August 8, 2014

August Newsletter

Dear Crittenden County Producers,

Our earlier planted crops are nearing maturity. If you haven’t already terminated irrigation, here are some tips for when to terminate from the production handbooks:

Corn: starch line at 50% for furrow irrigation and 75% for pivot irrigation, corn is mature when black layer is formed

Grain Sorghum: 50% dough (or colored), Desicant should not be applied until all grains to the bottom of the head are mature.

Soybeans: 50% or more of the pods have seeds that are touching within the pod

Rice: 25 days after 50% heading for long-grain cultivars, 30 days for medium-grain cultivars and 35 days for short-grain cultivars

Cotton: Terminate irrigation when 350-450 heat units have accumulated past cutout (NAWF-5)

Sugar Cane Aphids arrived in Crittenden County around June 28, and have dispersed themselves very quickly from north to south. They are fairly easy to find usually beginning on the south edge of fields, and on solitary plants if the stand is skippy. The aphids will be most numerous on the underside of the leaves. Look for shiny spots on the tops of leaves in the bottom half of the plant. A small number of aphids (3 or 4) can secrete enough honeydew to produce visible spots. For Grain Sorghum at or near maturity, the risk is a decrease in harvest efficiency from the honeydew hindering the ability of the combine to thresh the grain. Severe cases have been reported where plugging of the combine occurs. Treatment thresholds have not been established by the U of A since this pest is so new.

Insects: There was a fairly large flight of bollworm moths the week of July 7, followed by small numbers for several weeks. The numbers began to increase earlier this week, so be on the lookout for these worms in your soybeans. I urge all of our growers to apply insecticides based on presence of threshold levels, and not apply an insecticide just because you are making some other treatment such as fungicide. How many times have you heard Dr. Lorenz warn of making an unnecessary insecticide application, killing all of the beneficial insects, and then seeing the pest population explode. Please keep this in mind.
Talk about the law of unintended consequences, here is an interesting subject. We are seeing more instances of sulphur deficiency in some crops. Some is on recently leveled land, and some on light or sandy land. It is believed that the cleaning up of the coal fired power plants has reduced the amount of sulphur released into the atmosphere, which would fall as acid rain. That free nutrient source has been reduced, so we will need to monitor our soil sulphur levels and maintain them for optimum yields and plant health.

The Soybean Promotion Board has released the Grow for the Green Yield Challenge for 2014. There are 8 categories: 7 geographic and 1 entire state conventional (non GMO). Prizes will be awarded for the top 3 in each category (1st place $10,000, 2nd place $7,500, and 3rd place $5,000). Crittenden County is in District 1, along with the counties of Mississippi, Clay, Greene, Craighead, Poinsett, and Cross. Last year’s winner was 85.9 bushels per acre, with 3rd place being 83.7. Additional information is available at [www.arkansassoybean.com](http://www.arkansassoybean.com). I have a limited number of information sheets here in the office.

The Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service is an equal opportunity/equal access/affirmative action institution. If you require a reasonable accommodation to participate or need materials in another format, please contact your County Extension office (or other appropriate office) as soon as possible. Dial 711 for Arkansas Relay.

Thank you all for your support of the Extension Service and its mission.

Sincerely,

Russ Parker
County Extension Agent – Agriculture

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