

# PEANUT PRODUCERS' TOP TEN LIST

## Preplant

### 1. Field Selection / Rotation:

Peanuts require well-drained land and do best on soils with a sandy surface. Avoid fields with recent soybean history as best you can and eliminate soybeans from the rotation in the future. Sustainable peanut production requires a minimum of 2 years (3 years better) of cotton or corn (no legumes) in between peanut crops.

### 2. Soil test:

P and K are seldom needed if previous crop has adequate fertility. Use the **Peanut Fertility Check List** (see Peanut Production Guide) to compare soil test values to sufficiency levels for all nutrients. **Zinc can severely stunt or kill peanuts.** Raise pH to reduce toxicity risk in high Zn fields. Soil Ca levels above 600 lb/ac and Ca to K ratio of 3:1 or higher are desirable. Raise soil Ca with lime if pH allows.

## At-Plant

### 3. Get them inoculated:

Use only liquid in-furrow inoculants; they have been most consistent and are less likely to stop-up. Inoculants are live bacteria; handle with care to keep them alive. Make sure a steady stream (no pulse pumps) hits dead center in the bottom of the open furrow and gets into moisture. Use 5 gal minimum. Do not use chlorinated water. Don't plant too shallow (less than 1.5"). Always plant into moisture; dry soil kills inoculant and causes erratic emergence, which increases virus problems. Peanuts can be planted up to 3" deep if necessary for good moisture.

### 4. Reduce tomato spotted wilt virus risk:

- Plant tolerant varieties to the extent possible. NC V11, Bailey, Champs, and Gregory are va.-types with some virus tolerance. Many resistant runner alternatives are available. April – early May planting increases virus risk. The first week of May still has increased virus risk, but we need to get started planting large acreages. The optimum planting interval for S. C. is 5-25 May.
- Get a consistent, uniformly emerged stand, target is 4 plants/row ft. (need 6 seed/ft., or at least 5/ft. on large-seeded Va. types).
- Control thrips with in-furrow Thimet (phorate) 5.5 oz per 1000 row ft (4.7 lb on 38" rows) or Temik 5 lb/ac.
- Strip tillage reduces tomato spotted wilt.

## 0-45 DAP

### 5. Establish and maintain weed control (first 45 days critical):

- Valor (3 oz) is recommended for severe pigweed pressure. Valor must be applied within 2 days of planting; preferably watered in. Prowl/Sonolan or Dual can be tank-mixed. Do not plant shallower than 1.5" to reduce Valor injury.
- The first flush of weeds may need Gramoxone (+ Basagran or Storm) treatment before Cadre application (30-35 DAP). Dual can be applied post-emergence with Gramoxone or Cadre instead of (or in addition to) PPI for extended pigweed control.
- 2,4-DB, Blazer, Cobra, or Storm where needed for escapes. Poast Plus or Select for grass.

## Bloom

### 6. Give them calcium:

- All virginia type peanuts should get 300 lb/ac Ca (1500 - 2000 lb landplaster) at blooming.
- Calcium must be available in the pegging zone when the first pods begin to form.
- Better early than late with land plaster! Foliar Ca appl. is useless.

45 DAP

**7. Prevent foliar and soil disease:**

Although peanuts on “new” land should be relatively free of diseases, severe leaf spot and white mold loss can still occur. White mold and CBR are usually worst in fields with a soybean history. Peanuts have to be protected from a complex of both soil and foliar diseases with a preventative program. **Start leaf spot treatment no later than 45 DAP and white mold treatment at 60 DAP.** Increase leaf spot protection on high risk leaf spot varieties (Champs, Gregory, Phillips, Perry, Brantley). See the Production Guide for example fungicide programs. **75 and 90 DAP are the most critical white mold treatments.**

60 DAP

**8. Irrigation management:**

- Peanut is an indeterminate, drought-tolerant crop, but irrigation can be critical to **maximize returns from calcium, activate herbicides, and move fungicides** into the soil.
- Irrigation also reduces insect damage and, **prevents aflatoxin**.
- The critical water use period is during pod fill, approximately 60-110 DAP when peanuts need 1.0 - 1.5” per week minus rain. See the Peanut Production Guide for irrigation scheduling.

25 July - 30 August

**9. Check for insects:**

- Cutworms occasionally defoliate peanuts in late June or early July.
- Beginning in late June, watch for leafhopper “burn” getting started on field edges.
- Corn earworms, followed by fall armyworms, feed on peanut primarily from the last week of July through August. Velvetbean caterpillars sometimes strip peanuts in the lower part of the state in late (Sept. - Oct.). Fully lapped, unstressed peanuts can tolerate up to 8 worms/ft. The threshold is 4 worms per ft. on unlapped or stressed peanuts.
- There are some significant soil pests (lesser cornstalk borer, wireworm, burrower bug, rootworm), but the greatest threats (borers & burrower bugs) can be managed with irrigation.

130 DAP

**10. MORE MONEY IS MADE OR LOST WITH DIGGING DECISIONS THAN ANY OTHER ASPECT OF PEANUT PRODUCTION:**

**Timing:** Medium maturity virginia types generally reach harvest maturity in about 130-135 DAP under typical S. C. growing conditions. But many practical considerations figure into when the first field is dug, to include: vine health, acreage, equipment availability, when you started planting, and weather predictions. Runner types are more forgiving and can be allowed to stay in the ground longer, sometimes over 150 days. Start spot checking maturity at about 120 DAP. Use the pod blast or hull scrape method (see this and other techniques in the Peanut Production Guide) to sort pods into color piles and determine which fields should be dug first. Some pod color guidelines for virginia type maturity: 70% of pods in orange + brown + black categories, and 20-30% in brown + black, 1-2% coal black. For runners: 75% in orange + brown + black, and 30-40% in brown + black, 5% coal black. The grade target is at least 70 % TSMK. Practical considerations sometimes prevent waiting on full maturity in every field, particularly for the first field to be dug. **If you are digging before 130 DAP, use pod color to make sure you’re not too early; if you are waiting after 140 DAP, make sure you’re not late.**

**Digger operation:** It is easy to ruin a great crop with the digger. **Staying on the row** with the digger is a must (see growth regulator recommendations). Matching digger ground speed to shaker speed, digger running depth, and soil conditions are also critical.