SPIDER MITE – PEST STATUS, SOUTHEASTERN REGION

Phillip Roberts
Mike Toews
University of Georgia
Barry Freeman
Tim Reed
Ron Smith
Auburn University
Jack Bacheler
North Carolina State University
Ames Herbert
Virginia Tech University
Jeremy Green
Clemson University

Abstract

Spider mites are historically a sporadic and localized pest often associated with droughty conditions in the southeastern region (AL, GA, FL, SC, NC, and VA). The percentage of acres treated for spider mites and associated yield loss are minimal for the region as a whole, however losses can be severe in localized fields. The Tennessee Valley production area in North Alabama tends to have more spider mite problems compared with other areas in the southeastern region. From 1998-2008, the percent of acres infested by spider mites in the southeastern region has ranged from less than 5 percent to over 30 percent (Williams, M., Beltwide Cotton Conferences Proceedings, 1999-2009). The percentage of acres infested by spider mites has increased during recent years. From 1998-2004 infested acres averaged 7 percent with a range of 3 to 10 percent, whereas infested acres from 2005-2008 averaged 26 percent with a range of 18 to 32 percent. Although the increased frequency of which spider mites are observed is troubling, treated acres and yield loss have remained relatively low in the southeast. Spider mites are a pest which requires management in the southeast. Avoidance practices which reduce risks associated with spider mite outbreaks must be considered, especially in fields infested with spider mites. Conservation of natural enemies through the judicious use of insecticides and proper selection of insecticides are important management considerations.