

Peanuts across the V-C region experienced excessive rainfall in many areas as a result of Hurricane Florence. Rainfall was particularly heavy in southeastern North Carolina and northeastern South Carolina. For example, the Whiteville, NC weather station associated with the Border Belt Tobacco Research Station reported over 20 inches of rain associated with the storm. Other areas received more modest amounts in the V-C region. The excessive rain was able to run off of many fields without ponding in part because of dry conditions for the previous three weeks prior to the storm. However, farms closer to major watersheds have experienced rising flood waters and back movement into many fields. A significant amount of peanut acreage in North Carolina and portions of South Carolina received rainfall amounts from 2 inches to above 20 inches. However, peanut acreage is spread throughout the North Carolina coastal plain and this reduced the potential negative impact. In fact, rainfall in the northern portion of the upper coastal plain was beneficial to some farmers because soil had become dry and peanut would be difficult to dig. Soil moisture has improved significantly for these growers and they will be able to begin digging this weekend and into the following week with good soil conditions.

While some fields had peanuts at optimum maturity, peanut in many fields will not reach optimum maturity until the week of September 24. Peanuts planted in June most likely will not reach optimum maturity until the first week of October if not later. However, warm temperatures throughout the summer and fall have moved the maturity quickly, making the possibility of good yields possible even for later planted peanuts. Defoliation from leaf spot is beginning to be experienced in many grower fields because of gaps in fungicide sprays earlier in the season and challenges with getting into fields for final fungicide sprays during the week of the storm and the week of September 17. To realize projected yield potential, three weeks of dry weather will be needed so that farmers can dig fields as quickly as possible where disease epidemics are well past being able to be controlled. While the storm has been devastating for some people in the V-C region, from a peanut perspective in the mid to upper V-C region, a storm occurring in mid-September is potentially less damaging than a storm occurring in late September or early October (Hurricane Matthew in 2016).

Approximately 20% of peanut are dug in South Carolina with 5% or less dug in North Carolina and Virginia. Some fields in North Carolina may ultimately be abandoned, and the actual acreage associated with those fields is unknown at this time. However, total loss should be relatively low across the region but certainly catastrophic for individual farmers. Yield potential for the V-C region has been lowered to 4,150 kg/ha (3,700 lbs/acre) due to a combination of early and mid-season stress, dry conditions in August and early September in some areas, and excessive rain and flooding from Hurricane Florence. Poor weather conditions and subsequent challenges with field operations

over the next three weeks could lower this estimate significantly. Near perfect conditions are needed to realize this projected yield.

Peanut maturity profile near Lewiston-Woodville, North Carolina on September 19.



Peanut near Whiteville, NC experiencing drought stress on September 11. Clouds in the background are beginning signs of tropical weather associated with Hurricane Florence.



Peanut field in central North Carolina on September 17 with ponded water. Note defoliation in the canopy as a result of leaf spot incidence.



Pod set and pod maturity of the Virginia market type variety Sullivan on September 11 near Whiteville, NC. These peanuts were at optimum maturity at that time but will not be dug until the week of September 24 at the earliest. Some pod loss will occur due to natural shedding.





Harvestable

SMK

Optimum maturity now

ion to dig

omental conditions and plant health)

ype  
of frost)  
of increased pod fill and pod weight  
izes

for the Virginia market type  
Belt Research Station located  
percent of maximum.

40  
35  
30  
25  
20  
15  
10  
5

Percentage of a sample that contains 150 pods

Pod maturity for the variety Baily planted either May 9 or June 4 near Whiteville, NC. Image was recorded in September 11.





Peanut field dug on September 19 near Lewiston-Woodville, NC.

