



Cotton off to a Cool, Slow Start— Sandy Stewart, Ph.D.

Some things have happened fast and others slow to the 2008 Louisiana cotton crop. According to USDA, Louisiana’s planted cotton acreage jumped from 49 to 68 percent for the week ending May 4. This puts us ahead of a five-year average of 55% planted for this time of year. Large equipment, good soil moisture, and fewer acres should make it no surprise that planting has progressed rapidly.

Cotton that has been planted, however, has been slow to emerge and grow off. Relatively cool nights have slowed the early growth and development of cotton seedlings. Weather data recorded at St. Joseph, LA show that the average nighttime low for the past three weeks has been only 56 degrees. Although some days have warmed considerably, the end result is a

slow accumulation of heat units, or DD60s.

The chart on the following page indicates that 165 DD60s have accumulated at St. Joseph over the past three weeks. A five-year average for the same time period is 199 DD60s. Cotton can require as few 45 and as many as 130 DD60s to emerge. Thereafter, roughly 50 DD60s are required to add a new node or leaf. All of this adds up to cotton that has taken a long time to emerge and reach the one- or two-true leaf stage.

Seedling Protection

Eventually, conditions will warm and seedlings will begin to develop more rapidly. In the meantime, fields need to be monitored closely for thrips and seedling disease. There is a limit to how long control

(Continued on page 2)

Thrips Control—Ralph Bagwell, Ph.D.

Heavy thrips infestations will likely start occurring as adult thrips move from senescing wheat and other grasses to cotton. Cotton injury from thrips may be more as growth is also slower because of the cooler than normal conditions.

Treatment of thrips is only recommended when immature (wingless) thrips are present. The presence of immatures indicates that reproduc-

(Continued on page 2)

Inside this issue:

Cool, Slow Start	1
Thrips Control	1

Upcoming Dates:

- Northeast Research Station Field Day, St. Joseph—June 24
- Dean Lee Field Day, Alexandria—Aug. 21

Cool, Slow Start (cont'd from Page 1)

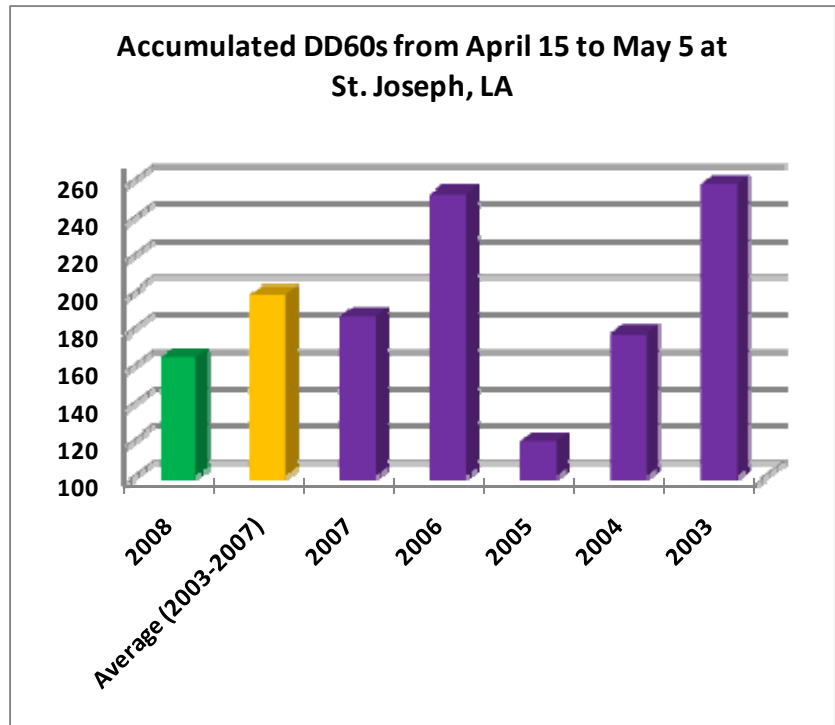
(Continued from page 1)

can be expected from any insecticide or fungicide, whether it is a seed treatment or in-furrow product. In-furrow products tend to last longer than seed treatments.

It is a fact of cotton production that the amount of seedling protection needed is a function of how quickly seedlings emerge and grow off. With the slow growing conditions we have experienced, close attention needs to be paid to fields planted two or more weeks ago. Dr. Ralph Bagwell discusses thrips control issues in this issue of the *Cotton Bulletin*.

Glyphosate Applications

As Dr. Bagwell points out in his article on thrips, automatically adding an insecticide to the tank when making an initial glyphosate application is not recommended unless immature thrips are present in the field. An additional point needs to be made con-



cerning early-season competition. There is sometimes a temptation to wait for cotton to either gain some size or for a good weed flush to emerge before making an initial glyphosate application. In slow-growing cotton, this can

(Continued on page 3)

Thrips Control (cont'd from page 1)

(Continued from page 1)

tion is occurring in the field. Reproduction occurs only after the at-planting insecticide becomes non-effective. Recommended foliar treatments, at broadcast application rates, for thrips control are shown on the following page.

Insecticides recommended for thrips control are systemic, thus thrips are exposed only to the insecticide by feeding on the treated plant. After feeding on a treated plant, they normally die, but the act of

feeding by the large number of thrips results in significant damage. Slow plant growth is causing more damage, because thrips are feeding on the same plant tissue for extended periods.

Thrips are almost impossible to manage in the current environment. Significant thrips damage will likely occur regardless of treatments applied. If you want to manage thrips for minimal damage, the best option is to apply a contact

(Continued on page 3)

Cool, Slow Start (cont'd from Page 2)

(Continued from page 2)

allow for more weed competition. The damaging effects of early weed competition in cotton are well documented. Competition from weeds can be even worse in slow growing fields, so keeping the beds weed free should be the first priority early in the season.



"Ragged" Cotton. Despite its appearance, no thrips were found in this field.

Thrips Control (cont'd from page 2)

(Continued from page 2)

insecticide every 24 to 48 hours. This is obviously not practical.

Take care when comparing different thrips treatments for efficacy. External factors such as the amount of nearby alternate hosts and field moisture conditions will have a very significant impact on the apparent efficacy.

Finally, many growers are beginning to apply "over the top" application of a glyphosate containing

products. Growers often want to tank mix an insecticide with this application in the hope that it will reduce the number of trips made across the field. This practice is not recommended unless immature thrips are being observed in the field. Unnecessary insecticide can, and often does, increase the probability of an outbreak of other insect pests. For example, acephate and Ammo both increase aphid reproduction. Application of either insecticide for unnecessary thrips control when aphids are present will only hasten the need for an additional insecticide application to control aphids.

LSU AgCenter Recommended Foliar Insecticides for Thrips Control.

Insecticide	Amount Product	Lb Active Ingredient	Acres Treated
	Acre	Acre	Gallon or lb.
acephate (90)	3.2 oz	0.18	5
Bidrin (8)	3.2 oz	0.2	40
Dimethoate (4)	6.4 oz	0.2	20
Dimethoate (5)	5.1 oz	0.2	25
Orthene (97)	3.0 oz	0.18	5.3



Dr. Sandy Stewart
Burch and D&PL Associate Professor
and Cotton Specialist

Dean Lee Research Station
8105 Tom Bowman Drive
Alexandria, LA 71302

Phone: 318-473-6522
Cell: 318-308-5625
E-mail: sstewart@agcenter.lsu.edu

LSU AgCenter Cotton
Extension

www.lsuagcenter.com

Parish	County Agent	Phone	Email
Avoyelles	Carlos Smith	318-253-7526	Csmith@agcenter.lsu.edu
Bossier	Joe Barrett	318-965-2326	JBarett@agcenter.lsu.edu
Caddo	John Levasseur	318-226-6505	JLevasseur@agcenter.lsu.edu
Caldwell	Jim McCann	318-649-2663	JMcCann@agcenter.lsu.edu
Catahoula	Cliff Watts	318-334-0700	CWatts@agcenter.lsu.edu
Concordia	Glen Daniels	318-336-5315	GDaniels@agcenter.lsu.edu
DeSoto	Hubert Wilkerson	318-453-1615	HWilkerson@agcenter.lsu.edu
East Carroll	Donna Lee	318-282-1292	DRLee@agcenter.lsu.edu
Evangeline	Keith Fontenot	337-363-5646	KFontenot@agcenter.lsu.edu
Franklin	Carol Pinnel-Alison	318-267-3713	CPinnel-Alison@agcenter.lsu.edu
Grant	Matt Martin	318-627-3675	MMartin@agcenter.lsu.edu
Lasalle	Jim Summers	318-992-2205	JSummers@agcenter.lsu.edu
Madison	R.L. Frazier	318-267-6714	RFrazier@agcenter.lsu.edu
Morehouse	Terry Erwin	318-282-3615	TErwin@agcenter.lsu.edu
Natchitoches	Hubert Wilkerson	318-453-1615	HWilkerson@agcenter.lsu.edu
Ouachita	Richard Letlow	318-282-2181	RLetow@agcenter.lsu.edu
Pointe Coupee	Miles Brashier	225-281-9469	MBrashier@agcenter.lsu.edu
Rapides	Matt Martin	318-473-6605	MMartin@agcenter.lsu.edu
Red River	Hubert Wilkerson	318-453-1615	HWilkerson@agcenter.lsu.edu
Richland	Keith Collins	318-355-0703	KCollins@agcenter.lsu.edu
St. Landry	Keith Normand	337-296-6859	KNormand@agcenter.lsu.edu
Tensas	Dennis Burns	318-267-6709	DBurns@agcenter.lsu.edu
West Carroll	Myrl Sistrunk	318-267-6712	MSistrunk@agcenter.lsu.edu

SPECIALISTS

Cotton Specialist	Sandy Stewart	318-473-6522 318-308-5625(cell)	sstewart@agcenter.lsu.edu
Weeds Specialist	Daniel Stephenson	318-473-6590 318-308-7225 (cell)	DStephenson@agcenter.lsu.edu
Entomology Specialist	Ralph Bagwell	318-435-2157 318-334-0393(cell)	Rbagwell@agcenter.lsu.edu
Nematodes Specialist	Charlie Overstreet	225-578-2186	Coverstreet@agcenter.lsu.edu
Pathology Specialist	Boyd Padgett	318-435-2157 318-308-9391(cell)	bpadgett@agcenter.lsu.edu
Economics Specialist	Gene Johnson	504-388-4081	GJohnson@agcenter.lsu.edu
Fertility Specialist	J. Stevens	318-427-4408 318-308-0754(cell)	JStevens@agcenter.lsu.edu
Extension Associate	Brandi C. Woolam	318-290-0625(cell)	bgarber@agcenter.lsu.edu

Louisiana State University Center Agricultural Center, William B. Richardson, Chancellor

Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station, David J. Boethel, Vice-Chancellor and Director

Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service, Paul D. Corell, Vice Chancellor and Director