



Cotton/Soybean Insect Newsletter

Volume 7, Issue #3

Edisto Research & Education Center in Blackville, SC

24 May 2012

Pest Patrol Hotline

The information contained herein each week is available via a toll-free hotline. I will update the short message weekly for at least as long as the newsletter runs. Call the free number (877) 285-8525 and select the messages you would like to hear. Select #1 for updates from the Southern Region. Select #3 for the Southeast, and then select #1 to hear my message. Text alerts are also available. The hotline is sponsored by Syngenta.

Insect Scouting Clinics

We will be offering our first insect scouting and management clinic for the season **tomorrow** here at EREC, starting promptly at **10AM** and ending by noon (lunch NOT provided...on your own on that). We will focus on early-season insect problems in cotton (thrips) and soybeans (kudzu bugs). The visit to some of my plots and discussion about current issues will be brief but informative. **Let me know via email if you plan to attend.**

News from Above the Lakes

No news to report this week.

News from Below the Lakes

Dr. Merle Shepard, Emeritus Professor of Entomology with Clemson, reported that he “got a call from a woman who lives on James Island...an organic gardener [who] found a heavy infestation of bean plataspid on her pole beans, sprayed them with Neem and detergent, and that seemed to have made them move along.”

Neem oil is a vegetable oil extracted from the fruits and seeds of the neem tree (*Azadirachta indica*). Formulations of the oil are available as a bio-pesticide and can be used by organic growers. Detergent is another “soft insecticide” that typically works on soft-bodied insects, but it might have some activity on kudzu bugs, or helped the neem oil provide control or repellency. Although I have not tested neem oil on kudzu bugs, there might be some activity, as indicated by the above report. However, most of the bugs in the field right now are still overwintered adults that are probably very sensitive and susceptible. Any spray that might work currently on this generation might fail on a subsequent generation.

Charles Davis, county agent covering Calhoun and Orangeburg Counties, reported that he observed many burrower bugs and damage in a cotton field this morning that will have to be replanted. He said that peanuts were planted in that field last year. He stated that “under each dead or injured plant were 5-10 burrower bugs attached or near the root. I could find 4-5 bugs inside of dead cotton seed husks. The damage was worse on the

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sandier soils. There were correspondingly many more burrow holes in the sandier soil than the clay soil. It appears that if the cotton was able to emerge it lived. Insect feeding on the stems at emergence seemed to cause the cotton to grow downward and not be able to emerge as one photo shows.” Avicta-treated seed were used. I reported on this insect last year on this very same week (26 May), so they are “on time”. Any early-season sprays (i.e. thrips sprays) should eliminate burrower bugs; dedicated sprays for these bugs should be rare. Any re-plant situations where injury from this insect and perhaps some herbicide injury/stunting occur together might require a spray after planting to eliminate the insects from the field. Just too much stress on the plants.



Burrower bugs (*Sehirus cinctus*) dead at base of cotton seedlings (above, left and center) and burrows (above, right). Bugs associated with seed/plants that did not emerge (bottom, left) and seedling damage (bottom, right).



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News from the Piedmont/Upstate

Jay Crouch, county agent in Newberry, reported that he had a grower that “sprayed some early seedling cotton with a tank mix of Ignite [Liberty], Staple, and Orthene. The cotton was nearly defoliated. Some he sprayed without the Orthene was fine.” After consulting with our weed scientist, Dr. Mike Marshall, we are in agreement that the cotton plant can only take so much “loading” when numerous materials are thrown at it at one time. On the label for Staple, it states not to use with malathion, another OP insecticide. So, there are likely some issues out there with herbicide mixtures and insecticides, specifically the OPs (that includes acephate – Orthene). Additionally, this specific problem with Ignite or Liberty will be greater on non-LL cotton (i.e. PhytoGen/WideStrike varieties without the full tolerance). Remember that herbicide-injured plants are very susceptible to insects. Sometimes insects can be the last straw when attacking a weakened plant.

Bollworm & Tobacco Budworm

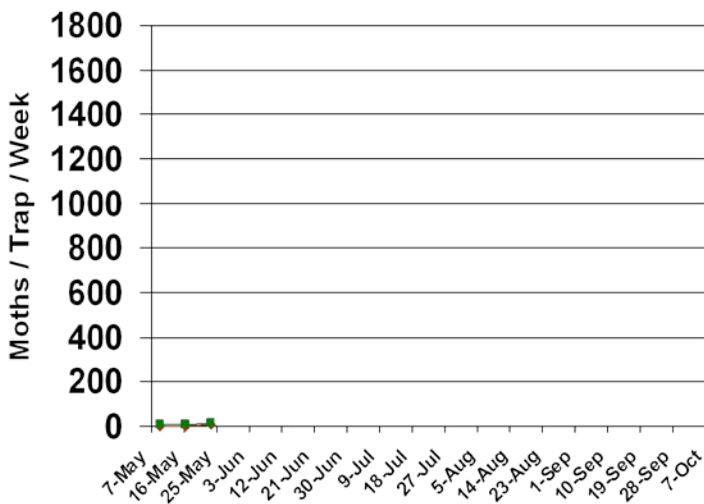


Captures of bollworm (BW) and tobacco budworm (TBW) moths in pheromone traps at EREC this season are shown below, as are the captures from 2011 for reference. Current numbers remain low. In general, numbers were high last year but not as high as those observed during 2010 that topped out on this chart scale. Tobacco budworm continues to be important for our soybean acres and for a very limited number of non-

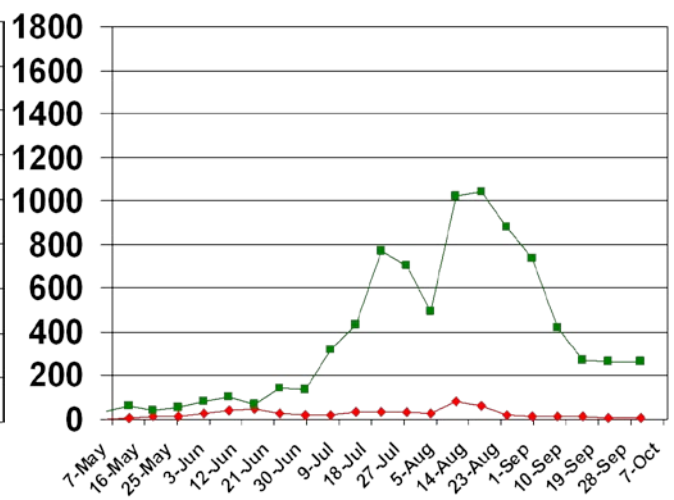
Bt-cotton acres. I provide these data as a measure of moth activity in our local area where I use these data as an indication of moth presence and activity near my research plots. The numbers are not necessarily representative of the species throughout the state.



Pheromone Trap Capture SC - 2012



Pheromone Trap Capture SC - 2011



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Cotton Situation

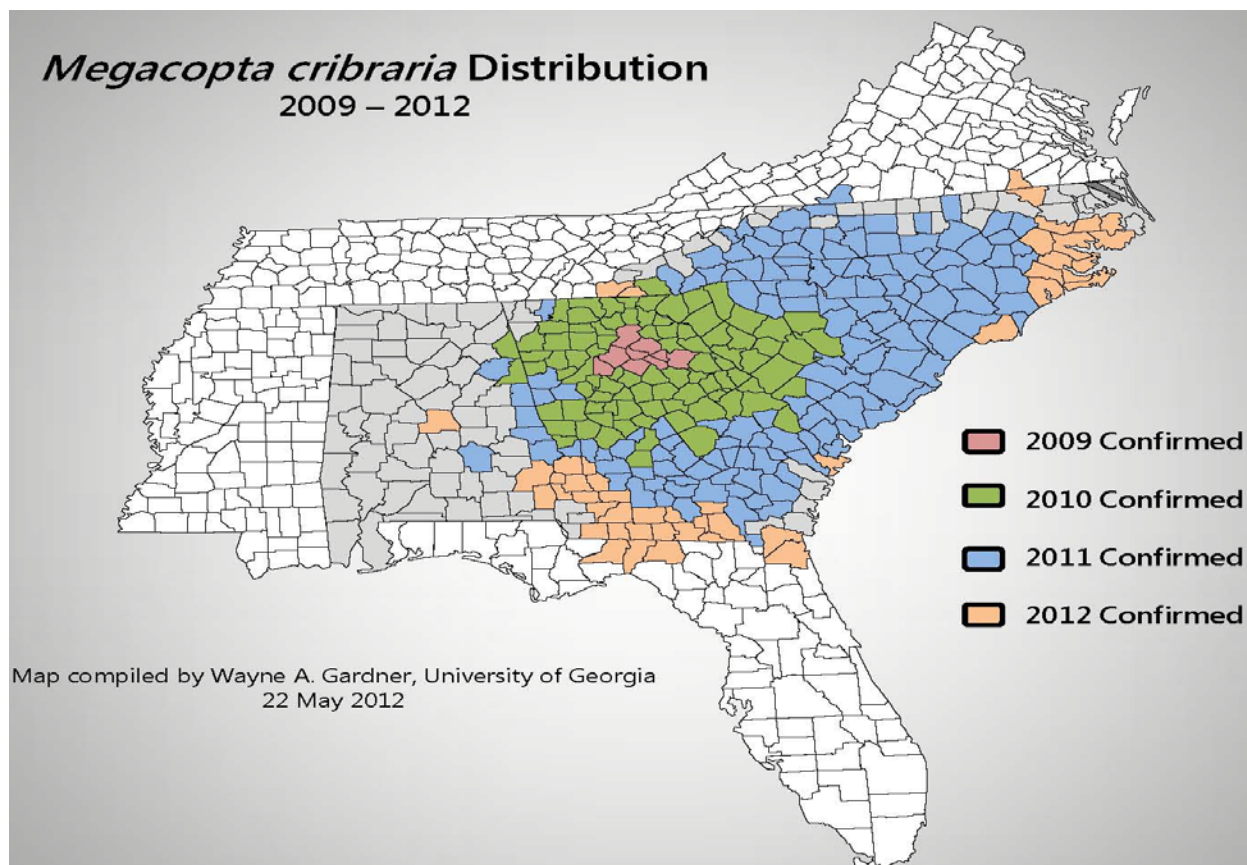
As of 21 May 2012, the USDA NASS South Carolina Statistical Office had our progress at about 69% planted, very close to where we were in 2011 at 68% and the 5-yr average of 65%. The recent rains have helped tremendously, and soil moisture levels in the state have greatly improved at 5% very short, 22% short, and 69% adequate, and 4% surplus. These are observed/perceived state-wide averages.

Soybean Situation

As of 21 May 2012, the USDA NASS South Carolina Statistical Office had our progress at 47% planted, about equal to where we were last year at 48% but well ahead of the 5-yr average of 34%. About 33% of planted soybeans have emerged, ahead of last year at 26% and the 5-yr average of 18%. Overall conditions for soybeans were similar to those in cotton. These are observed/perceived state-wide averages.

Kudzu Bug/Bean Plataspid

Below is the latest map of the distribution of the kudzu bug, *Megacopta cribraria*, in the Southeast. Many thanks to Dr. Wayne Gardner (UGA) for updating and supplying this map every week. Florida added another 4 counties, and North Carolina added 1 county. There are 6 states now reporting this invasive species. In order of appearance of the pest: Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Alabama, Virginia, and Florida.



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At least one of the soybean fields I have been watching that had building populations of kudzu bugs was almost without bugs at all yesterday. The field was not treated for kudzu bugs. We had a little rain on Tuesday, and the plants in that field are sustaining serious deer damage. I am wondering if the lack of leaves on top of those plants is allowing too much sun and perhaps heavy rain down to the main stem for these bugs, and they are leaving for a more favorable home. Canopy cover and ample leaves for depositing eggs are important for them.

Our recommendations for managing kudzu bugs in soybeans that were put together during the winter months based on our experiences last year can be found at:

http://www.clemson.edu/extension/kudzubugs/pdfs/kudzu_bug_insecticide_soybeans.pdf

Visit our kudzu bug webpage for the latest information on this new pest:

<http://www.clemson.edu/extension/kudzubugs/index.html>



Pest Management Handbook - 2012

Insect control recommendations are available online in the 2012 South Carolina Pest Management Handbook at:

<http://www.clemson.edu/extension/rowcrops/pest/index.html>

Need More Information?

For more Extension information: <http://www.clemson.edu/extension/>

For historical cotton/soybean insect newsletters:

http://www.clemson.edu/extension/rowcrops/cotton/pest_management/newsletters/index.html

Sincerely,

Jeremy K. Greene, Ph.D.

Associate Professor – Entomologist