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## Cotton Insect Newsletter

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## *Cotton Insect Newsletter*

Volume 3, Issue #13

Edisto Research & Education Center in Blackville, SC

7 August 2008

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### **Status of Cotton Crop**

As of 3 August 2008, the USDA NASS South Carolina Statistical Office had our progress at 96% squaring, just ahead of the 5-yr average of 95%. About 58% of the crop is setting bolls, ahead of the 5-yr average of 53%. Only 1% of the state's cotton crop was reported to be in excellent condition. The remainder was reported as 31% good, 35% fair, 21% poor, and 12% very poor. These are observed/perceived state-wide averages.

### **Status of Soybean Crop**

As of 4 August 2008, the USDA NASS South Carolina Statistical Office had our conditions for soybeans at 14% very poor, 28% poor, 41% fair, 17% good, and 0% excellent.

### **News from Above the Lakes**

A consultant in the Pee Dee region informed me earlier this week that fall armyworms were a problem in numerous cotton fields. See below and last week's newsletter for recommendations concerning fall armyworms.

### **News from Below the Lakes**

A consultant in the local area informed me that he is spraying a field for fall armyworms this week. He is trying to control some bollworms as well, so he is going with a "bollworm rate" of a pyrethroid plus 6 oz of Diamond for fall armyworms. That should be a pretty good treatment for Bollgard cotton (i.e. DP555), where you would be trying to control stink bugs, bollworm "escapes", and fall armyworms.

### **Fall Armyworms**

Because detection and control of fall armyworms will likely be important for the next week or four (☺), we should cover that area some more. What can we do about fall armyworms in cotton? Right now, check for "windowpane" symptoms on boll bracts. Small fall armyworms begin their feeding on boll bracts before feeding on the boll, causing brown patches on bracts. Unlike bollworms that damage multiple fruiting sites as they move down the plant, fall armyworms only damage a limited number of bolls per insect – thankfully. Insecticides that we recommended for control of fall armyworms are typically not extremely effective. Although these materials will provide some control of fall armyworms, they rarely will go out alone in the tank. Usually, there is a tank-mix application to control bollworm and/or stink bugs (i.e. pyrethroid) and fall armyworm. "Rescue" applications for large fall armyworms are difficult at best because they tolerate insecticides (especially the large worms) and because of their behavior. As you know, fall armyworms are boll feeders and typically enter the boll on the bottom under the bracts. They feed inside of bolls near the bottom of the plant. All of these feeding behaviors hinder the effectiveness of insecticide applications. The pesticide

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simply does not reach the target in many cases. Higher water volumes are better than lower volumes. The best application for fall armyworms right now will likely be a pyrethroid plus one of the insecticides listed for FAW in last week's newsletter. High rates of pyrethroids applied for bollworms will offer good control of very small armyworms. If fall armyworms escape pyrethroids and exceed threshold\*, you can try to control them with another application. Diamond 0.83 EC is an insect growth regulator that has some contact activity on caterpillars but requires ingestion for maximum effectiveness. The 9-oz rate per acre has been used effectively alone in some cases, but when it is tank-mixed (6-9 oz) with a pyrethroid, you end up with a good treatment for bollworms, stink bugs, and fall armyworms. However, 100% control should not be the target with any of the insecticides alone or in combination – somewhere around 80% should be considered good.

\*Control of fall armyworms (FAW) may be justified when 10 or more larvae are found per 100 plants. Check blooms for the presence of FAW and look for feeding symptoms on boll bracts in the lower canopy.

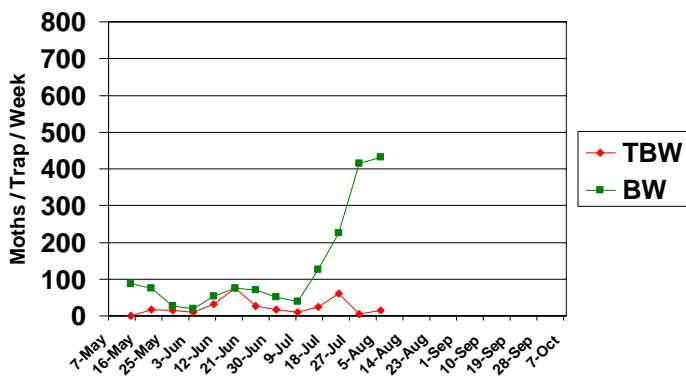
**Tobacco Budworm & Bollworm**

Captures of adult tobacco budworm (TBW) and bollworm (BW) in pheromone traps at EREC 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. Once again, we observed tremendous captures of bollworm moths this past week. The pattern is looking more and more like that observed last year.

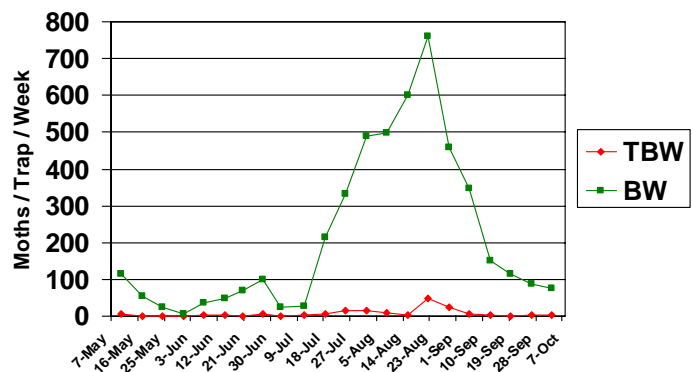


Bollworm (left) and tobacco budworm (right)

Pheromone Trap Capture SC - 2008 (EREC)



Pheromone Trap Capture SC - 2007 (EREC)



**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>

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**Fall Field Day (\*\*Reminder\*\*)**

Our annual Fall Field Day will be held at the Edisto Research and Education Center near Blackville, SC, on 4 September 2007. Registration will begin at 9:00AM. Tours and programs will begin at 9:30AM. Lunch will be from 12:00 to 1:15PM. The cotton/soybean/corn program will be immediately after lunch (1:30-3:30PM). Here is a short version of the program:

- 9:00 – Noon**    **Registration**  
**9:30 – Noon**    **Peanut Tour**  
**9:30 – Noon**    **Beef Cattle Tour**  
**Noon – 1:15**    **Lunch and Indoor Program**  
**1:30 – 3:30**    **Corn, Cotton & Soybean Tour**

Sincerely,

Jeremy K. Greene, Ph.D.  
Cotton Entomologist



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