UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
EXTENSION
Ben Hill County

BEN HILL COUNTY AGRICULTURE NEWS

Tue 30	83°/65°	AM Clouds/PM Sun	13%	NNE 9 mph
Wed 01	85°/63°	Partly Cloudy	8%	NE 9 mph
Thu 02	81°/60°	Sunny	5%	NE 12 mph
Fri 03	82°/63°	Partly Cloudy	8%	NE 12 mph
Sat 04	82°/66°	PM Showers	35%	ENE 12 mph
Sun 05	82°/67°	Showers	51%	ENE 12 mph
Mon 06	84°/66°	PM Showers	33%	ENE 11 mph
Tue 07	85°/64°	AM Showers	37%	NE 10 mph
Wed 08	86°/64°	Partly Cloudy	19%	NE 9 mph
Thu 09	86°/63°	Partly Cloudy	24%	NE 8 mph
Fri 10	84°/60°	Partly Cloudy	24%	NE 8 mph
Sat 11	84°/61°	Partly Cloudy	24%	NE 7 mph
Sun 12	85°/61°	Partly Cloudy	19%	NNE 6 mph
Mon 13	85°/60°	Mostly Sunny	5%	NNE 7 mph

(Forecast from The Weather Channel for Ben Hill County)

UGA Podcasts:

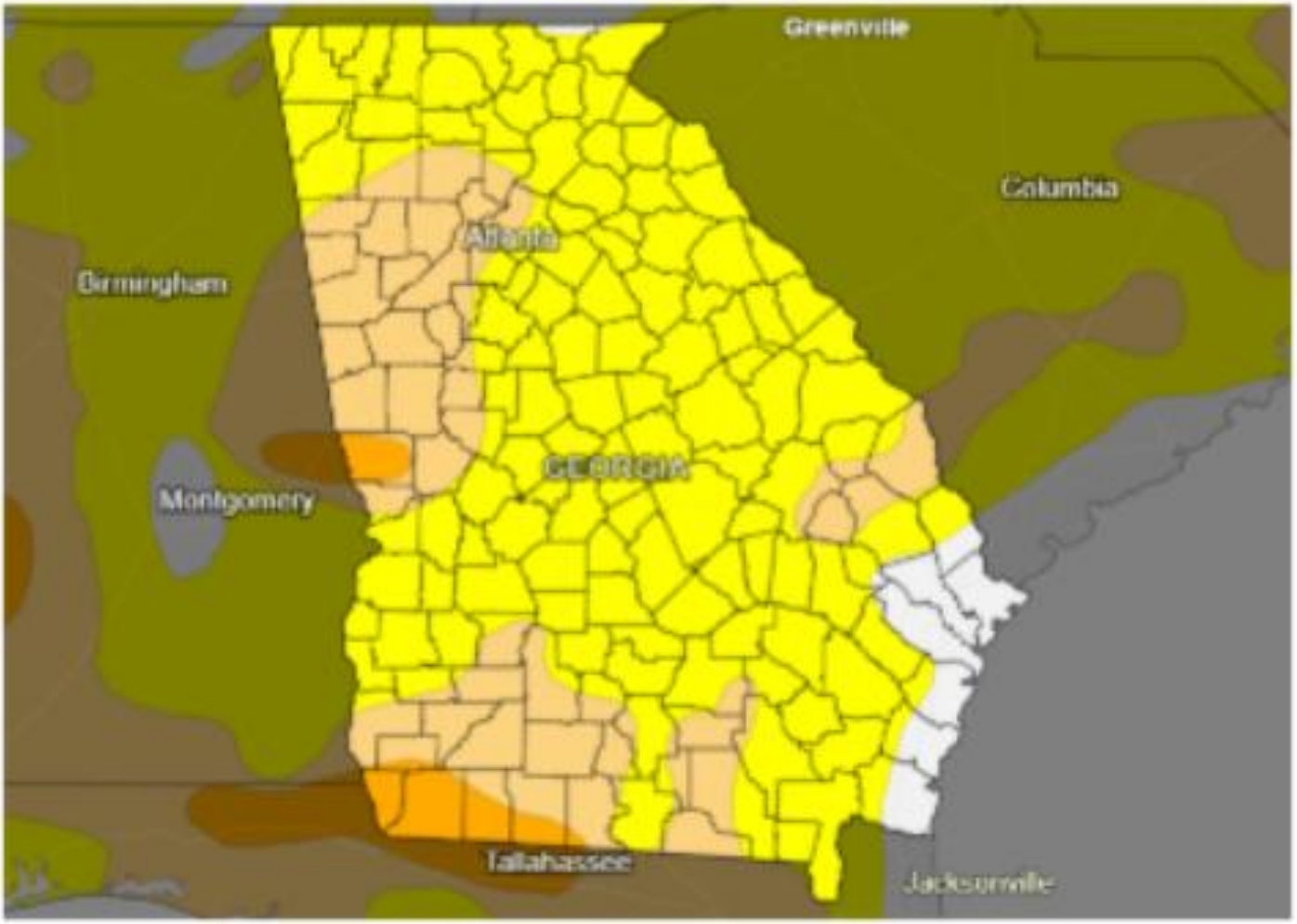
Link to **peanut** podcast page-

https://open.spotify.com/episode/5wxSceuurtvEOFxCzjXiN8?si=FTFSdzUyTzCKkQh_LJXcKw

Link to **cotton** podcast page

https://www.buzzsprout.com/2350262/episodes/17832862

U.S. Drought Monitor: Georgia

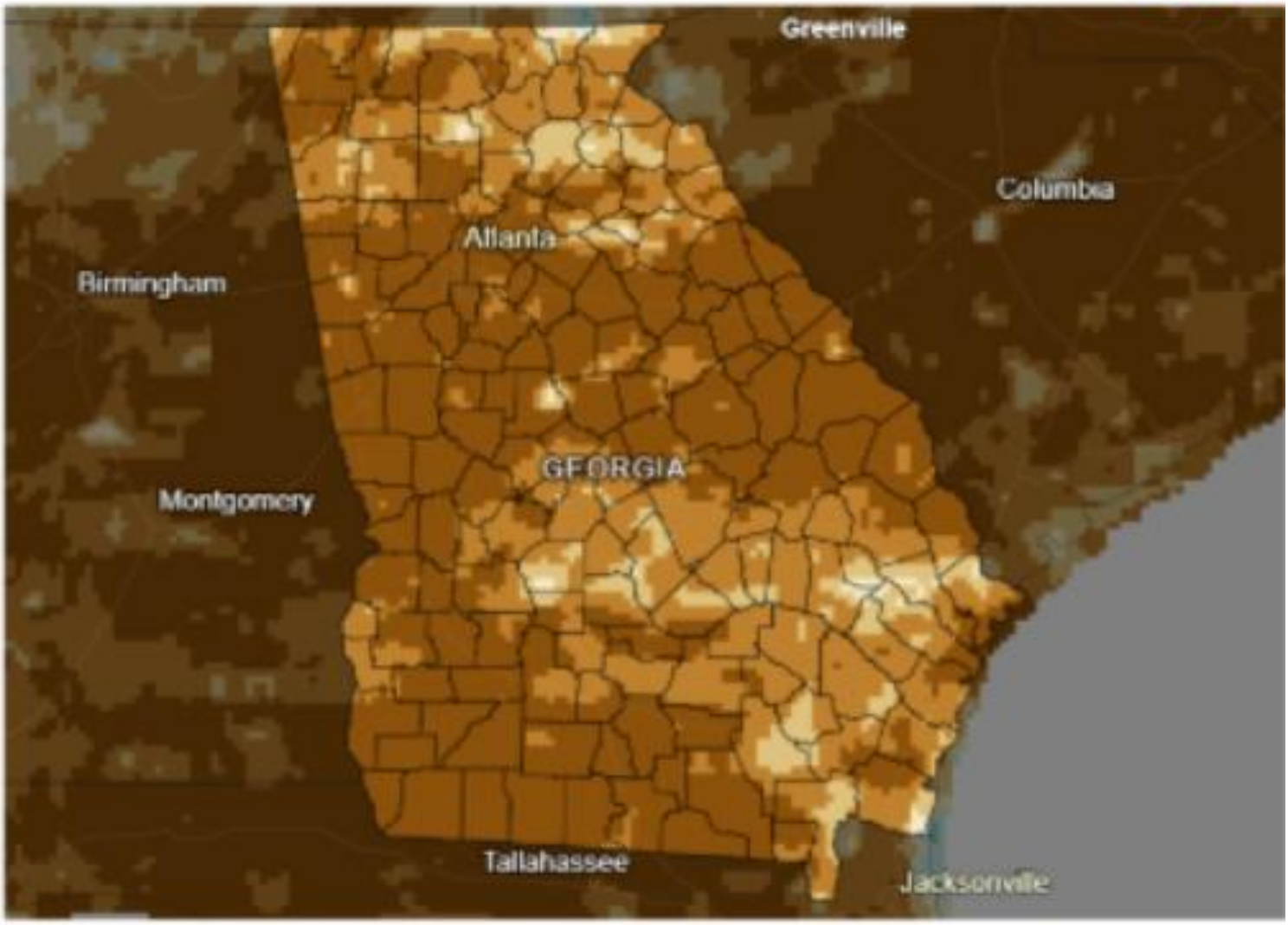


Drought & Dryness Categories	% of GA
D0 – Abnormally Dry	68.1%
D1 – Moderate Drought	24.0%
D2 – Severe Drought	3.1%
D3 – Extreme Drought	0.0%
D4 – Exceptional Drought	0.0%
Total Area in Drought (D1–D4)	27.2%

Source(s): NDMC, NOAA, USDA
Data Valid: 09/23/25

Drought.gov

30-Day Percent of Normal Precipitation



Precipitation Shown as a Percentage of Normal Conditions

0% 25% 50% 75% 100%

100% 150% 200% 300%

Source(s): UC Merced
Data Valid: 09/22/25

Drought.gov

Extension Precision Ag and Irrigation:

We finally received rain across most of the state, it still was not enough to have a significant impact on the current conditions. High temperatures, periods with little to no rainfall, low humidity, and moderate winds have all contributed to complicating end of season irrigation in both cotton and peanuts. In the production guide for both crops, the crop water requirement curve provides an estimate of water needed in each respective week of growth. For example, peanuts in the 18th week of growth would require 0.7 inches of irrigation per week according to the production guide (Figure 1), but we have seen that in conditions that have been hotter and had lower humidities than normal the amounts reflected below do not reflect the actual crop water usage nor recover to optimal soil moisture conditions.

Peanut Update:

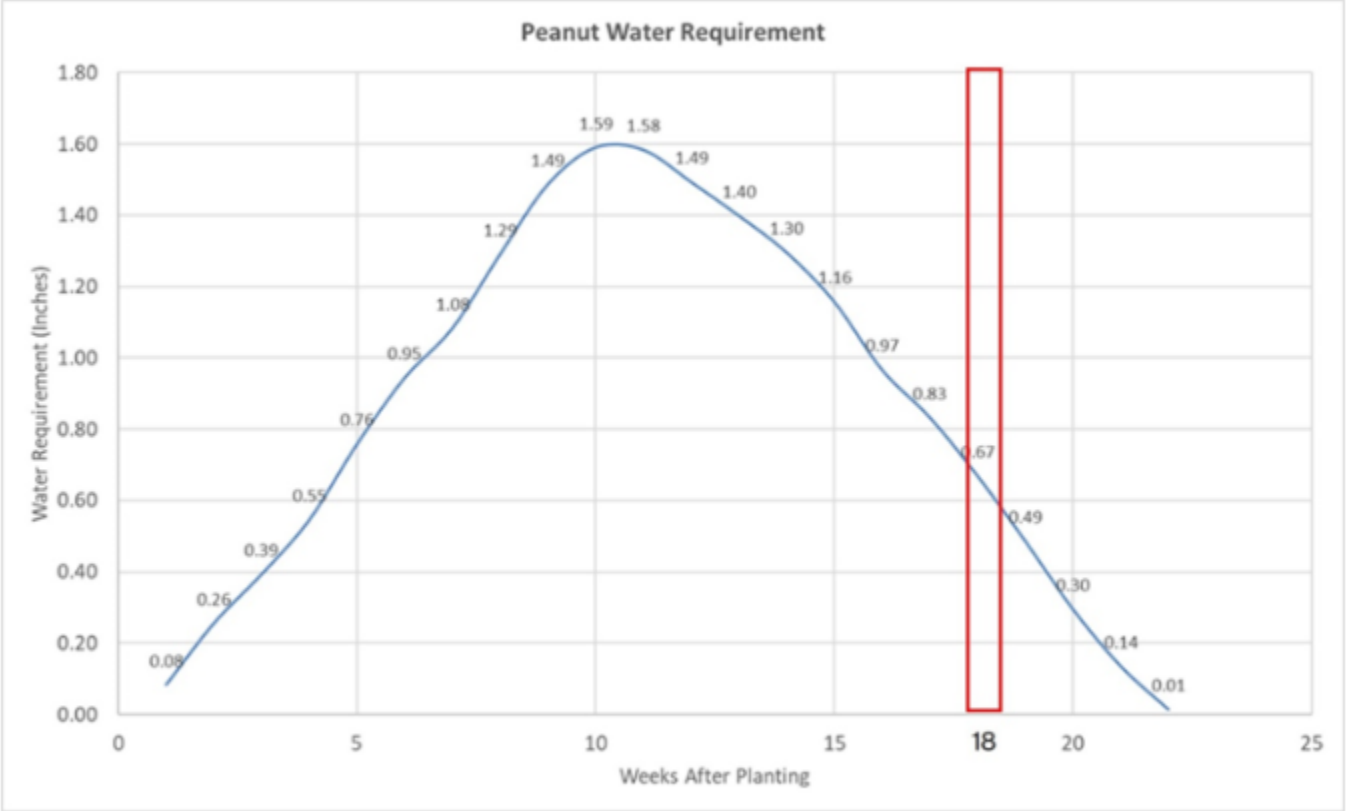


Figure 1. Peanut water use curve with week 18 highlighted in red box

During these water usage periods with prolonged drought, once there is depletion of moisture deeper in the soil profile it is very difficult, if not impossible, to recover with irrigation alone. This raises the question that even if you have the irrigation capability to keep up with more frequent irrigation, is it economical? Are you recovering more in yields than you are losing from the costs associated with operating the irrigation system? Unfortunately, at this time we do not have the final answer to that.

Peanuts behind Peanuts?

This season has been one for the books when it comes to leaf spot incidence and severity.

In many fields on short rotations or peanuts behind peanuts, leaf spot has taken over. Even with premium fungicide programs.

This doesn't mean the fungicides didn't work, it means conditions were favorable and something in the program allowed the disease to get established. Once the freight train of leaf spot has started, there is no stopping it.

Some peanut behind peanut fields have worse leaf spot than others…WHY?

Inoculum. The leaf spot that was present in the field last year was worse in some fields than others, meaning the primary or initial inoculum coming into this year is different from field to field.

What do they look like on the board?

Many samples I have checked this past week have been coppered up on the front end. However, not all coppered peanuts have detached from the hull.

Once the peanuts DO detach, they are sitting and waiting.

Once over half of the front end has coppered up, depending on limb crop and overall pod load, I say they are withing a few days away from digging.

Some situations with heavier pod loads that are less mature or heavy limb crops can be held for a little longer.

The ole farmers tale says if you dig 12 Ys without seeing sprouts, you dug too early

Why are there single kernel pods?

Why did the plant abort the other kernel?

WEATHER. When it is dry and temperatures reached 94° +, the plant felt the stress and aborted one of the kernels to fill the other.

This is why we have seen higher %shell on grade sheets.

Cotton Update:

Camp Hands Defoliation rates for the week:

Rates: First part of week - 4 oz/acre dropp, 10 oz Folex, 32- 42 oz Prep

End of week I would consider bumping folex up to 12 oz, certainly use highest rate of Prep. I like ginstar when it cools off, 6-8 oz should be plenty, but I would spike it with dropp/thidiazuron because of the regrowth potential of this crop. If we get a big rain statewide this stuff is going to go.

- **Highs look pretty normal first part of the week but drop towards the end, with parts of the state getting into the 70s on Thursday and Friday. By the end of the week I would be utilizing higher rates of many products or switching to some stuff that may have better activity when it is cooler (i.e. Ginstar/Cutout/Adios).**

- **Keep in mind rainfree periods - rainfall is still spotty but it isn't fun when you get the opportunity to respray cotton.**

- **Had a phone call from someone this morning about top bolls not opening after being sprayed 10 days ago - make sure to "double check" if a field is ready. If you count NACB, also slice into top bolls or count % open.**

- **Talked with some folks last week about watering open cotton to get better defoliation, but they were two weeks off from defoliating. Not worth turning the pivot on as dry as we are, gonna lose that water in a couple of days and will have to do it again if that's the plan. Better off waiting to see if we catch a rain and then adjusting as we get closer.**

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Deer damage on defoliated cotton

The damaged cotton plants that were fed on early in the growing season grew back but did not make harvestable bolls. Though the plants are loaded down, the plant could not catch back up.

Thanks to everyone that came out to the field meeting last week!

SUPPORT BEN HILL COUNTY 4-H!

ENJOY FRONT DOOR PRODUCE FRESH FROM THE FARM

ORDER A BOX

Our online form for orders will be open between September 15 and November 7, 2025

SCAN TO ORDER

PICK IT UP

Your 20-pound box of produce will be delivered to the UGA Extension Office on November 17th for pick-up. This will be perfect for Thanksgiving!

SUPPORT 4-H'ers!

Call our office at 229-922-0277 if you have questions!
321 Dewey McGlamry Road
Fitzgerald, GA 31750

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Extension Value added services:

There are several resources your county agent has access to for assisting the public:

- **SpotOn Digital Sprayer Calibrator & nozzle cleaner tool** - Accurate flow rate checking of individual sprayer nozzles.
    - **Fertilizer Spinner-Disc Spreader Calibration** - spread pattern testing of fertilizer spreaders.
    - **Hay Moisture Tester –** Evaluation and assessment of hay to bale at optimum moisture content - decrease mold growth and increase feed value. Test baled or unbaled (in field)
    - **Forced Motor Planter Calibration –** at-plant insecticide hopper box calibrations. Potential benefits: increase insecticide application efficacy with the appropriate and effective application of product label and recommended control rate. Decrease
    - **Mobile Irrigation Lab** – Pivot efficiency evaluation/Irrigation audits to support water conservation and decrease irrigation costs.
    - **Harvest Moisture Testing** – Corn and soybean moisture testing to decrease drying time and fuel costs.
    - **Enviroscape Watershed Model -** Environmental education programming tool. Interactive demonstration of the sources and effects of water pollution. Present and illustrate watershed/stormwater concept.
    - **Rainfall Simulator Tabletop Educational Program tool -**
    - **Digital wind meter educational tool** – Anemometer measures wind speed to support safe pesticide applications and reduce drift.
    - **Pivot Calibrations**
    - **Drone imagery/scouting**