

New Mexico State University

Extension Plant Sciences

Cotton Newsletter: Volume 8, Number 2

NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

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- FUSARIUM WILT OF COTTON
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Mid-Season Cotton Report in New Mexico

Apart from damage caused by a few isolated hail storms, the 2017 cotton season in New Mexico is progressing very well. The monsoon season has been very active, bringing much needed moisture to many areas while causing some problems in others. This increase in rainfall raises the usual fears about the development of some diseases associated with excess moisture. Generally, cotton plants are thriving, with most fields having vigorous stands. The 2017 NM cotton acreage is up compared to last year. It is estimated that about 56,000 ac of upland cotton was planted this year compared to 47,000 ac last year. Pima plantings are down slightly from 8,000 acres in 2016 to approximately 6,281 acres in 2017. Overall, cotton yields this year are expected to be slightly above average.

Please, send your comments and contributions to John Idowu (email: jidowu@nmsu.edu; phone: 575-646-2571. Previous editions of the Cotton Newsletter are posted on <http://aces.nmsu.edu/ces/ifcpm/cotton-production.html>

In our last Cotton Newsletter (Vol. 8 No 1, April 2017) we reported on the 2017 NM Cotton Conference and listed our sponsors. However, we inadvertently left out one of our major sponsors, **DowAgroSciences/Phytogen**, who have consistently supported the NM Cotton Growers Association for several years. This error is highly regretted.

Pest Management Report

The PBW (Pink Bollworm – Figure 1) Technical Advisory Committee will meet in late September in Phoenix, AZ, to discuss many items including a recommendation for a national PBW eradication declaration. This would ultimately allow NM to avoid a refuge requirement for Bt cotton.

Dr. Jane Pierce (Associate Professor, Entomology)



Figure 1. Pink Bollworm larva

Fusarium Wilt of Cotton

Fusarium wilt of cotton is potentially a devastating fungal disease that can affect cotton production significantly. Fusarium wilt is caused by *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *vasinfectum* (FOV). The symptoms of this disease include leaf wilting, leaf yellowing, and defoliation of plants, leading to eventual plant death (Figure 2). Other symptoms include stunting, generalized plant wilting, and the presence of deep brown discoloration in the stem of severely affected plants. The disease can occur in patches across the field, with some areas of the field displaying higher incidence of the disease than others (Figure 3). There are different fungal races for FOV, and race FOV4 seems to be most devastating to the growth and development of cotton.

FOV4 has been found in some fields on pima cotton in the El Paso area in 2016 and 2017. Fusarium wilt can affect both pima and upland cotton varieties. Farmers in NM therefore need to take precaution to avoid the spread of FOV. Some of the previous known races of the fusarium wilt pathogen like FOV1, FOV3 and FOV8 require the presence of root-knot nematodes in the soil for plant infection, but in the case of FOV4, nematodes are not required for infection to occur.

FOV can be spread through infested soil, diseased plant debris and through contaminated seeds. To control the spread of this pathogen, it is important that growers wash farm implements thoroughly that have been exposed to contaminated fields before using them in other fields. Growers should always use certified seeds, free of diseases at planting. Currently, there is no method for controlling FOV4 in contaminated fields. The only solution is to plant resistant cotton varieties.



Figure 2. Cotton plant infected by fusarium (FOV4)



Figure 3. A cotton field affected by Fusarium wilt

Dr. John Idowu (Extension Agronomist, NMSU) & Dr. Soum Sanogo (Professor, Plant Pathology, NMSU)

Cotton Prices: 2016/2017

	2016		2017	
	Upland Cotton "A" Index*	ELS (Pima) Spot Price*	Upland Cotton "A" Index*	ELS (Pima) Spot Price*
January	68.75	115.80	82.33	124.20
February	66.57	109.70	85.15	124.20
March	65.46	109.00	86.79	124.20
April	69.28	104.70	87.04	124.20
May	70.28	104.70	88.64	124.20
June	74.10	104.70	84.76	124.20
July	81.06	104.70	84.09	124.20
August	80.48	104.70		
September	77.86	104.70		
October	78.52	104.70		
November	78.92	118.50		
December	79.50	124.20		
Average	74.23	109.18	85.54	124.20

*Source: National Cotton Council of America and prices in (cents/pound of lint).

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