

**PEST MANAGEMENT: A SOUTHEAST
GROWER'S PERSPECTIVE ON PEST CONTROL
BEFORE AND AFTER BOLL WEEVIL
ERADICATION AND Bt COTTON**

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Abstract

I farm in the northwest corner of Alabama. We farm 3200 acres of cotton scattered over a 50 mile wide area on 34 different FSA numbers with an average field size of less than 20 acres.

Boll weevil eradication began in my area in the fall of 1994 with fall diapause applications. By 1996 my area was basically weevil free with only limited eradication activities.

Prior to eradication we normally would apply two applications for bollweevils at pin head square. This would usually set the stage for two to four budworm / bollworm applications in mid season followed by two to three late season bollweevil applications.

We would usually average seven to eight insecticide applications per season at a cost \$45.00 per acre. This does not include application costs.

Since 1996 we have averaged 1.75 applications per season. We normally use bidrin, vydate, or a low rate of an inexpensive pyrethroid. The main insect pests we have are plant bugs and stinkbugs.

Our insect control cost now averages \$34.85, which consists of:

1. \$5.00 eradication assessment.
2. \$26.00 Bt fee
3. \$3.85 plant bug & stink bug control costs

Again, no application costs are included.

This program has resulted in savings of \$10.00 per acre.

We have also experienced an average yield increase of 47 pounds of lint, which results in a net increase of over \$ 40.00 per acre since eradication and the release of boll guard cotton.