

LATE PLANTED SORGHUM CONSIDERATIONS FOLLOWING FAILED COTTON

Prepared for Hockley and Surrounding Counties - June 23, 2017

Herbicide Residual

- Do not plant sorghum if Reflex, Flexstar, Staple LX, Pyrimax, Brake FX or Envoke has been used.
- If the following herbicides were used, sorghum can be planted, but the seed needs to be placed under the herbicide zone. Generally, moving an inch or two of soil is sufficient.
 - Treflan, Prowl
 - Caparol, Prometryn, Cotoran, Direx
- If Dual (metolachlor) was used, sorghum can be planted with Concep III treated seed.
- If 8 oz of Clarity (dicamba) or Xtendimax was used, there is a 15 day plant-back label restriction, however, experience has shown very little crop injury to sorghum 7 days after dicamba application, especially following a significant rain.

Hybrid Selection

- Typically, a medium maturity hybrid can be planted up to about July 1st while early maturing hybrids can be planted up to about July 12th.
- Check with seed company representatives on the hybrids best suited for your environment and planting date.
- Consider planting a sugarcane aphid tolerant hybrid. These hybrids may still need to be sprayed but research has clearly shown sugarcane aphids multiply slower on these hybrids providing more time for insecticide application and reducing the potential for the necessity to spray. See attached hybrid list.
- Make sure sorghum seed is treated with Cruiser, Poncho or Gaucho. These typically provide 40 days of sugarcane aphid control.

Seeding Rate

- Increase seeding rate 25 percent in late planted sorghum compared to optimum planting date to compensate for the reduction in tillering that typically occurs with late planting.
 - Dryland - Suggested seeding rate is 24,000 to 32,000 seed/acre
 - Limited Irrigation - Suggested seeding rate is 30,000 to 50,000 seed/acre
- With the warm soil temperatures associated with late planting expect the sorghum to emerge in 3 to 5 days.

Fertilizer

- For nitrogen needs, consider any N that may have been applied to the cotton. In areas where high rainfall amounts occurred after N was applied, significant leaching of the N out of the potential sorghum root zone may have occurred. In this situation consider applying a starter fertilizer.
- A good rule of thumb is 2 lbs of N are needed for every 100 lbs of expected grain yield. A 3000 lb yield goal will need 60 lbs. of N.

Weed Control

- It is important to start off with a clean field. Glyphosate can be applied any time before planting or prior to emergence without any risk to the sorghum. Adding a burndown product, such as Sharpen, can aid in control of resistant or hard to control weeds. See label for details.
- A pre-emergence herbicide is important. Consider applying Dual (s-metolachlor), Outlook (dimethenamid), or Warrant (acetochlor). These are sold under various trade names and are fairly short residual herbicides that will not impact cotton planted the following year. These can also be applied early post-emergence (but before weed emergence) if there is not enough time to apply pre-emergence.
- Care should be taken in applying atrazine and even propazine this late due to potential carryover.
- Always **check labels** for specifics.

Hay Option

- Typically, a sorghum/sudangrass (haygrazer) is a good option. The advantage of a hay crop is that less water is required compared to producing grain. The best quality and yield will be obtained if harvested in the boot to early heading stage. Check with seed companies for the best option for your farm. Texas AgriLife out of Amarillo conducted several years of hay trials prior to 2012. Data from these trials should be available or copies can be obtained from the United Sorghum Checkoff.
- Another option for hay is to plant millet. The advantage to millet is excellent quality and most varieties are very resistant to sugarcane aphid. Their disadvantage is they will not yield as much as a typical haygrazer.
- Grain sorghum hybrids with sugarcane aphid tolerance may also be planted as a hay crop or simply for cover residue. If grain sorghum hybrids are going to be used for hay, increase seeding rate 30 percent over an optimum rate if the sorghum is to be drilled.

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