Cotton/Soybean Insect Newsletter

Volume 17, Issue #8   Edisto Research & Education Center in Blackville, SC  24 June 2022

**Pest Patrol Alerts**
There was a disruption in text alerts this season, so, if you have not received text alerts from the Pest Patrol program this year and you had previously and want to continue receiving them, go through the steps below again. If you have been receiving Pest Patrol texts this season for my recorded messages, you are good and no reregistration is needed. Thanks.

Some of the information contained herein each issue is available via text alerts that direct users to online recordings. I will update the short message often for at least as long as the newsletter runs. After a new message is posted, a text message is sent to alert users that I have recorded a new update. Users can subscribe for text message alerts for my updates in two easy steps. Step one: register by texting **pestpat7** to 97063. Step two: reply to the confirmation text you receive by texting the letter “y” to complete your registration. Pest Patrol Alerts are sponsored by Syngenta.

**Updates on Twitter**
When noteworthy events happen in the field, I will be sending them out quickly via Twitter. If you want to follow those quick updates, follow me at @bugdocisin on Twitter.

**News from Around the State**
Jonathan Croft, county agent in Orangeburg County, reported, “The cotton I looked at this week was in early pinhead square stage but didn’t have any insects. A lot of areas in Orangeburg County received rainfall yesterday evening/night.”

Mitch Binnar, a crop consultant in Florence, SC, reported that some of the cotton he checks planted the last week of April is at first flower, has been under drought stress, is not very tall, but has excellent square retention. He will start monitoring for stink bugs in a couple of weeks and will be looking for plant bugs, aphids, and spider mites until then. Mitch also plans to watch weed control, especially pigweeds, after the dry weather we have experienced recently. He expects some slippage on control. I also had another report earlier in the week from Charles Davis, county agent in Calhoun County, that he was seeing plant bugs at 6 bugs per 100 sweeps last week. That is under the treatment threshold of 8 bugs per 100 sweeps...but close. Keep watching out for plant bugs, aphids, and spider mites. Stink bugs and bollworms are on the way, though!
Scouting Workshops

Plans are set for our 2022 in-field, in-person workshops devoted to scouting for insect issues in cotton and soybeans, everything peanuts with Dr. Dan Anco, and weed identification with Dr. Mike Marshall at the workshop in Blackville. Dates and locations for these scouting workshops are below. You must preregister to attend. Links for preregistration are on the flyers and on the attached announcements. Attendance could be limited to the first 50 participants that preregister for each session/workshop, so sign up quickly. For more details, see attached announcements, as they are available.

- 27 July in Florence, SC, at the Pee Dee REC (2200 Pocket Road, Florence, SC 29506).
  Morning Session – Cotton/Soybean Scouting Workshop
  Afternoon Session – Peanuts
- 28 July in Cameron, SC, at Lone Star Plantation (102 Po Boy Court, St. Matthews, SC 29135).
  Morning Session – Cotton/Soybean Scouting Workshop
  Afternoon Session – Peanuts
- 29 July in Blackville, SC, at the Edisto REC (64 Research Road, Blackville, SC 29817).
  Announcement sent out soon for preregistration.
  Morning Session – Cotton/Soybean Scouting Workshop
  Afternoon Session – Weed Identification and Control

Cotton Situation

As of 19 June 2022, the USDA NASS South Carolina Statistical Office estimated that about 99% of the crop has been planted by this week, compared with 96% planted the previous week, 98% at this time last year, and 97% for the 5-year average. About 13% of the crop is squaring, compared with 3% the previous week, 20% at this time last year, and 23% for the 5-year average. The conditions of the crop were 7% excellent, 58% good, 27% fair, 8% poor, and 0% very poor. These are reported statewide averages.

Cotton Insects

Plant bugs – Most of the crop is in the important window (a couple of weeks before and after first bloom) to monitor for plant bugs and check square retention. Keep checking for plant bugs and monitoring square retention until you start checking for boll injury and stink bugs and begin spraying for stink bugs.

Aphids – Cotton aphids continue to build in the crop, but don’t worry too much about aphids. Almost all of the data I have seen regarding aphids indicates that aphids are not economic pests of cotton...in most scenarios (there are exceptions, such as very young, stressed cotton, etc.). The virus (Cotton Leafroll Dwarf Virus – CLRDV) aphids transmit to cotton has not been a yield-limiting factor in any widespread fashion. Furthermore, as you know, we get much assistance from Mother Nature on aphids. The aphid fungus eventually takes them out with an epizootic, parasitism can be high, and predators use them as food to build their populations that help us out with other insects that do cause yield loss.

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Public Service Activities

The mention of any commercial product in this publication does not imply its endorsement by Clemson University over other products not named, nor does the omission imply that they are not satisfactory.
Spider mites – We had regular rainfall last year that kept spider mites out of the picture for most of the season. That has not been the case this year, but I have yet to hear of problems with spider mites. They must be operating in the background unnoticed because we all know they like it hot and dry, and that describes 2022 perfectly so far.

Bollworm – We easily collected 1,200 corn earworm larvae out of non-Bt corn this past week to send off for resistance monitoring, so there were plenty of them in the fields we visited in Blackville and Florence. These will pupate in the soil soon and emerge as moths looking for a host for their offspring. That is usually in cotton and soybeans, where we call them bollworm and podworm, respectively. Captures of moths in pheromone traps doesn’t really show the moths moving to silking corn, but we will see a big increase in trap captures after they start emerging from corn fields and moving to cotton.

Stink bugs – Southern green stink bugs (SGSB) and brown stink bugs have been numerous in corn this season, so I expect it to be a big stink bug year. We saw a lot of reproducing SGSB in corn, so those insects will “stair step” to the next crops available – cotton and soybeans.

Soybean Situation
As of 19 June 2022, the USDA NASS South Carolina Statistical Office estimated that about 90% of the crop has been planted this week, compared with 82% planted the previous week, 92% at this time last year, and 83% for the 5-year average. About 76% of the crop has emerged, compared with 65% the previous week, 86% at this time last year, and 68% for the 5-year average. The conditions of the crop were 5% excellent, 63% good, 24% fair, 6% poor, and 2% very poor. These are reported statewide averages.

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From the SC Soybean Specialist (Dr. Michael Plumblee)
“Soybean planting is wrapping up across the state. A few places are waiting for rain to continue planting. Just a reminder the final planting date for soybean in terms of crop insurance is tomorrow June 25th. Next year we anticipate the final planting date will be pushed to June 30th, so be looking for updates on that change this fall/winter from the RMA office. Our national soybean specialist group has put together another video about soybean growth stages: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KopTm13G2P0. Hans, from North Dakota, does a good job of going through growth stages and talking about each stage. Soybean disease scouting will ramp up soon as we move through the summer, we will keep you updated on if and when we find Asian soybean rust on soybean in the state and share our recommendations on fungicide sprays at that time.”

Soybean Insects
We are still seeing many false chinch bugs (FCB) in the field. These insects can be worrisome in soybeans, cotton, and other crops, but they rarely pose an economic threat, unless plants are very small and under drought stress. Be sure to see the newsletter from last week, as it has some photos of FCB, TPB, and bigeyed bugs. All of these insects can be found in soybeans and can be difficult to identify.

We have seen a few kudzu bugs here and there, but it is still fairly quiet in soybeans regarding insects. We need to be thankful kudzu bugs are not as numerous as they were on seedling soybeans in 2013, as in the photo here. Thankfully, populations are not what they were early on with this invasive species. They have made somewhat of a comeback, though, in recent years.

Be sure to study up on identifying moths on the next page, so you can know what larval pests are coming when you flush moths walking through soybeans.
The figure below is for much later in the season, but it stays here as a reminder to learn how to identify larvae and adults (moths).

As moth activity increases, deposited eggs will yield caterpillar pests on soybeans. It is good skill to be able to identify adult moths flying around in fields. Use this chart to study moth and caterpillar identification.
**Bollworm & Tobacco Budworm**

Captures of bollworm (BW) and tobacco budworm (TBW) moths in pheromone traps at EREC this season are shown below, as are the captures from 2007-2020 for reference. Tobacco budworm continues to be important for our soybean acres and for any acres of non-Bt cotton. I provide these data as a measure of moth presence and activity in our local area near my research plots. The numbers are not necessarily representative of the species throughout the state but are useful for general trends.

Trap data from 2007-2020 are shown below for reference to other years of trapping data from EREC:

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**Pest Management Handbook – 2022**
Insect control recommendations are available online in the 2022 South Carolina Pest Management Handbook at:
https://www.clemson.edu/extension/agronomy/pestmanagement2022/2022pmhmaster.pdf

**South Carolina Crops Blog**
The SC Crops Blog contains content about production of major row crops at the following link, if you want more information:  https://blogs.clemson.edu/sccrops/
Archived issues of the Cotton/Soybean Insect Newsletter can be viewed at a convenient link on the SCCrops page. Contact Dr. Michael Plumblee, if you have any questions about the blog.

**Free Mobile Apps: “Calibrate My Sprayer” and “Mix My Sprayer”**
Download our free mobile apps called “Calibrate My Sprayer” and “Mix My Sprayer” that help check for proper calibration of spraying equipment and help you with mixing user-defined pesticides, respectively, in custom units (available in both iOS and Android formats):
http://www.clemson.edu/extension/mobile-apps/

**Need More Information?**
For more Clemson University Extension information: http://www.clemson.edu/extension/
For historical cotton/soybean insect newsletters:
https://www.clemson.edu/extension/agronomy/cotton1/newsletters.html

Sincerely,
Jeremy K. Greene, Ph.D.
Professor of Entomology

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