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## NEWS LETTER APRIL 2008

### Upcoming Production Meetings

#### Cover Crop Production Meeting

Date: Tuesday, April 15, 2008

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Place: Tim Tucker Farm in Uriah. We will meet at the field on Highway 21, just one mile North of the Monroe Gin, which is also just North of Uriah.

Speakers: Dr. Edzard van Zanten, Professor in Agronomy, Auburn University. He is the plant breeder who developed the AU Robin Clover, AU Homer White Lupin and other legume crops. Primary focus will be on legume cover crops for our area. Tim Tucker is conducting an on farm experiment using 8 different cover crops. Dr. Dennis Delaney, AU Soybean Specialist and Tillage Specialist, and Specialists from the USDA Tillage Lab in Auburn will have brief topics discussing the impacts of cover crops and tillage. We will tour this demonstration and then have a sponsored lunch at the Monroe Gin.

#### Wheat Cold Injury.

There are many factors affecting wheat cold injury. Typically 27 degrees for two hours will cause cold injury. On March 24 we had some temperatures that were very close to damaging our small grain crops. Randy Akridge, Superintendent of the Brewton Ag. Research Unit for Auburn University sent me this web site for Middleton Field at Evergreen. Here the temperatures are recorded by hour for the previous three days. This Site sometime may be helpful for you, especially if you are concerned about the cold temperatures in your area.

<http://www.weather.gov/data/obhistory/KGZH.html>

ALABAMA A&M AND AUBURN UNIVERSITIES, AND TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY, COUNTY GOVERNING BODIES AND USDA COOPERATING

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## University of Georgia Row Crop web sites

Listed are a few University of Georgia web sites that I find helpful from time to time. They are good reference and excellent production guides. They may prove helpful to you as well.

Cotton:

<http://commodities.caes.uga.edu/fieldcrops/cotton/2008cottonguide/2008CottonGuide.htm>

Corn:

<http://www.caes.uga.edu/commodities/fieldcrops/gagrains/2008CornProductionGuide.html>

Soybean: [http://www.caes.uga.edu/commodities/fieldcrops/soybeans/prod\\_guide.html](http://www.caes.uga.edu/commodities/fieldcrops/soybeans/prod_guide.html)

Peanuts: <http://www.ugapeanuts.com/>

Wheat: <http://www.caes.uga.edu/commodities/fieldcrops/gagrains/wheat.html>

Other grains: <http://www.caes.uga.edu/commodities/fieldcrops/gagrains/othergrains.html>

Sorghum: <http://www.caes.uga.edu/commodities/fieldcrops/gagrains/sorghum.html>

All located from this site: <http://www.caes.uga.edu/commodities/fieldcrops/index.html>

### Marketing – A Necessary Chore

Dr. Bob Goodman, Auburn University Extension Economist

The commodity markets have been in turmoil since last fall. Some crop prices have increased dramatically, others – cotton to be specific, have not. All commodities seem to have suffered from some fundamental changes in the way futures markets operate. The advent of electronic trading and the discovery of the futures markets by large “hedge funds” have significantly increased volatility in all markets. For example, last month cotton futures soared over 20 cents then retreated to near the previous level in just a week. Some farmers were able to market cotton at nearly a dollar per pound. Most were not. To take advantage of that market, a farmer had to be in close contact with the market, and most farmers do not spend the day tied to a computer or DTN machine.

Much of the cotton in Alabama is marketed through what is called a “pool” or “association”. Several of these organizations operate in the state. One, the Autauga Quality Cotton Association (<http://www.aqca.com/>) was actually started in the state. Another well known “pool” is Staplcotn, (<http://www.staplcotn.com/>) operating out of Mississippi. These pools exist to market cotton for their members.

However, it is debatable whether these pools can get a higher price for cotton than an individual farmer can. Granted, they deal in much larger volumes of cotton and thus may have a bigger footprint in the marketplace, but in my opinion the actual timing of sales may have a much larger effect on price, and any farmer can “time” sales to achieve a higher season average price. All it takes is extremely good luck, like being in the gin office on the day cotton goes to 98 cents.

But pools and associations do provide a valuable service. The simple fact is that if they didn’t, they would go out of business, and they haven’t. In fact, they seem to be growing. Marketing is an essential chore on any farm, and if the farmer is unwilling to do it himself or hire someone else, farm profit will

suffer. Also, these pools provide a marketing service for cotton that requires no up-front fee or subscription.

I highly recommend participation in any one of these pools to any farmer who is not going to make marketing a top priority.

Autauga Quality Cotton Association, Jeff Thompson 1-800-438-3338  
Staplcotn, Tom McKee 1-877-207-3941

### **Wheat Update April 2008**

The wheat and oat crop in Southwest Alabama as of April 1, 2008 looks very promising. The crop report for Alabama has wheat acres doubling to 200,000 acres for 2008.

**Wheat Diseases.** In other parts of the wheat growing belt growers typically wait to see diseases present before applying a fungicide. In Southwest Alabama, research has shown that applying a fungicide always pays as long as the wheat crop is at least an average crop and the wheat price is reasonable. Leaf rust was found in Baldwin County around March 15<sup>th</sup>. This disease is typically worse on oats. Some growers applied an early application of fungicides to control this disease and prevent its spread. Powdery mildew is also present in most wheat fields, but only at a low level. Treatment has not been necessary. Powdery mildew grows best at temperatures between 50 and 70 degrees F and nearly 100 per cent humidity, so it too could be a problem. The important key to fungicide timing is to know the flag leaf stage. At the flag leaf stage the seed head is in the stem just starting to emerge. The seed head can be seen down in the stem at this stage. The flag leaf is most important to protect as it is the leaf that supplies the nutrient materials for the grain head. A fungicide application should be made at this time. Dr. Austin Hagan, Auburn University Peanut and Grain Pathologist is recommending a full rate of a quality fungicide such as Headline, Quilt or Stratego at this time. A second application of a fungicide will most likely be necessary. Spray the flag leaf and then wait 2-3 weeks before making the second application when 80 to 90 % of the heads have emerged. If the weather during that time has been rainy, applying a second application of a quality fungicide would be the choice. If the weather dries, Tilt 3.6F or a generic propiconazole would be a less costly alternative to protect the seed heads. Bacterial blight or black chaff, have been found in several wheat fields in South Alabama. It has only been found in the varieties AGS 2010 and AGS 2020. There is no control for this disease. Hopefully it will not be too big of a problem.

**Insects on wheat.** Scouting and spraying for aphids is about over. Unless you are seeing extreme populations of aphids it does not pay to spray. The threshold is 10 English aphids per seed head before spraying. The disease Barley Yellow Dwarf (that is spread by aphids) has been very low this year. As far as Hessian fly just be aware for planning for next year. As wheat heads the flies move up the stalk and lay their eggs further up the stalk making them easier to find. Look for stalks that are lodged and split them open. If it is Hessian fly you will find a flax seed looking egg. There is nothing you can do now. Just observe for next year. As acres increase Hessian fly populations should increase. Plant on the recommended planting dates, plant resistant varieties and possibly use a seed treatment.

### **Peanuts, Caution on Planting Early**

Planting date studies have been conducted in Alabama, Georgia and Florida now for quite a few years. The results clearly indicate that peanuts planted between May 10 and May 20 out performed peanuts

planted between April 10 and April 20. Planting too early is risky both from a tomato spotted wilt virus standpoint and cool soil temperature. From a soil temperature standpoint the soil needs to be 65 degrees at the 4 inch depth at 9:00 a.m. in the morning for four consecutive days with a good weather forecast for the future before planting. A soil thermometer can be a very useful tool to a grower. Another source for the soil temperature is <http://www.awis.com/mesonet/index.html>. Two good sites for our area are Brewton and Fairhope. Soil temperature at the 4 inch depth at Brewton at 8 a.m. April 2<sup>nd</sup> is 71 degrees. The soil temperature at Fairhope is 63 degrees. This soil temperature will go down if we have another cold spell as we typically do. In most years the soil temperature does not stay this warm until late April. If a grower does decide to plant early for example in late April, it would be best to plant varieties with the best resistance to TSWV. These varieties would be AP-3, Georgia-03L, Georgia-02C, or one of the new release varieties with higher levels of TSWV resistance. Avoid planting Georgia Green in April if at all possible.

### **Soybean Seed Update April 2008**

Dr. Dennis Delaney, AU Soybean Specialist.

Due to the difficulty in finding soybean seed this year, Ag. and Industries Comm. Ron Sparks has issued an emergency order to allow sale of soybean seed in Alabama with reduced germination rates to 60% (normally minimum of 70%). I understand this is for 120 days from Feb. 22, 2008 (see below). This should help our producers to find more soybean seed for planting.

Producers should be aware of the actual germination rate of the seed that they purchase and adjust their planting practices accordingly. This would include higher seeding rates and precise planting into optimum soil moisture and temperatures for the lower germinating lots.

Reportedly, extremely hot conditions during seed fill and then dry conditions at harvest in areas where much of our seed is grown led to mechanical damage and lower germination. Treating soybean seed with recommended fungicides can often increase soybean seedling emergence, however, rough handling during treatment and planting operations can further damage this seed, so producers will need to be careful.

Dr. Trey Koger, the new Mississippi Extension Soybean Specialist, has a very good discussion of the problem in the MS Crop Situation newsletter from March 12, 2008:  
<http://msucares.com/newsletters/pests/cis/index.html>

### **HERBICIDE TRADE NAMES AND ACTIVE INGREDIENTS**

Dr. Mike Patterson and John Everest, Auburn University Weed Scientists

**INTRRO** (alachlor) 4 # /gal - Monsanto, preplant incorporated (ppi) or preemergence (pre) on soybean, grain sorghum.

**BULLET** (alachlor + atrazine) 2.5 + 1.5 # /gal - Monsanto, ppi or pre on field corn, grain sorghum

**REFLEX** (fomesafen) 2 # /gal - Syngenta, pre, post-directed (pds) on cotton, ppi, pre, postemergence (post) on soybean, 18 months recrop to root crops.

**FLEXSTAR** (fomesafen) 1.88 # /gal - Syngenta, ppi, pre, post on soybean 18 months to root crop.

**DUAL MAGNUM** (s-metolachlor) 7.62 3 /gal - Syngenta, ppi, pre, pds on corn, post on RR cotton, ppi, pre on soybean, ppi, pre, post on peanut.

**PREFIX** (s-metolachlor + fomesafen) 4.34 + 0.95 # /gal – Syngenta, preplant foliar (ppf), ppi, pre on soybean.

**EXPERT** (atrazine + s-metolachlor) 2.14 + 1.74 # /gal – Syngenta, pre, post on field corn, grain sorghum.

**LUMAX** (s-metolachlor + atrazine + mesiotrione) 2.68 + 1.0 + 0.27 # /gal – Syngenta, pre, post on field corn.

**LEXAR** (s-metolachlor + atrazine + mesiotrione) 1.74 + 1.74 + 0.22 # /gal – Syngenta, pre, post on field corn.

**GUARDSMAN** ( dimethenamid + atrazine ) 1.7 + 3.3 # /gal- BASF, ppf, ppi, pre, post on field corn. 18 months to vegetables.

**SYNCHRONY XP** (chlorimuron + thifensulfuron) 21.5% + 6.9% - Dupont, ppf, ppi, pre, on soybean. 18 months to vegetables.

**CANOPY EX** (chlorimuron + tribenuron) 22.7% + 6.8% - Dupont , ppf with residual on soybean. 18 months to vegetables.

**ENVIVE** (chlorimuron + flumioxazin + thifensulfuron) 9.2% + 29.2% + 2.9% - Dupont, ppf with residual on soybean, 10 months to cotton.

**RESOLVE DF** (rimsulfuron) 25% - Dupont, ppf, pre, post on field corn. 10 months to cotton, soybean, 18 months to peanut, vegetable.

**RESOLVE Q** (rimsulfuron + thifensulfuron) 18.4% + 4% - Dupont, post on field corn. 10 months to cotton, soybean, 18 months to peanut.

**FIRSTSHOT SG** (thifensulfuron + tribenuron) 25% + 25% - Dupont, ppf on cotton corn, soybean, peanut.

**FIRSTRATE** (cloransulam) 0.84 #/gal – Dow, ppf, ppi, pre, post on soybean. 9 months to corn, cotton, peanut.

**VALOR XLT** (flumioxazin + chlorimuron) 30% + 10.3% - Valent, pre on soybean. 18 months to cotton, 10 months to corn.

**GANGSTER** (flumioxazin/cloransulam co-pak) – Valent, pre on soybean, 9 months to cotton, corn, oats.

### HERBICIDE PRICE AND BURNDOWN OPTIONS FOR COTTON

Mike Patterson, Extension Weed Scientist

The cost of glyphosate herbicide has increased significantly over last year at this time. Glyphosate in its many forms is one of the primary herbicides used for burndown (preplant foliar) applications in our reduced tillage production systems. Other herbicides are often mixed with glyphosate to increase weed spectrum and/or manage hard to kill or herbicide resistant weeds (i.e. glyphosate resistant horseweed). Apparently the world demand for glyphosate has out stripped the production this year and this has resulted in higher prices. Another reason may be the increased price of crude oil that drives our economy. What options can you consider in this situation to get optimum results in a burndown spray?

First, there are different formulations and concentrations of glyphosate products being sold. Comparing different glyphosate formulations can be confusing. One rule to remember in comparing these products is to look at the active ingredient on the product label and especially look at the pounds acid equivalent (ae) in each gallon of material. For example, a high-end glyphosate product like Roundup Power Max contains 4.5 lbs ae per gallon. Most generics contain 3.0 lbs ae per gallon. The standard or X rate of Power Max is 21 fluid ounces per acre. The standard rate of a 3.0 lb ae generic is 32 fluid ounces per acre. Power Max has about 50% more active ingredient per gallon than the generic.

Another point to compare is the surfactant load in the product. Power Max, Weathermax, Touchdown Total, and other name brand glyphosate products have excellent surfactant systems in the jug and no other surfactants are needed. Generics may or may not have good surfactant systems in the jug. Always ask the person you are buying from if the product has a good surfactant. If they don't know, then adding additional non-ionic surfactant at 1 quart per 100 gallons of spray mix is a good idea.


Regardless of the glyphosate formulation you use for burndown, adding additional herbicides like 2,4-D (one pint or less) or Clarity (8 fluid ounces), applied 30 and 21 days ahead of cotton, respectively, can increase the control of weeds like cutleaf evening primrose and horseweed. Aim, ET, and Resource can be added to increase activity on certain broadleaf weeds without a waiting period for planting. These products along with the 2,4-D and Clarity do not offer any residual activity on future germinating weeds. Harmony Extra with glyphosate provides increased activity on several winter annual broadleaf weeds and has a 14 day planting restriction. Harmony Extra works slower than most herbicides and may require 3 to 4 weeks for optimum control. Valor (1.5 – 2 oz), diuron (1.5 pt), and Caparol (1.5 pt) all provide residual activity in addition to increasing the foliar activity of glyphosate in burndown. These materials at the rates listed require a 14 day waiting period to planting cotton.

Paraquat (Gramoxone, etc.) operates on a different mode of action than glyphosate. This can be good if you know how to use this product. On the weeds it controls, paraquat kills quickly. Primrose and horseweed are tolerant of paraquat alone, but adding a little Valor (excluding horseweed), Caparol or diuron with paraquat significantly increases the activity on these weeds. Adding 2,4-D or Clarity with the paraquat and either Valor, Caparol or diuron and you have a very good burndown mixture. Unlike glyphosate, that can be sprayed in as little as 5 gallons of solution per acre, paraquat must cover the plant to obtain optimum activity and therefore should be sprayed in a minimum of 15 gallons of solution per acre.

Finally, Ignite herbicide can be used in place of glyphosate or paraquat in burndown mixtures. Ignite has good activity alone on primrose and horseweed (including glyphosate resistant horseweed). Adding additional products mentioned above can increase both foliar and/or residual activity of these mixes. Ignite alone is weak on grass cover crops like wheat, etc. and glyphosate should be mixed with Ignite if these grasses need to be killed prior to planting.

Again, I hope this information has been helpful.

Sincerely,



Richard L. Petcher  
Regional Extension Agent  
Agronomic Crops

