

ENTOMOLOGY

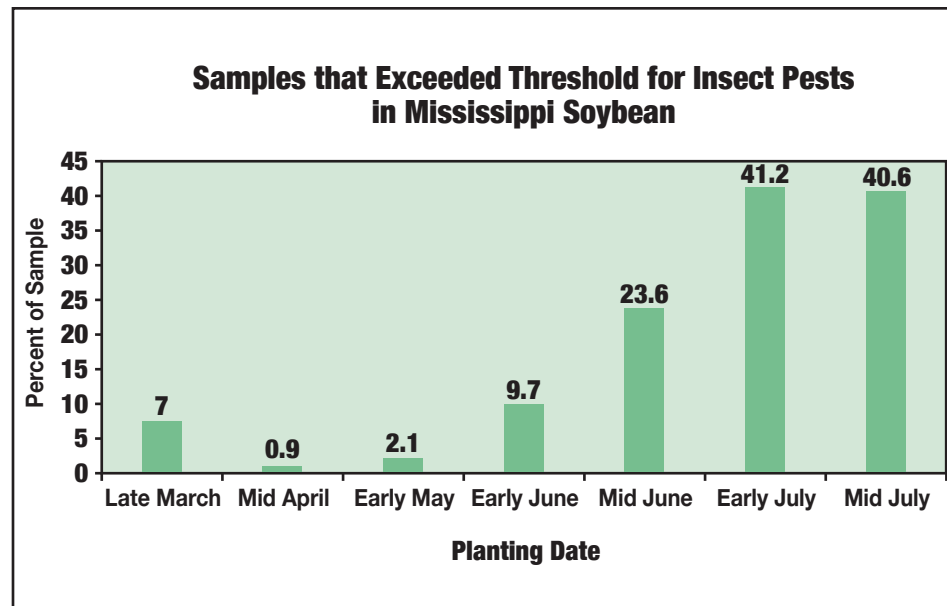
IMPACT OF PLANTING DATE ON THE OCCURRENCE OF INSECT PESTS IN MISSISSIPPI SOYBEAN

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Soybeans are planted over a wide range of dates in Mississippi every year despite the fact that higher yields can be expected with earlier planting dates. Several factors can impact soybean planting date including adverse environmental conditions, failed crop stand at earlier planting dates, and management of harvest capability. Numerous insect pests are a limiting factor in soybean production in Mississippi every year and it is presumed that insect populations will vary among planting dates. Experiments have been conducted throughout Mississippi over the last four years to determine the impact of soybean planting date on insect pest populations. Maturity group IV and maturity group V soybeans were planted over seven dates ranging

from late-March to mid-July. Insect densities were determined weekly by taking 25 sweeps per plot. Data were analyzed with a frequency analysis to determine the percentage of samples that exceeded threshold for all insect species. As expected, later planting dates had a greater chance of experiencing insect pest populations at levels that exceeded the current action thresholds in Mississippi. In general, there was a less than 10% chance of having any insect pest above thresh-

old for soybeans planted by early June. The percentage increased to 23% at mid-June and over 40% for July plantings. Based on these results, growers should plant soybeans as early as possible to maximize yields and avoid damaging insect pest populations.



"SOYBEANS PLANTED PRIOR TO JUNE HAD A LOW CHANCE OF EXPERIENCING INSECT PEST POPULATIONS THAT EXCEEDED CURRENT THRESHOLDS. THE LIKELIHOOD OF DAMAGING INSECT INFESTATIONS INCREASED DRAMATICALLY FOR SOYBEANS PLANTED IN JUNE AND JULY."

Jeff Gore