

Temperatures across the Virginia-Carolina region moderated over the weeks of September 16, 23, and September 30, allowing pod maturity to progress at close to a normal pace. However, temperatures were lower during the week of October 7. In central and northern areas of the Virginia-Caroline region, projections are that night temperatures will be at or below 50 F for several days in a row. These temperatures will most likely prevent further pod and kernel maturation. Peanuts in many fields have reached optimum maturity. Weather patterns during the weeks of September 30 and October 7, coupled with a forecast of dry and sunny weather for the next 10 days will help farmers make important gains in harvesting the peanut crop. Currently, approximately 35% of peanuts are dug as of October 9. However, over the next 10 days much of the crop will be dug. The caveat is tropical weather, although currently there is not a major threat to the region. Threshing will be a slower process, and harvest in 2024 will go well into November. Currently, there is no risk of a frost or freeze event that could damage freshly dug peanuts in short-term forecasts. However, as we move toward the latter half of October, risk of frost goes up dramatically.

Yield potential for peanuts in the region is 4,340 kg/ha (4,050 lbs/acre). The primary issue for growers continues to be declining plant health and possible pod shed. The pace at which peanuts can be dug and harvested relative to disease can affect yield. With the delay in field operations in late September and early October, peanuts could be vulnerable to freeze damage if dug to close to a freeze event. Growers will have to juggle soil conditions and risk of freeze damage as they move through October and into November.

Leaf spot disease in the peanut canopy on October 7.



Peanut canopy expressing symptoms of disease.



Peanut pods and vines inverted near Lewiston-Woodville in northeastern North Carolina.



Peanut pods and vines after digging. The first image was dug 10 days prior to the image being taken. The second image is of peanuts dug 18 days prior to the image being taken.





Peanut pods with discoloration. The dark spots on pods develop in most cases when peanuts are dug but not threshed prior to rainfall.



Peanut pods dug and vines inverted prior to a major series of rainfall events.







Peanuts dug when soil conditions were not favorable for this operation. Note the soil associated with pods and the root systems.





Field with peanuts recently threshed.



