

1999 YEAR IN REVIEW: THE MID-SOUTH
Bobby J. Phipps
University of Missouri
Portageville, MO

Abstract

In 1999, 3,680,000 acres were harvested, which was up 519,000 acres from the prior year. The yield was 668 pounds per acre, up thirty-four pounds from 1998 but was still low when compared to the five-year average of 717 pounds.

Transgenic varieties are very popular with the three top varieties being transgenic. Stoneville BXN 47 and D&PL NuCOTN 33B being the most common varieties planted. In Tennessee, forty-one percent of the acreage was planted to Paymaster 1220 BG/RR. In Louisiana, thirty-six percent and in Mississippi twenty-nine percent of the acreage was planted to NuCOTN 33B. Stoneville BXN 47 had forty-one percent of the acres in Arkansas and in Missouri thirty percent.

Conservation tillage is becoming much more popular in all of the Mid-south states due to the reduction in the cost of crop production. No-till is becoming more popular, especially in Tennessee where twenty-four percent of the acres are not tilled. Ultra narrow row cotton is barely holding its own. The harvesting with a broadcast stripper harvester has been a great handicap and has adversely affected acceptance by local cotton gins.

Thrips were unusually severe early in the growing season. Mississippi had problems with aphids early in the season. Spider mites were common in Missouri and Arkansas. Reniform nematodes were a problem in Mississippi.

Very few disease problems were reported. In western Tennessee, a late season outbreak of bronze wilt appeared.

The planting season started with the crop being planted in record time in Missouri. In Mississippi the planting was spread over the entire months of April and May. May and June were unusually good and crop development was better than normal. At the first week of July, the cotton crop was outstanding. The weather turned extremely dry for the next three months. The dryland crop was hit hard. It was very short and cutout very early. The bolls opened prematurely in many fields. Yields were very low in many dryland fields. The irrigated fields performed much better and opened closer to the normal date. Well irrigated fields produced a very good crop. Dryland cotton was harvested very early and the irrigated crop was harvested slightly earlier than normal. The

weather during harvest was outstanding and ginning was completed very early.

The color grades were outstanding and trash content was low. The fiber length was unusually short being 1/32 to 3/32 shorter than normal. Micronaire was much higher than normal except in Mississippi. This resulted in many bales receiving a price discount for micronaire.

The value of irrigation was proven this year. The dryland fields fared poorly and the irrigated fields produced well.