

TIMELY INFORMATION

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PEANUT SCOUTING REPORT: THRIPS IN PEANUTS

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Here is a short report on preliminary thrips counts from a biological control field study currently underway at the Gulf Coast Research and Extension Center, Fairhope, AL. The test was planted to peanuts (Georgia Green) on May 22, 2009. Various application rates of microbial and botanical insecticides (foliar sprays) are being tested in rotation with reduced rates of Temik 15G and Thimet 20G. Before the spray program for bioinsecticides was initiated last week, I scouted the Temik and Thimet plots that received one-half of the labeled rate for granular insecticides (i.e., Temik half-rate = 3.2 lb/A; Thimet half-rate = 2 lb/A).

Observations were recorded on June 12, 2009. Five plants were sampled destructively from rows 1 and 4 of each plot; a transparent Ziploc bag was inverted on the peanut seedlings and then the plant was plucked from the ground to prevent the escape of thrips during sampling. Peanut plants were then vigorously shaken inside the plastic bag in order to dislodge and stun thrips followed by removal of organic matter from the bag. Thrips counts were recorded in the field and laboratory. The table below summarizes preliminary observations:

<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Number of plots sampled</i>	<i>Average thrips population per plant</i>
Thimet 20G (full labeled rate)	40 plants outside research plots	0.20
Thimet 20G (half labeled rate)	28	0.58
Temik 15G (half labeled rate)	20	0.45
Untreated plots	14	0.95

Preliminary data suggests a linear increase in thrips numbers in treated plots depending on the rate of granular insecticides, i.e., higher the rate used lower are the preliminary thrips numbers. The untreated plots have almost 1 thrips per plant. The predominant species is tobacco thrips, *Frankliniella fusca* (pictured above). The hot and dry weather condition is facilitating rapid growth of thrips on these peanuts that were also planted slightly late compared to many commercial peanut producers. A high number of thrips on peanuts is known to increase the chance of TSWV infection, so it will be interesting to see what happens in this biocontrol study. Thrips count and TSWV hits will be taken for the next three to four weeks. This biocontrol study is also being replicated at the Wiregrass Research and Extension Center, Headland, AL but observations there are pending.



Other insects I encountered during peanut scouting at Fairhope were some early instars of the beet armyworm (pictured on left) that were feeding on peanut leaves in small aggregates (common habit of the early instars). Mite populations may become abundant with prolonged heat and dry period, so keep a close eye on your peanut crop. Keep scouting fields for timely detection of pest problems.

You can now supplement your crop scouting effort with IPM pheromone trap data to stay informed in the best possible manner. Interested? Click on <https://sites.aces.edu/group/crops/peanut/default.aspx> and then click on 'IPM Pheromone Trap Network'. For assistance related to insect issues in peanuts, please contact Ayanava Majumdar, cell phone: 251-331-8416, linc# 7*333, e-mail: azm0024@auburn.edu.