

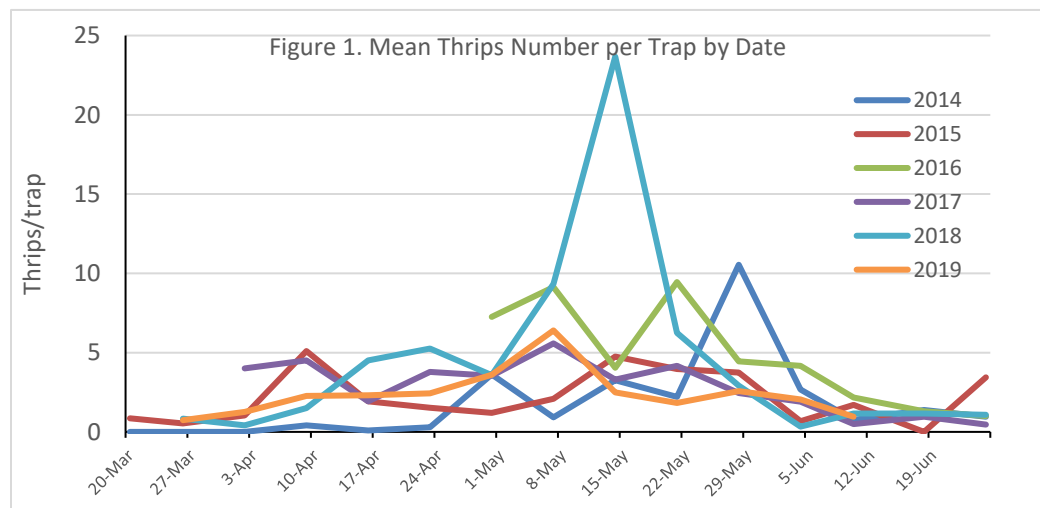
Thrips Population Monitoring: 2019

M.R. Abney and R. Srinivasan

Thrips are present in almost all Georgia peanut fields every year, but time of planting and environmental conditions can have significant impact on the abundance of thrips and severity of damage in a given field. The UGA Peanut Entomology Program has been monitoring thrips dispersal each year since 2014 and providing this information to county Extension faculty and growers through weekly on-line updates. These data are useful for researchers trying to understand changes in the incidence of Tomato spotted wilt virus and can help growers make thrips management decisions. These data were particularly valuable as workers at UGA and NC State University worked to develop a thrips prediction model that is relevant for peanut.

Four yellow sticky traps were placed at each of six locations in South Georgia. Locations were chosen with the help of UGA County Extension faculty in major peanut producing counties, and include sites in Tift, Worth, Brooks, Colquitt, Mitchell, and Decatur Counties. Collections were made around the edges of fields where peanuts were scheduled to be planted in 2019. Traps were collected and replaced weekly. Once returned to UGA Tifton, the traps were processed by counting all thrips present and identifying and counting tobacco thrips separately. The results of each week's trapping were graphed and posted on the UGA Peanut Entomology Blog. This tool was designed to encourage scouting and help growers decide whether or not a foliar insecticide application targeting thrips is needed given real time thrips dispersal information. The multi-year data set compiled through this work was a valuable resource for research efforts to develop an accurate thrips prediction model that is applicable to peanut.

The number of dispersing tobacco thrips collected on sticky traps in 2019 spiked in mid-May (fig 1). The peak was accurately predicted by the thrips prediction model.



Peak intensity of dispersal in 2019 was less than previous years; nevertheless, TSWV was severe in many locations. The regional thrips monitoring program will be discontinued in 2020, though trapping will continue in Tift County. The on-line thrips forecasting tool has proven very accurate for Georgia, and growers seeking thrips dispersal information will be directed to use that tool.