

Considerations When Switching To Earlier Cotton Varieties

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As far as cotton planting progress goes from this past week, probably the best you can say is we got a good start. State wide my best guess is that we are no more than 15 percent planted. It is raining now and at best we will be back in the field by May 20. Typically by May 20th we are hoping to be wrapping up cotton planting not really just getting started. Even though we are just getting started we probably need to be moving away from planting medium season cotton varieties like PHY 499, ST 5458 and DP 0920.

The early maturity varieties like AM 1550, DP 0912, FM 1944, PHY 367, PHY 375 and ST 4145 would be the varieties of choice to plant this next week. There are some new varieties that I understand are in limited supply like DP 1311, PHY 339 and ST 4946 that would also fit in the later planting window. Hopefully we can get cotton planting wrapped up in the next 10 days or so. If not and you elect to plant around June 1

then we need to progress to the earliest of the early varieties most notably AM 1550, DP 0912, PHY 367 and PHY 375. Darrin Dodds of Mississippi State University has put together a very good cotton maturity guide (2013 Cotton Maturity Guide) that can be useful in making variety switching decisions. In general go with the varieties on his chart that are in the green.

In the rush to plant next week while switching intended cotton varieties be mindful of variety placement. For example if you switch from say a PHY 499 to PHY 367 to get that earlier maturity be aware that PHY 367, though early, will not perform near as well on a Crockett or Haywood county eroded hill side like PHY 499 would. Another early season variety would probably be a better fit in that situation. If the variety is new to you it would be a good idea to contact your county agent, cotton seed company representative or your retailer before you plant it. Δ

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