

The 2021 peanut crop in the Virginia-Carolina region yielded slightly above average. Some sections of the region produced record yields but there were patches of dry weather late in the season that limited recorded-breaking yields across the entire region.

Dry weather early in the season (May) resulted in slow emergence of peanuts and challenges with obtaining adequate stands. However, in June, rainfall was generally adequate across the region for rapid growth and most fields filled in stands. June and July typically had adequate rainfall for vegetative and reproductive growth and this carried into August.

While variation was noted, rainfall was limited from August 20 through September and into early October in a considerable amount of the production area. Limited rainfall prevented pods in some fields from filling out completely and created challenges for digging and vine inversion, especially on finer-textured soils.

Heat unit accumulation across the region was adequate for peanuts to reach optimum maturity in September or October when planted in May or early June. Unlike 2020, cool temperatures at night (less than 50 F) did not occur until late October or November in 2021. In 2020, cool temperatures in late September prevented peanuts from reaching optimum maturity in many fields. Even though heat unit accumulation was adequate, rainfall patterns that limited soil water also resulted in delays in peanut maturation.

There were no major surprises relative to pest management. Weed control was generally good across the region. There were no major outbreaks of insects or spider mites, although many fields were treated for foliar-feeding insects. Growers were able to control leaf spot and stem rot diseases in most fields through timely fungicide applications and using a diversity of fungicide products. Sclerotinia blight did not present a major problem in the upper Virginia–Carolina region. While some tomato spotted wilt was noted, especially in the lower portion of the Virginia-Carolina region, incidence was minimal and this virus did not have a major impact on yield.

Field conditions for digging and inverting vines and threshing were generally good across the region for much of the fall. This enabled farmers to dig and combine peanuts on predictable timelines. Quality of in-shell peanuts is expected to be good given weather conditions during harvest. Freeze damage is likely minimal as most peanuts were dug and threshed prior to freezing temperatures in November.

Average yield is estimated to be 4,700 kg/ha (4,200 lbs/acre) across the region.

Peanut growth and development from June through October in a field near Oak City, North Carolina.

Early June



Late June



Early July



Late July



Mid-August



Early September



Late September





Early October



Mid-October



Late October

