Features:

Weeds:

Spiderling: An emerging weed problem..................2

Pesticides:

EPA Registers New Nematicide Alternative ..........4

Operation Cleansweep is Back!...............................5

Miscellaneous:

Calendar of Events............................................7
Spiderling: An emerging weed problem

Spiderling (Boerhavia spp) is an annual/perennial that is becoming more prominent in north Florida. Once only observed on roadsides, spiderling is now becoming established in no-till peanut fields and perennial peanut hay fields.

Spiderling can be identified from a few unique characteristics. Seedling plants often show a deep red/purple color in the leaves but this converts to green as the plant matures. Additionally, the leaves have deeply inset veins and this lasts for the life of the plant. Stems are often red toward the base, but become progressively green as you move upward. Spiderling will grow fairly erect if other plants are near, but in open environments it is likely to sprawl with the stems lying flat on the ground. The seedhead is fairly open and produces seeds that are very sticky. I have observed these seeds to stick to clothing, vehicle tires, or just about anything that passes by.

Spiderling is an annual in norther climates, but does perenniate in Florida. It has a fairly short, but thick taproot. Attempts to hand-pull this weed will commonly cause the taproot to break off and resprout. To control this pest, it must be dug from the ground or sprayed with an effective herbicide.

To date, little is known about herbicide efficacy on this weed. We know that imazapic is not effective, neither has 2,4-D shown successful results.
Spiderling: An emerging weed problem (cont.)

Trials are currently underway to determine which herbicides will successfully control spiderling without adversely affecting the crop. Until these options are found, it is important to keep a watch for this weed and not allow it to spread. If the infestation is currently low, I would recommend digging them out and watching for survivors.
EPA Registers New Nematicide Alternative

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is registering a new active ingredient, fluensulfone, a non-fumigant nematicide that provides lower-risk chemical control of nematodes than methyl bromide and other restricted-use soil fumigants. Under the Montreal Protocol, the EPA has phased out methyl bromide because its use depletes the ozone layer.

Nematodes are difficult to control and can cause significant economic damage by reducing crop yield and quality. Fluensulfone is a nematicide for pre-plant, bare-soil application on fruiting vegetables and cucurbits – cucumbers, melons, squash, tomatoes, okra, eggplant and peppers. Of the seven main alternatives to fluensulfone used in the last five years, six (including methyl bromide) are soil fumigants and the seventh is a carbamate.

All seven are Restricted Use Pesticides, which may pose a greater risk to human health than fluensulfone. Restricted Use Pesticides require special applicator training and certification, reporting and record-keeping, and additional restrictive labeling to protect against human exposure. Soil fumigants can be labor intensive, requiring tarping and posting of fields. With its evaluation, EPA confirms that when used in accordance with the newly approved label, fluensulfone meets the safety requirements in the law.
Operation Cleansweep is Back!

The purpose of Operation Cleansweep is to offer a safe, convenient, and cost effective mechanism for agricultural operations, golf courses, and pest control companies to properly dispose of canceled, suspended, and unusable pesticides (CSUP). The 2014 Legislature has appropriated $100,000 to fund the program, with the funds going directly to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) to hire a contractor and implement the program in accordance with these Program Guidelines. In-kind services from the staff of DEP and FDACS will also be directed to this program.

This is an opportunity for agricultural operations, golf courses, and pest control companies that reside in Florida to properly dispose of CSUP. This program is not intended for universities, pesticide manufacturers and distributors, institutions, or state and local government. The intent of this guideline is to ensure that the public money that funds Cleansweep goes mostly to commercial users rather than governmental agencies or commercial wholesalers.

For all private commercial entities requesting service, they will be serviced at the following rate: the first 500 pounds of CSUP will be managed utilizing Cleansweep funds. If more CSUP, over the initial 500 pounds, exists, the entity requesting service will be responsible for paying for the management of this “excess” material at the contracted rate of 89 cents per pound of material. The costs of disposal through the state Operation Cleansweep contract are generally 1/3 or ¼ the costs of disposal it would normally cost to hire a private contractor to handle the same pesticide wastes.
Operation Cleansweep is Back! (cont.)

Additional requests will be handled on a case by case basis, based on the degree of eminent danger to public health and safety and the potential for environmental harm. If Cleansweep funds remain, after March 1, 2015, when all private agricultural entities that were on the list have received service, governmental/public agencies will be serviced at the following rate: the first 500 pounds of CSUP will be managed utilizing Cleansweep funds. If more CSUP, over the initial 500 pounds, exists, the agency requesting service will be responsible for paying for the management of this “excess” material at the contracted rate. Additional requests will be handled on a case by case basis, based on the degree of eminent danger to public health and safety and the potential for environmental harm. A list of participants, quantities and products will be compiled in advance of scheduling a pickup or collection. When a list in a geographic area (county), reaches a quantity specified in the vendor contract e.g., 2,000 lbs., a “milk run” collection would be authorized by the FDACS Program Manager. The contractor, not the FDACS Program Manager, would schedule the specific route and collection schedule for all participants served by a milk run.

This program is primarily focused on the collections of pesticide or fertilizer/pesticide containers known to contain CSUP ingredients. This means the product label should be legible. In instances where the label is not legible a decision will have to be made at the collection site by FDACS personnel as to whether it is acceptable. Leaking product containers shall be over-packed at the collection site and accepted for proper disposal. The selected contractor will be responsible for all CSUP handling, packaging, loading, transportation, disposal, and emergency response. Gas cylinders are not acceptable. Formulations in aerosol dispensers are acceptable.

For information, contact: Shannon Turner - Shannon.Turner@freshfromflorida.com
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Calendar of Events

To follow the link, press “Ctrl” and put cursor over link, and “click.”

Oct 14-16 2014   Sunbelt Ag Expo  
                 Moultrie, Georgia  
                 http://sunbeltexpo.com/

Nov 2-5, 2014    ASA, CSSA, & SSA International Annual Meetings  
                 Long Beach, California  
                 https://www.acsmeetings.org/

Dec 8-11, 2014   2014 48th Annual NAAA Convention and Exposition  
                 Louisiana, KY  
                 Agaviation.org

Sunbelt Ag Expo  
North America's Premier Farm Show®  
October 14-16, 2014  
Moultrie, GA

GRAND CHALLENGES  
GREAT SOLUTIONS
ASA, CSSA, & SSSA International Annual Meeting  
Nov. 2-5, 2014 | Long Beach, CA