Bertie County Ag News

NORTH CAROLINA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

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Profit Pointers

This year continues to challenge everyone with low commodity prices. History has shown that growers who continue to manage costs while not sacrificing yield are survivors in times like these. Dr. David Jordan stresses these yield sustaining points.

Rotation Is Important

Place peanuts in fields with a minimum 3-4-year rotation. Avoid sustained inclusion of soybeans in a peanut rotation. An occasional year may not cause damage, but multiple years will take its toll.

Monitoring Soil pH

Everyone has heard keep your pH between 5.8 – 6.2. Research shows that the higher end of this spectrum is better assuming other nutrient level are sufficient. Occasional deficiencies from manganese or boron may show up when pH is high, but these can be corrected with foliar applications. Try to avoid cases where pH is above 6.4. Remember a higher pH helps the plant to tolerate higher levels of zinc (typically from the use of chicken litter). Injury generally starts to occur when zinc levels exceed 250 parts per million.

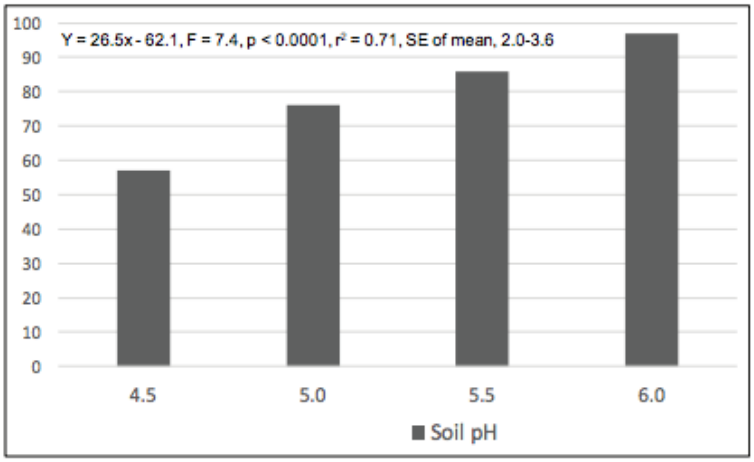

Figure 3-1. Influence of soil pH on peanut yield presented as percentage of maximum yield. Data are pooled over six years.

Give Your Seed a Good Start

Seed size has an effect on the seeding rates but generally planting 125-130 pounds per acre will net you 5 seed per foot yielding a strong population of 4 plants per foot of row. This will aid in the reduction of TSWV infection. Inoculate every acre whether peanuts have been in this field in the last 3 years or not. Generally, liquids products do a more uniform job. Inject directly in the center of the furrow below the seed into moist ground. Studies have shown inoculate placement to the soil left or right of center or on top of seed reduce its performance. If cost is a consideration, remember tests show a 500% return on this investment.

Table 3-4. Peanut Yield Response and Economic Return at a Price of $535 per ton in Fields without a History of Peanuts versus Fields with Frequent Plantings of Peanuts (1999 – 2017). Trials were conducted in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia with Virginia market type varieties.

Inoculant Use	New Peanut Fields		Fields with a Recent History of Peanuts	
	Yield (lb per acre)	Economic return ($ per acre)	Yield (lb per acre)	Economic return ($ per acre)
No inoculant	3,460	5	4,280	227
Inoculant	4,660	323	4,450	268
Difference	1,200	318	170	41
Number of Trials	52	52	43	43
Years	1999 – 2017		1999 – 2017	

Control Thrips Early

Include an in-furrow insecticide treatment on every acre. There are a number of effective treatments and application methods. Orthene, Admire Pro , Velum Total, Thimet or Ag Logic. Its critical to apply at planting. Research by Dr. Rick Brandenburg points to a post emergence application of Orthene 14 days after planting will almost always pay off.

Don’t Skimp on the Weed Control

Early season control is critical for high yields. PPI and /or Preemergence chemicals give a strong footing to begin the season. Options include PPI (Prowl, Dual Magnum, Outlook , Warrant and Strongarm) and PRE (generally the same list with the addition of Valor, Spartan and Pursuit). A combination of two herbicides is needed to control broadleaf and annual grasses. Follow-up with and at cracking treatment (Paraquat or Strongarm) plus a residual (i.e. Dual, Zidua) within 28 days of emergence (21 days is better). Basagran can be added to safen the Paraquat. Resist the urge to cut rates. While lowering rates **may** give the same control this time, without ideal moisture conditions there is a better chance it will not. This also leads to weakened survivors which over time lead to resistant weed species.

BE TIMELY

Success in any farm operation comes down to doing what needs to be done at the right time. What has it cost you to miss that opportune planting date? What about the missed spray date? Maybe the weather caused the delay or a machine breakdown, but timeliness is critical. Know the optimum planting dates and conditions and shoot for them. Have a plan if those are delayed or missed. Know the limits of your machinery and labor. Avoid over extension of assets in normal conditions. Try not to plan where every cylinder has to hit to make the process complete.

Market Prices

Since our production meeting in February, grain prices have tumbled while cotton has increased 3-4 cents per pound. What lies ahead? Will there be profitable pricing opportunities? Probably, but only you will know because only you hold the key….knowing your actual production costs. When margins are as thin as now, knowing your costs will allow you to take advantage of upward price movements. These maybe weather related or planting intentions etc. We can help sort this out based on your actual practices and costs. We have budget guides (and that's all they are) as well as tools that can look at scenarios across your farm operation. Give us a call if you would like to pin these costs down.

Burndown Options in Peanuts

By Dr. David Jordan

Winter weeds such as marestail (horseweed) can be difficult to control prior to planting peanut, especially as weeds get larger. And there is no product that comes close to giving complete control after peanuts emerge. We must assume that marestail is resistant to glyphosate in all fields. Applying 2,4-D or dicamba to help on this weed as well as weeds like cutleaf evening primrose needs to be done now to make sure control is adequate and residues that could injure peanut have dissipated. Paraquat and glufosinate can also be used as burndown treatments up to planting and prior to peanut emergence. But something needs to be applied well before that point in time and the synthetic auxins have a place if applied soon enough.

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