



Cotton/Soybean Insect Newsletter

Volume 4, Issue #4

Edisto Research & Education Center in Blackville, SC

28 May 2009

Pest Patrol Hotline

A summary of current problems with insects is available this season via a toll-free hotline. Simply call the free number (877) 285-8525 and select the messages you would like to hear. I will update the short message weekly for at least as long as the newsletter runs. The hotline is sponsored by Syngenta Crop Science.

Cotton Situation

Although planting has been delayed this season, many producers were able to “get caught up” this past week. However, in isolated areas enormous amounts of rain were observed again. We had 4 inches of rain in just a few hours here at EREC on Monday evening. As of 26 May 2009, the USDA NASS South Carolina Statistical Office had our progress at 78% of the crop being planted, slightly ahead of where we were last year (76%) and very close to the 5-yr average of 80%. Conditions were described as 1% excellent, 58% good, 40% fair, and 1% poor for the crop. These are observed/perceived state-wide averages.

Soybean Situation

Soybean planting is also somewhat behind schedule due to the wet conditions. As of 26 May 2009, the USDA NASS South Carolina Statistical Office had our progress at 31% of the crop being planted, well behind where we were at 42% in 2008 and for the 5-yr average. About 20% of soybeans have emerged, about where the crop was this time last year (26%) and ahead of the 5-yr average emergence (14%). These are observed/perceived state-wide averages.

2009 SC Cotton Growers’ Guide, Pest Management Handbook, and Insect Control Guides

The 2009 South Carolina Cotton Growers’ Guide is available from your local county office in paper copy or online at: <http://www.clemson.edu/psapublishing/pages/AGRO/EC589.PDF>.

The 2009 Pest Management Handbook is ready and available in limited quantities. Contact your local county office for availability. A \$10 fee might be charged for the handbook. You can also download the handbook from: <http://www.clemson.edu/extension/rowcrops/index.html>

Clemson University Publications IC97 (Cotton Insect Management) and SL1 (Soybean Insect Management) are available free from your local county office in paper copy or online at:

<http://www.clemson.edu/psapublishing/pages/ENTOM/IC97.PDF> and

<http://www.clemson.edu/psapublishing/pages/AGRO/SL1.PDF>

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News from Above the Lakes

I have an anonymous report from someone who visits fields regularly that over the last two weeks, he has "seen sand blasting, 'dampening-off' diseases, and chilling injury affecting emerging and seedling cotton. Older cotton has been affected too, it's just not as apparent. Cotton planted mid-May is having stand issues (big legged, chilling, pythium). Early May cotton is 4-6 leaf but held back by thrips, wind, and cold. Looks like there was one period (May 12-15) where DD-60's were 0-6 each day, and two significant periods in May (12-13) and (19-20) where DD-60's were flat to negative. Add wind, rain and soil conditions, and our crop is in rough shape. However, cotton has jumped since Monday. I looked at cotton stands today that were planted on Monday and excellent emergence and seedling conditions were noted. Several growers with earlier planted cotton (4-6 leaf stage) report stem disease prevalent...will it make cotton is the question."

News from Below the Lakes

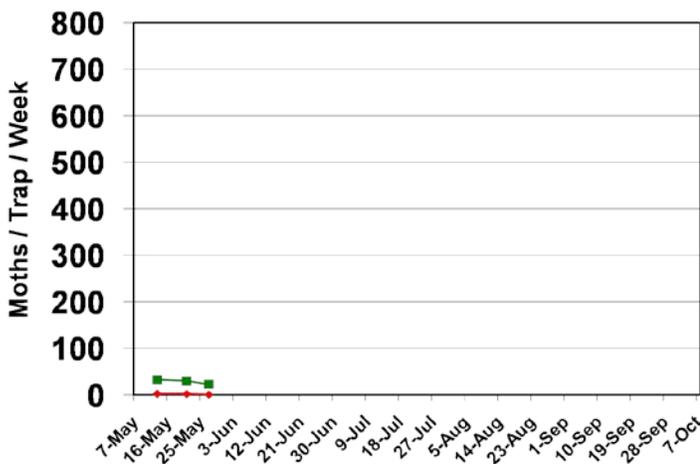
No news to report this week. Please email or call me with your observations and comments by Wednesday!

Tobacco Budworm & Bollworm

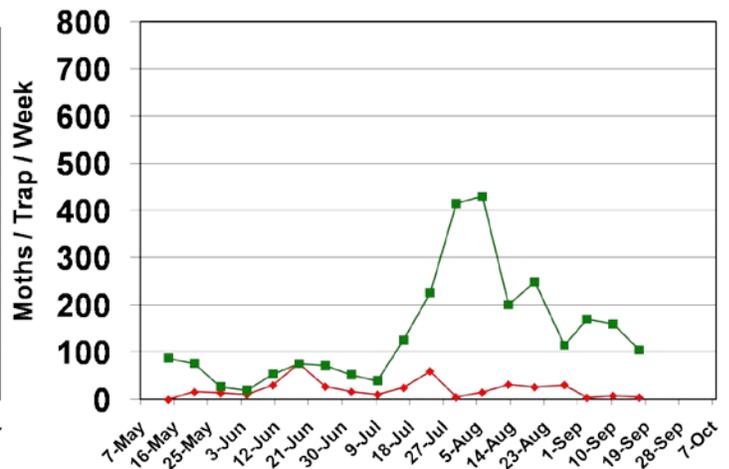
Captures of bollworm (BW) and tobacco budworm (TBW) in pheromone traps at EREC this season and last seasons are presented. The scales on the charts are the same to illustrate where we are compared with last year. We trapped about 23 BW moths and 1 TBW moth per trap this past week. That is a little down from last week. The rain and cooler temperatures were still "slowing down" these insects.



Pheromone Trap Capture SC - 2009



Pheromone Trap Capture SC - 2008



How Late Can We Plant Cotton (& Soybeans)?

The wet weather has certainly made this question an issue this season. We typically see about 4.0 inches of rain during the month of May in many areas of SC. Some of the totals for various locations are staggering for May of 2009. For example, here at EREC we have had 11.2 inches of rain so far this month, and we still have some

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days left, with good chances of rain everyday into June! We try not to plant cotton in June, but we might be planting up to the 40th of May this year. Historically, our latest recommendation for planting cotton in the southern half of SC has been about 10 June, recognizing that this date is “a moving target”, subject to variation due to variety maturity, rainfall, temperatures, etc, especially near the end of the growing season. Our experiences (again limited mostly to the lower half of SC) have indicated that sometime during the last week of August represents our typical effective last date for taking white blooms to yielding bolls. Many of the “old timers” have described previously that they seldom pick a boll from a Labor-Day white bloom. Most years we do not have the extended season required to harvest a significant number of bolls from those flowers. Maximizing the number of weeks of bloom under good conditions is the key, and maximum accumulation of DD60s at the beginning and very end of the season is sought. Also related to this question of “how late can we go” are the implications of coverage for crop insurance. For all cotton in SC, 25 May is the last day to plant cotton without a penalty on coverage. For every day after that, there is a 1% reduction in coverage up to 15 days after 25 May. When you get to 16 days after 25 May (that would put you right at 10 June) coverage for losses is void. So, in a nutshell, plant cotton before 10 June. Also, the rules for insurance are also similar for soybeans. The last date to plant soybeans without a penalty on insurance coverage is 15 June, with the same 15-day window for 1% loss/day. When you get to July, your crop insurance coverage for soybeans is void.

Early-Season Insect Issues

Things continue to remain quiet concerning insects. Thrips are about the only insects causing problems in cotton, but most stands are receiving sunlight and good temperatures now, so plants with some preventative insecticide will be able to outgrow much injury.

Need More Information?

Log on to the following webpage to view important recommendations for cotton and soybean insect management, data, and historical cotton insect newsletters:

<http://www.clemson.edu/edisto/cotton/cotton.htm>

Sincerely,

Jeremy K. Greene, Ph.D.
Associate Professor – Entomologist



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