



Arkansas Cotton Update



April 23, 2008

Tom Barber - Editor

Number 2

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Planting Forecast (Tom Barber - Extension Agronomist, Cotton)

The comments in this planting forecast are meant to be used as a guide. Weather forecasts are subject to change and errors. The comments included below provide no guarantee and are meant only as a guide.

Five-Day Heat Unit

Accumulations (DD60) and Rainfall Outlook (April 24 – April 28)

Predicted DD60 accumulation for five days following planting	Outlook for planting
< 10	Very Poor
11-15	Poor
16-25	Marginal
25-50	Good
>50	Very Good

Northeast Arkansas

Historic DD60s – 22

Predicted DD60s – 15.5

Precipitation – 80% Chance of rain Thursday, 50% Friday, 10% Saturday, 40% Sunday and 20% Monday

Planting Forecast – Poor

Central Arkansas

Historic DD60s – 30.5

Predicted DD60s – 21

Precipitation – 80% Chance of rain Thursday, 50% Friday, 10% Saturday, 40% Sunday and 20% Monday.

Planting Forecast – Marginal

Southeast Arkansas

Historic DD60s – 32

Predicted DD60s – 30

Precipitation – 60% Chance of rain Thursday, 40% Friday, 40% Saturday, 40% Sunday and 10% Monday.

Planting Forecast – Good

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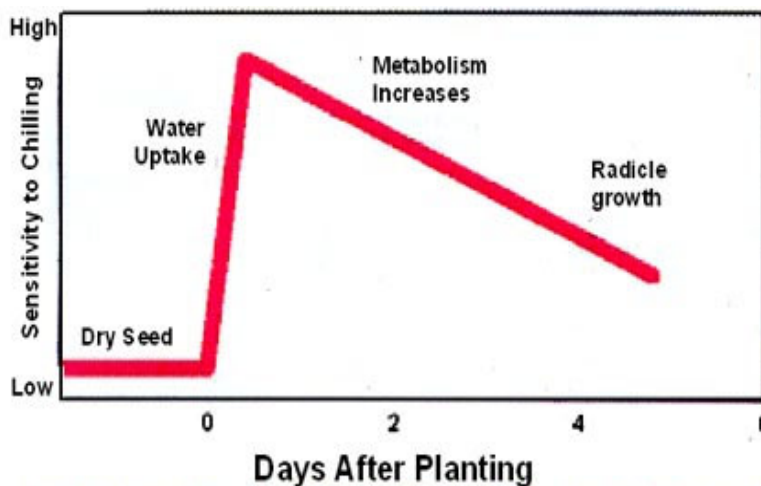
Cotton Update (Tom Barber - Extension Agronomist, Cotton)

Few acres of cotton have been planted to date in Arkansas. As of last Monday, the Arkansas Agricultural Statistics Service report indicated that approximately 5% of cotton acres have been planted. This compares to 3% planted this time last season and 6% for the five year average. Many planters were rolling across the Southern counties of Arkansas, earlier this week. However, very few of them were planting cotton. The Southern most counties, Chicot and Ashley continue to be the driest counties where cotton is produced. Carl Hayden in Chicot County mentioned to me today that several farmers have stopped planting due to lack of moisture. This is hardly the case across the rest of the state. Monday I sent out a planting forecast report indicating that there was a 30 to 40% chance of rain this week. Yesterday that 30% chance turned quickly into 100% for many areas. Now forecasters indicate 80% chance tomorrow for most areas and 40% chances for several days in the future.

The planting forecast on the previous page indicates that temperatures will once again turn cool over the weekend into the first part of the week. I am a little worried about the cool snap that is forecasted the next few days. However, I am not the least bit surprised to see the cool weather. If you take a look at the long term average (40 years), you will find that on average, we will get a cool snap at the end of April almost every year. Growers in North Arkansas should probably wait until this last cool front passes before planting, assuming that it is dry enough to plant in the first place. Figure 1 below illustrates the cotton seed's sensitivity to chilling each day after planting.

If the cotton seed has been in the ground for 48 to 72 hours or 2 to 3 days, it will most likely be ok. However, the seed that tries to germinate within 24 hours of the cool and wet soil conditions is most at risk. The following figure describes the relationship between germination, days after planting and chilling injury of the cotton seed. If you will notice, the most injury will occur within the 24 hour period of germination during the time where the seed takes up the necessary moisture for germination. It is the cooler soils coupled with the cold water that can give us the most trouble. Cotton can withstand the cooler soil temperatures if the soil is dry. However, the cool soil coupled with cold water can be devastating.

Figure 1



Adapted from - Physiology Today, March 1990, Kater Hake et. al. National Cotton Council

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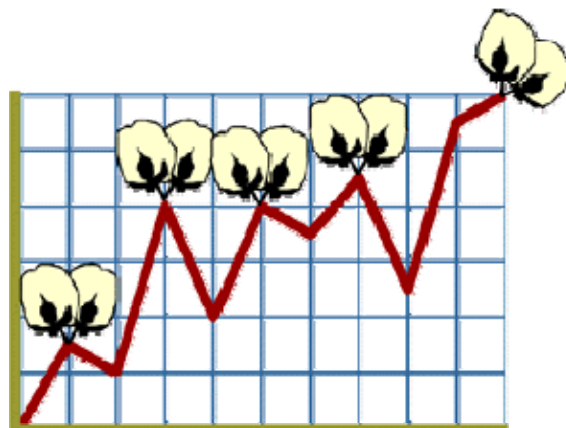
Market Update (Scott Stiles – Extension Economist)

April 22, 2008

New York Futures

December cotton settled higher Tuesday and erased Monday's 124 point loss. Commodities as a whole were strong Tuesday. Corn, wheat, rice and soybeans were all up. Crude oil trading near \$120 and the U.S. Dollar making new lows supported cotton prices as well.

For the present time, it seems that December cotton futures move higher with the grains and soybeans. As planted acreage materializes and the growing season progresses, December futures will develop more into a weather market with particular attention on Texas (half of U.S. acreage) and Asian production.



On Tuesday, the CFTC held its' hearing on the futures markets and issues related to volatility. In regard to the March run- up in cotton prices, the CFTC showed that speculative funds and index funds were actually sellers in the market. The price increase came from traders considered as commercial interests buying back positions. No one at the meeting could offer an exact reason why cotton futures rose. The CFTC did acknowledge that if an institutional or individual investor meets their position limit, they can go through what is referred to as a swap dealer. Investment through a swap dealer is considered commercial activity and fund trading would receive an exemption in that case.

Tues. 4/22	Close	Change	Range
Dec 08 Cotton	83.08	+139	81.48-83.30

U.S. Crop Progress

Monday afternoon, the USDA released its weekly crop progress report. Nationwide, planting has progressed to 14% as of April 20, which is 2% higher than last year, but the same as the five-year average. Arkansas is 5% planted, 0% last week, 3% this week a year ago. The Arkansas five-year average for this week is 6% planted.

U.S. Farm Bill

A one week Farm Bill extension has been granted through April 25. Conferees are trying to resolve the final issues which are mostly related to paying for the spending increase. It's possible the 2002 Farm Bill will be extended 1 year.

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World Food and Input Crisis

The global food shortage issue is all over the headlines this week making the *New York Times*, *Financial Times*, and *The Economist*. Argentina, Brazil, India, Thailand, Kazakhstan and Vietnam, to name a few, are all restricting exports of grains and/or oilseeds. This is increasing price volatility in the commodity markets—particularly rice. 2009 cotton futures will have no choice but to compete fiercely for acreage.

Diesel and fertilizer prices are getting uglier. Crude oil is technically overbought, but many global news items are pushing crude oil higher this week. The usual suspects: Nigerian rebels, Chinese demand and OPEC.

One recent story in the news illustrated the outlook for potash. Canpotex (Canadian Potash Exporters), the world's largest exporter of potash, agreed to ship 1 million metric tons of potash to China for \$576 per metric ton. This is roughly a \$400 per metric ton increase (+230%) over 2007 prices. For investors, the companies that own Canpotex are Mosaic Inc. (NYSE: MOS), Potash Corp. of Saskatchewan Inc. (NYSE: POT), and Agrium Inc. (NYSE: AGU). Also, China is placing huge tariffs on fertilizer exports to guarantee adequate supplies for their own crop production. And, Urea prices at the U.S. Gulf have been moving up this month. Gulf prices were up on average \$69/ton or about 18% during week of April 10 thru 17th.

Weed Control Questions (Ken Smith – Extension Weed Specialist)

Fields have been wet and burndown was made late. How soon can we plant after a dicamba application?

The label states 21 days following an inch of rain. Technically, this means that we cannot start counting days until an inch of rain has occurred. This is an accumulated amount, so we add all rainfall amounts until it adds up to one inch and then start counting. There has been some talk about reducing the plant back interval to 14 days on cotton to be consistent with the soybean label. We have the data to support this change, but it has not been modified and the 21-day interval is still in effect in Arkansas.

I am just now able to get into some fields, what can I use for burndown?

Ignite at 32 – 40 ounces plus AMS is probably the best alternative for horseweed at this time. Although the MP-44 states that there is a seven day plant back interval following Ignite applications, this has been changed, and cotton can be planted immediately following Ignite applications.

I had pigweed escapes last year and/or samples sent in indicated glyphosate resistant pigweed in my fields. What is my best program this year?

Obviously, soil applied residual herbicides will be required to control the pigweed. If they germinate and get too large to control with a directed application, we have no over-the-top post-emergence herbicides to control pigweed in cotton. Staple and Envoke have ALS mode of action and approximately 50% of the pigweed in Arkansas are already resistant to this mode of action. We have outlined our suggestions for controlling resistant pigweeds in an Extension Fact Sheet (FSA2152 Prevention and Control of Glyphosate-Resistant Pigweed in Roundup Ready Soybean and Cotton) that

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can be picked up at the county extension office or accessed online at:
http://www.uaex.edu/Other_Areas/publications/PDF-FSA-2152.pdf

We have a new 24C label that allows Reflex to be applied 14-21 days prior to planting cotton on medium and fine textured soils. Reflex is also labeled PRE on sand soils, but we feel the potential for injury is too great to use PRE in Arkansas. Our data on the 14 – 21 day pre-plant has shown very strong early season pigweed program with no injury to cotton. If it is not possible to get Reflex down pre-plant, a pre-emergence herbicide, such as Cotoran, will help keep pigweeds in check until an over-the-top application of Dual can be made in the first or second glyphosate application.

How serious and how widespread are glyphosate-resistant pigweed?

Two hundred, seventy-six samples seed samples were collected from seventy-four farms throughout Eastern Arkansas in 2007. After thrashing, 26 samples contained no viable seed. The remaining 250 were screened for glyphosate resistance by spraying with a rate equivalent to 22 ounces of Roundup WeatherMax. Out of the 250 samples screened, only 30 showed no survivors and 110 had some, but less than 10% survival; approximately 100 samples had between 10 and 50% resistant offspring and 18 samples had greater than 50% survivors. The largest number of survivors was 97%. Palmer pigweed has male and female plants. Obviously, the females are pollinated by many males and each seed in the seedhead carries different genetic material and can demonstrate different levels of resistance. Unfortunately, we have identified glyphosate resistance in pigweeds in almost every cotton-producing county.

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