

## Soybean Loopers May Cause More Problems for Later-Planted Soybeans

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**August 26, 2018**

So far numbers of acres treated for soybean loopers (SBL's) are less than normal in Alabama but the recent statewide increase in SBL moth trap catch numbers and the increase in the number of small SBL's in test plots in Baldwin and Escambia counties indicate the possibility of more fields requiring treatment during the next two weeks.

Soybean looper moth trap catches at 5 trapping sites in the state have increased steadily since the last week of July. (See Table below).

### Soybean Looper Moth Trap Catch Numbers in 5 Alabama Counties in 2018

	Limestone		Autauga		Escambia		Baldwin		Elmore	
	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018
1 <sup>st</sup> week of July	17	34	15	0	9	36	59	116	70	NT
2 <sup>nd</sup> week of July	12	3	13	76	4	17	72	132	73	NT
3 <sup>rd</sup> week of July	12	59	14	110	9	67	102	156	319	NT
4 <sup>th</sup> week of July	70	51	120	70	56	80	77	211	268	NT
1 <sup>st</sup> week of Aug	203	113	177	112	253	132	580	221	437	98
2 <sup>nd</sup> week of Aug	272	113	621	197	680	39	579	375	253	220
3 <sup>rd</sup> week of Aug	490	168	342	444	241	311	316	334	183	228

NT = Not Trapped

Average trap catch numbers for 5 sites were as follows: 4<sup>th</sup> week of July = 102, 1<sup>st</sup> week of August = 135, 2<sup>nd</sup> week of August = 188; and 3<sup>rd</sup> week of August = 297. Soybean loopers have been sprayed in most soybean fields in Baldwin county and numbers of small loopers present in test plots at Fairhope having soybeans in the early R5 stage have increased significantly during the past week. These plots were treated earlier with a foliar neonicotinoid spray and Amdro fire-ant bait to reduce beneficials, but unsprayed fields of soybeans at the Fairhope research station also had defoliation levels of 20% due to SBL's on August 23. Drop cloth samples taken on 8/23 showed total numbers of SBL's per 3 row ft ranging from 55 to 80 at Fairhope. About 75% of these larvae were 3<sup>rd</sup> instars or younger and defoliation was close to 10%. This was up from 5% the previous week. SBL numbers at the Brewton station were also increasing with unsprayed test plots averaging 38 SBL larvae per 3 row feet with 75% of the worms being small. Defoliation ranged from 5% to 10% in these Brewton plots, up from 1 to 4% the previous week. We have also had reports of SBL's being sprayed in Pickens, Dallas and Jackson counties. Reports from Monroe county, northwest and north central AL indicate very low levels of loopers present to date. Reports indicate Green cloverworm numbers have also crashed across the state after reaching treatable levels in some fields. Velvetbean caterpillars were very rare at both Fairhope and Brewton on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of August, respectively. Velvetbean caterpillar numbers were also reported to be low in some Monroe county fields. Our 2018 insecticide tests at Brewton have shown that Besiege, Intrepid Edge and Prevathon have all provided good control of soybean loopers at this site. We have also had reports of

Fall armyworms infesting pastures/hayfields, athletic fields and lawns across central and south Alabama. Grass that has been well-fertilized and watered is especially attractive to Fall armyworms.