Another Mite Pest of Pecan

Will Hudson

We have seen the emergence of another uncommon pest of pecan this year. The mite, *Oligonychus viridis*, has been observed in several orchards this season. This mite can be distinguished from scorch mite by the dark coloration on the rear end of the mite and the large hairs on its dorsal surface. (see photo). It has been noted as a pest of pecan in South Carolina, Texas and Louisiana. *O. viridis* has been collected in New York, Georgia, and Florida from hickory as well.

This mite prefers feeding on the upper leaf surfaces, but during heavy infestations it occurs on both sides of pecan leaves. Such infestations cause the leaves to become greyish white owing to feeding by the mites and the presence of old cast skins. Severe browning of the upper leaf surfaces has been observed on shagbark hickory. *O. viridis* is controlled by normal miticides labeled for pecans.

Anthracnose on Pecan

Jason Brock

In June and July of 2009, a leaf scorch was reported from multiple counties across Georgia. Based on the symptoms and isolation of the fungus *Glomerella cingulata*, leaf anthracnose appeared to be the problem. This was thought to be due to unique weather conditions and hoped not to be a reoccurring issue. Unfortunately, this disease has been observed this growing season. The good news is that it doesn’t seem to be as wide spread or causing as much damage as last year. Areas that received above normal rainfall during the spring are more likely to have leaf anthracnose.

Without data or much experience with
anthracnose on pecan, we can look to other crops for generalities. For growers concerned about anthracnose on leaves or fruit, we can only offer our best guess at recommendations that might suppress this disease.

The most effective fungicide class should be QoI (strobilurin). Premixes that contain a QoI or tank mixes can be used. Remember the limitation of the number of applications of QoI fungicides due to the high risk of fungicide resistance.

In addition to the QoIs, thiophanate-methyl (Topsin M) has been listed as an option for control of anthracnose on trees and nut crops, and recent trials have shown improved control from phosphite containing fungicides (Agri-Fos, K-Phite, Phostrol, and Fungi-Phite) when used in combination with other products. These products can be used as in addition to a scab program in hopes of suppressing anthracnose.

Proper timing of application is critical for all fungicides. Once symptoms develop or become severe, anthracnose can’t be effectively controlled during the current season. For growers that have observed leaf anthracnose in their orchard, it is important to remember that fungicide applications to protect the fruit will be important for both scab and anthracnose.

**New Fruit Thinning DVD**

Lenny Wells

Although 2010 is an off year in Georgia, it is a good off year and I have seen some trees that may need fruit thinning. (Although with the expected price for pecans, this may be a tough sell!)

We have just completed a new instructional DVD on the process of fruit thinning pecan, which is available now at the UGA Pecan website: [www.ugapecan.org](http://www.ugapecan.org)

The DVD’s cost $5 per copy. Thanks to the Georgia Agricultural Commodity Commission for Pecans for funding the production of this DVD.

**Late Season Fertilizer**

Lenny Wells

With a better than average off year crop in Georgia, you may want to consider the application of additional fertilizer if your trees have a good crop (>60% fruiting shoots). Applications should be made the last week of August or the 1st week of September.

If your leaf analysis shows leaf N at 2.8% or higher, it is unlikely that you would benefit from late season fertilizer unless the trees are severely overloaded. In most cases, where late season fertilizer is applied, 30-50 lbs N per acre is sufficient.

**Stink Bugs**

Lenny Wells

Stink bugs have been abundant in orchards throughout the season, particularly following a mowing. Bear in mind that stink bugs are highly mobile and may be in the tree or on the orchard floor one minute and gone the next. Pecans are not a preferred feeding host for stink bugs until late in the season when other more preferred hosts like cotton, soybeans, and peanuts reach maturity or are harvested.

When cotton is defoliated and peanuts are dug stink bugs may move into orchards to feed. Late in the season, stink bug sprays
may be warranted, particularly if you have an orchard neighboring row crop fields that are nearing maturity.

A 16-24 oz/A rate of Brigade WSB (bifenthrin) should provide good stink bug control for at least 7 days (and probably up to 10 days). Brigade should also control weevils as well. Keep in mind that any time pyrethroids are applied in the orchard, there is potential for flaring of aphids and mites.

'\textbf{Cultivar Profile---'Creek'}

\textit{Lenny Wells}

\textit{(Information from UGA Pecan Breeding Webpage)}

'Creek' was released in 1996, primarily for its superior precocity and disease resistance. It also seems to bear well under competition from other trees. Productivity as a mature tree is good, with a tendency to alternate bear.

Nut size is about 55 nuts/pound, but quality is often poor with percent kernel averaging only 48.3%, unless the crop load is managed. When trees are not crop thinned, 'Creek' only produces a small percentage of kernels rated fancy due to a tendency to be poorly filled. In over-cropping situations 'Creek' kernels also tend to have an unattractive wrinkling of the seed coat at the apex of the kernel.

'Creek' was released as a highly productive and precocious temporary tree that could be removed as the orchard matured. 'Creek' is a good tree under high-density situations where the crop load is thinned, but we do not recommend it for standard orchard conditions.

'Creek' is reported to set good crops on shaded limbs, a desirable trait for high-density plantings. Pest resistance of 'Creek' is good, making it an "easy keeper" for most disease and insect problems. Harvest date of 'Creek' is usually early October, which allows the nut to be sold for a better price than would normally be obtained.

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\textbf{Upcoming Meetings}

Georgia Pecan Growers Association
Fall Field Day
September 9, 2010
Mason Farms and Lane Southern Orchards
Ft. Valley, GA
Contact the GPGA at 229-382-2187 for information

\textbf{Pecan Hotline}

1-800-851-2847

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