus is present, it might be a good time to use an aphid material. The neonicotinoids such as imidacloprid (Trimax @ 1.0 - 1.5 oz/acre), Couraze, etc., thiamethoxam (Centric @ 1.25 - 1.5 oz/acre), and acetamiprid (Assail @ 0.6 – 1.0 oz/acre) and likes such as flonicamid (Carbine @ 1.4 – 2.8 oz/acre) should provide the best control of aphids. Aphids have started to show signs of tolerance to these products in the Mid-South this season, but we should still get pretty good control of aphids in our area. Before you treat for aphids, know what level of fungus you have!

### **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>

To see cotton insect newsletters for this year, go to the following webpage to view the cotton page at the Edisto Research & Education Center. <http://www.clemson.edu/edisto/cotton/cotton.htm>

We will continue to update this webpage in the coming months.

Sincerely,

Jeremy K. Greene, Ph.D.  
Cotton Entomologist



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<http://www.clemson.edu>

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