2011 Summary of Irwin County Extension Peanut and Cotton Educational Efforts

Edwards*, R.P.¹, Troutman, S.A.²
¹Cooperative Extension, University of Georgia, 107 West 4th Street, Ocilla, GA 31774
³Fort Valley State University Cooperative Extension 107 West Fourth Street, Ocilla, Georgia 31774

ABSTRACT

Peanuts and cotton are important agronomic crops to Irwin County with over 60,000 acres grown each year. Irwin County is a top ten row crop and forage county thanks mostly to these two crops. Assisting farmers in achieving peanut and cotton profitability and quality is the major goal. Educational efforts are conducted in the county with excellent support from UGA Extension Specialists. Issues are varied as the crop year progresses in such areas as soil sampling, crop budgets, crop rotation, planting, soil temperature, tillage, variety selection, herbicide usage, fungicide programs, pest management, crop maturity determination, safe pesticide usage, accurate calibration, irrigation and others. The objectives are to plan and provide effective educational opportunities to farmers, the agricultural community and consumers through numerous and diverse methods. Additionally efforts are made to recognize farmer achievements. Information is presented meetings, office and farm visits, phone contacts, email, newsletters, news articles, on-farm applied research trials, maturity clinics, cotton defoliation determination, state and national meetings, and similar activities. The success or failure of these two crops directly affects the viability of local, state and regional economies.

RESPONSE

Meetings: Peanut and Cotton Production, Crop Budget, Weed Management, Hull Scrape Clinics, Agricultural Management Seminar
Communication: Newsletters via email, Current Extension Webpage, News articles and feature stories Ocilla Star, WSST TV
Farmer Recognition: TM Hobbs High Yield Peanut Award, Irwin County Farmer of the Year, Cotton Quality Award, GA Peanut Achievement Club
Collaborative Projects: USDA Grant for Irwin County Farmers Market, Osceola Gin Company, USDA ARS and UGA Dept. of Entomology Stink Bug Migration Study, FVSU Team Success
Consultation: Farm Visits, Office Visits, Phone Calls, Soil/Nematode/Tissue submissions, IPM, DDDI, GA AEMN, Peanut Maturity Clinics - Daily during harvest, Crop Budget and Crop Comparison Tools, Peanut Rx, Pesticide Training and recertification, EPD ag water permit,

IMPACT

From Jan 1-Oct 15, 2011
- 421 peanut maturity samples checked
- 26 email newsletters to 300 farmers
- 74% of peanut and 66% cotton acreage directly impacted by peanut maturity clinics
- Completed results will be presented in 2012 Beltwide Cotton Conference and county production meetings.

SITUATION

- Peanut and cotton production involves more farmers than any other single commodity
- Farmers demand and receive current, unbiased information from UGA Extension Agents
- Peanut and cotton farm gate value $13,000,000
- Production efficiency is important to total farming success
- Disease pressures, and irrigation demands has magnified need for quick response