

# Mississippi Crop Situation

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Editor: Angus Catchot

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<http://www.msucares.com/newsletters/pests/cis/index.html>

## **Crop Situation: (For the week ending September 16, 2007)**

Cotton had 90% open bolls and 5% harvested. Corn was 100% mature, and 92% harvested. Soybeans were 95% turning color, and 46% harvested. Rice was 99% mature and 70% harvested. Sorghum is 93% harvested. Peanuts are 17% harvested. State average air temperature was 76 degrees (normal). Weekly rainfall was 1.7 inches (0.78 inches above normal).

## **Cotton Defoliation**

**Dr. Darrin Dodds**

The National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) estimates crop condition as 2% very poor, 5% poor, 27% fair, 50% good, and 16% excellent. Cotton defoliation is progressing after delays last week due to rainfall; approximately 5% of the cotton acreage has been harvested compared to 28% at this time last year and an average of 12% over the past five years. NASS yield estimate for Mississippi is 953 lbs/acre.

Recent rainfall and cooler temps would have been a welcome sight in August; however, they can lead to problems in mid- to late-September. The recent rainfall has led to problems with cotton re-growth, especially in areas where residual nitrogen was present in the soil due to mid-season drought. Products containing thidiazuron (i.e. Dropp, Freefall, Klean-Pik, Thidiazuron, etc.) should be considered in defoliation applications this week to prevent re-growth in these and other areas where re-growth may be a problem. However, keep in mind that forecasted temperatures for the next ten days include highs in the upper 80's and lower 90's and lows in the mid to upper 60's. Be mindful of temperature fluctuations when making defoliation decisions as they can have a significant impact on the activity of various defoliant. Generally, if temperatures drop into the 65°F range, activity of thidiazuron products begins to decline. Under current conditions with mid to upper 60 degree temperatures predicted, there may be enough heat and sunlight during the daytime for thidiazuron to still perform well. However, care should be exercised with thidiazuron over the next couple of weeks as we are walking a fine line between acceptable and reduced activity. If we reach a point where we are increasing thidiazuron rates (based on temperature) to maintain performance, it may be time to think about alternative products. Herbicidal defoliant such as Aim, ET, Resource, and Blizzard, etc. as well as thidiazuron/herbicidal defoliant (i.e. Ginstar) are less temperature sensitive than thidiazuron. However, exercise caution in rate selection with herbicidal defoliant as the potential for desiccation is increased with these products. If I can do anything to help, don't hesitate to give me a call at 662-418-1024.



Table 1. Expected activity of various defoliants as compiled by Drs. Sandy Stewart and Donnie Miller in 2007 Cotton Defoliation Guide for Louisiana.

<b>Table of Expected Activity of Various Defoliants</b>					
Material	Estimated minimum temperature	Expected activity			
		Mature leaves	Juvenile growth	Regrowth prevention	Boll opening
Def/Folex	60°F	Excellent	Fair	Poor	None
Thidiazuron	65°F	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	None
Harvade	55°F	Excellent	Fair	Poor	None
Ginstar	60°F	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	None
Aim	55°F	Excellent	Excellent	Poor	None
ET	55°F	Excellent	Excellent	Poor	None
Resource	55°F	Excellent	Excellent	Poor	None
Blizzard	55°F	Excellent	Excellent	Poor	None
Prep/SuperBoll, others	60°F	Fair	Poor	Poor	Excellent
Finish	60°F	Excellent	Poor	Fair	Excellent
CottonQuik/FirstPick	60°F	Excellent	Poor	Poor-Fair	Excellent
Glyphosate	55°F	Fair	Fair	Excellent	None
Sodium Chlorate	55°F	Fair	Fair	Poor	None
Paraquat	55°F	Desiccation	Excellent	Poor	Fair

## Area Update

### Dr. Chris Daves, Central/South MS

The latest USDA Ag Report stated corn was 92% harvested. Corn harvest in our area as well as the areas I travel weekly checking traps reflects this number. A majority of the remaining cornfields I saw yesterday had combines running in them. A lot of the early soybeans have been or are in the process of being harvested. There are a few wheat-beans in the area that are just now showing signs of turning. Cotton harvest in the area is sporadic to none. Most if not all the cotton is ready to be defoliated. Many of these fields will likely be defoliated this week.

### Dr. Don Cook, Northeast MS

Most of the corn has been harvested as well as the early soybeans. Folks are finishing up these two and starting to harvest some of the later beans. Wheat beans still have a good while left, the ones I have looked at have fairly high numbers of stink bugs and clover worms. Some cotton has been defoliated and some folks will probably start picking next week.

## Insects

**Cotton:** **Angus Catchot:** We recently conducted a survey to try and document the plant bug situation in the delta this year. Only problem was the scale we used was too low to accurately capture the upper limits on plant bug applications. In our survey we had 158,000 acres represented. This is approximately 35% of the delta acres. Of the acres represented in the survey, 44.7% received more than 10 applications for plant bugs and another 38.5% received between 7-10 applications. We are currently working on another survey to better document the plant bug situation in the Mississippi delta for the 2007 growing season. Up until this year the record average number of plant bug applications for the delta was 5.2 sprays during the 2004 season. With few new products coming from industry, we are currently working on a plan to incorporate everything we know about plant bug management both chemically and non-chemically on to grower farms to try and reduce tarnished plant bug applications for 2008. Similar to the S.M.A.R.T. program we think we can utilize all the things researchers have

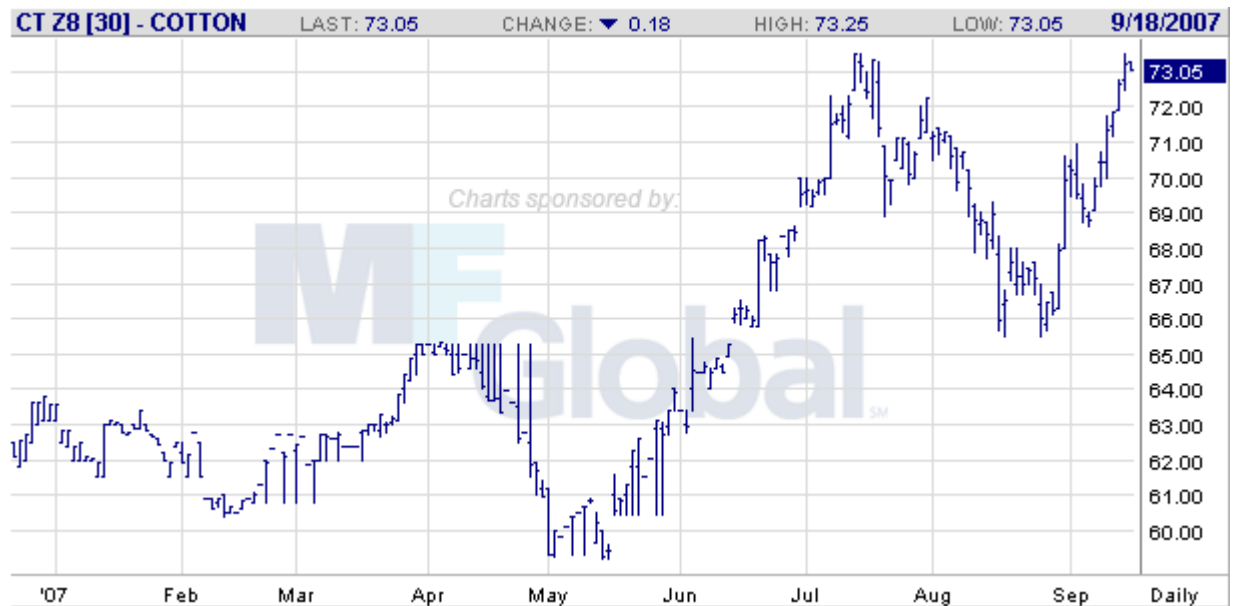
learned over the years about tarnished plant bugs and apply it to large field systems and demonstrate ways for producers to save applications for tarnished plant bugs (more to come on this later).

## Crop Market Update

**September 17, 2007: Dr. Steve Martin & Dr. John Anderson**

**Cotton:** New York Board of Trade (NYBOT) cotton futures prices have steadily advanced over the last 3 weeks. The December 2007 contract is currently trading in the \$0.63 per pound range and December 2008 is close to \$0.73. Acreage concerns for 2008 as well as adequate export business have provided strength to the market.

While export levels have not been as high as some would like, demand has still been very good. The price collapse in mid-August provided a buying opportunity for many mills that has continued as prices have eased back higher. The speculative community and several fund managers have listed cotton as a commodity that is severely under priced and offers high potential returns. All of these scenarios, coupled with the fact that cotton must compete with high grain prices for 2008 acres, has provided a firm base to the cotton market. Most likely any further significant price advances will occur in the December 2008 contract.



**Rice:** Chicago Board of Trade rice futures prices have been slowly advancing. The November contract which traded in the upper \$10 per cwt range for most of the late summer has been above \$11 since the beginning of September. Cash prices have increased slightly as well. Excellent export sales as well as anticipated new export business have added strength to the market.

The September WASDE report showed very little changes from last month. Beginning stocks were lowered 2.6 million cwt based on the August rice stocks report. Production for the 2007 crop year was increased slightly and thus ending stocks were estimated at 27 million cwt, only 0.1 million cwt below last month. USDA currently estimates the 2007 U.S. crop yield at 7,024 pounds per acre, a new record if achieved.

Harvest pressure will continue to hold down any significant price rallies. However, with corn, wheat, and soybeans prices for 2008 available for booking at very profitable levels, rice prices will continue to ease upward in order to insure adequate 2008 acres. With continued interest in export sales and the competition for 2008 acres, rice prices could advance significantly over the next 3-6 months.

**Corn and Wheat:** Last week's Crop Production and WASDE reports appeared, on the surface, to be pretty bearish for corn. Production was estimated at 13.308 billion bushels – up from an August estimate of 13.054 and on the high side of pre-report estimates from private sources. Ending stock estimates for 2006/07 were bumped up slightly. Total use estimates were up 100 million bushels. The increase was due to higher feed use and export estimates which more than offset the first-in-a-long-time downward revision of estimated corn use in ethanol production. Ending stock projections for 2007/08 were raised by 159 million bushels to a little over 1.7 billion.

Despite the seemingly bearish news, corn futures rose rather sharply last Wednesday, with 2007/08 contracts rising by around 15 cents. The justification for the somewhat surprising reaction seemed to be that WASDE report information had been quite positive for soybeans and wheat. Indeed, wheat initially traded higher on Wednesday; however, by the end of the day, wheat futures through 2008 were limit down, removing much of the justification for higher corn futures. On Thursday, most contracts gave back about two-thirds of Wednesday's gain.

At the end of last week, corn futures had begun to settle back down. The December contract (now the nearby) settled Monday at just over \$3.52 – still a few cents off of the highs posted last Wednesday but a good dime or so above pre-report levels. Harvest-time pressure will remain a key feature of the corn market for the next few weeks. However, corn will continue to be influenced strongly by other grain prices.

Wheat prices, currently still sitting close to all-time highs, will remain volatile. Last week's WASDE report included a further 42 million bushel reduction in 2007/08 ending stocks, bringing US carryover to its lowest level since the early 1970s. Global production estimates were also lowered by a further 4.2 million metric tons (MMT), reflecting reduced production expectations in Australia, Canada and Western Europe. On Tuesday morning, the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics (ABARE) released their most recent crop production estimates. They forecast this year's wheat production at 15.5 MMT. This compares to USDA's September WASDE report estimate of 21 MMT for the Australian crop. The Australian report also notes that even realizing projected yields will require rainfall in September. The market will be watching the development of that crop closely over the next two or three weeks.

**Soybean:** Last week's USDA report confirmed expectations of reduced soybean production in response to late-summer heat and drought. The production forecast was reduced by 6 million bushels to 2.619 billion bushels. This was a bit on the low side of private estimates but well within the range of forecasts. The same was true of projected carryover. Ending stocks for 2007/08 were forecast at 215 million bushels (down from 220 million bushels last month).

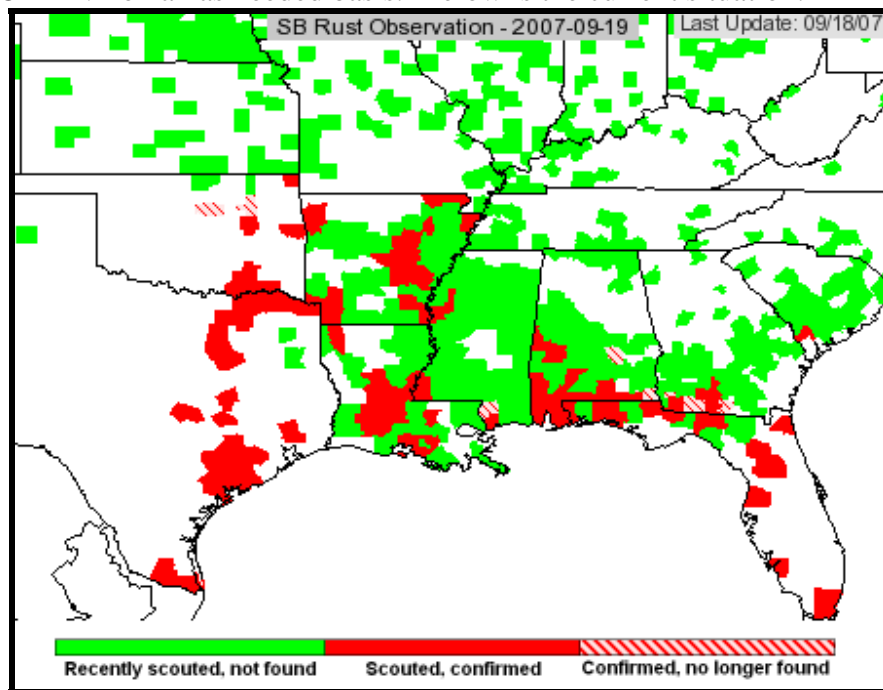
On the demand side, total use estimates were revised lower, mainly reflecting a lower export forecast. Overall, demand prospects remain very good. Domestic crush projections were revised upward, and export projections for soybean oil and meal remain very supportive of prices.

In addition to generally supportive WASDE figures, soybean futures benefited early this week from a freeze in the upper Midwest that may have contributed to some crop damage. It is a bit early to tell, but with stocks tightening, the market did not wait to react. The July 2008 contract traded above the \$10 mark on Monday. The November 2008 contract moved back close to contract high levels established last July, creating very attractive forward pricing opportunities for next year's crop.

## Soybean Rust Update

**Dr. Billy Moore, Ben Spinks, Dr. Alan Henn, and Dr. Tom Allen**

As of September 19, 2007 we have found soybean rust in six counties in Mississippi. The latest find was in Adams County on soybeans September 12, 2007. **We have no new recommendations for the prevention/control of soybean rust.** However, we are paying close attention to our wheat beans. Scouting continues in the state on sentinel plots, kudzu, and producer fields. We will continue to update the USDA site, [www.sbrusa.net](http://www.sbrusa.net), as well as the 1-800 RUST HOTLINE on an as needed basis. Below is the current situation:



If you have suspicions that you might have rust, do not hesitate to call us for verification. We are paying close attention to this disease and will let you know if anything changes.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE TAKEN OFF OF THE LIST, UPDATE YOUR ADDRESS, OR BE ADDED TO THE EMAIL DISTRIBUTION LIST PLEASE CONTACT SHERRY MCMULLIN AT (662) 325-2085 OR EMAIL HER AT: [smcmullin@entomology.msstate.edu](mailto:smcmullin@entomology.msstate.edu) WITH **CIS NEWSLETTER** IN THE SUBJECT LINE TO BE ADDED TO THE ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER LIST OR MAKE ANY CHANGES.

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