

The peanut crop in the Virginia-Carolina region has been planted. A significant portion of the crop was planted during the first and second week of May with some delays in planting after that due to rainfall patterns. The balance of plantings was completed during the final week of May. Plant stands are considered good to excellent across the region. Air temperatures have promoted rapid growth of emerged peanuts over the past two weeks. Peanuts planted in early May emerged about 10-14 days after planting. Recent Peanuts in recent plantings have emerged more quickly. In some cases peanuts have emerged in less than 7 days after planting.

Weed control across the region has been good, with many growers receiving adequate rainfall to activate herbicides applied immediately after planting. However, in some instances growers were caught by rain after peanuts were planted but before herbicides could be applied. This has resulted in challenges with catching up on weed control. Interference from weeds even during the first few weeks can have a significant impact on peanut yield. Growers have the tools to control escaped weeds but have experienced challenges in terms of being timely, especially in fields without adequate residual herbicides applied at or prior to planting. Many growers have applied insecticide to suppress thrips populations. Generally, insecticides applied in the seed furrow at planting protect peanuts from this pest during the first three weeks after emergence. In many areas of the region, especially in the middle and upper areas, excessive injury from thrips can reduce yield. Two applications of insecticide (systemic in-furrow applications and foliar applications) are needed for adequate suppression of thrips.

Growers will begin applying gypsum (calcium sulfate) on Virginia market types and large-seeded runner market types. Calcium is the key element in gypsum. The peanut plant is not able to translocate adequate amounts of calcium from soil through the root system to developing pegs and pods later in the season to endure pod formation. Gypsum is broadcast to the soil surface approximately 45 days after planting when flowering begins so that high concentration of calcium is in the pegging zone. Calcium moves directly into developing pods while in soil water. All Virginia market types require gypsum to optimize yield and market grade characteristics. While some gypsum will be applied in early June, the traditional recommendation is that gypsum is applied toward the end of June when peanut plants are larger. This can prevent excessive leaching of calcium out of the pegging zone and also minimizes washing of gypsum from tops of beds when rainfall is excessive or intense showers occur.

During the month of June, the primary focus is firming up weed control in fields by eliminating escaped weeds and applying additional herbicides that provide residual control. Foliar insecticides will be used to protect peanuts from thrips injury. Gypsum will be a focus from the middle of June through early July. In the lower V-C Region, fungicides to protect peanut from leaf spot and stem rot diseases will be initiated during the final week of June. In the upper V-C region, sprays are generally initiated in early July.

The peanut crop across the region has experienced a very good start with adequate soil moisture and temperatures for growth and development. Yield potential for peanut in the region is currently set at 4,480 kg/ha (4,100 lbs/acre). The majority of plantings in North Carolina and Virginia are large-seeded Virginia market types (95%) that target the in-shell and gourmet peanut markets. In South Carolina, runner market types will be planted on approximately two-thirds of hectares with the balance in Virginia market types.

Peanuts in a field near Tarboro in northeastern North Carolina on June 5.





Peanuts in a field near Oak City, North Carolina in conservation tillage. Notice that gypsum (calcium sulfate) has been applied.



Flower on a peanut plant near Oak City, North Carolina on June 5.





Injury from herbicide in a field near Hamilton, North Carolina on June 5.







Peanut regrowth after injury from flumioxazin. Note the initial injury near the base of the plant.





Injury caused by thrips feeding on a peanuts planted in early May near Lewiston-Woodville, North Carolina.



Peanuts planted in late May with image recorded on June 6. This field is located near Westbrook in southeastern North Carolina.









Peanuts in a field near McGee's Crossroads in central North Carolina on June 6.







Peanuts in a field near Whiteville in southeastern North Carolina on June 6. These peanuts were planted the second week of May.





