Black Widow Spiders found in Corn and Cotton Fields

It has been about 3 weeks now when I received a call from Kaj Overstreet, crop consultant, about finding black widow spiders in corn and cotton fields. He explained that the occurrence of the black widow spiders has been increasing for the past several years. And, it isn’t as if he rarely finds one. He comes across them regularly on both plants and in the stubble and leaf litter while scouting fields. The presence of black widow spiders is a concern and could pose a threat when handling plants. After we finished talking, he found these black widow spiders in a field on July 7 and sent me the photographs. I appreciate Kaj for calling me and sharing what he is finding while scouting. It is definitely something of interest and to be shared.