Peanut Pointers

August/September, 2025

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Peanut Team

August/September 2025 Entomology Peanut Pointers

Mark Abney

The late summer pest complex can vary from year to year, but the main things you are likely to see in peanut fields as we make the turn to the home stretch of the 2025 peanut season are: foliage feeding caterpillars, three cornered alfalfa hoppers, potato leafhoppers, and spider mites.

Foliage feeding caterpillar pressure has been light in most areas of Georgia this year. Growers may be asking you about putting out a "preventative" diflubenzuron (Dimilin) application if they have not already done so. If fields are scouted correctly on a regular basis, there is no real need for a preventative insecticide spray. Diflubenzuron is excellent on velvetbean caterpillar (VBC), and it will kill them even if it is applied after the eggs hatch. My guess is that most growers who do not scout have already applied an insecticide for caterpillars (whether it was needed or not), but if they have not, now would be a good time for that "preventative" diflubenzuron spray. I do not encourage preventative sprays, but this one makes sense if you are not scouting; it is cheap, has long residual activity, and does not flare secondary pests. Some scouts like to see a diflubenzuron application go on before the VBC show up because it can make their job easier by taking that pest out of the equation. I don't blame them; it is not necessary, but I might do the same thing if I were farming or consulting. On the other hand, every dollar that we don't spend is a dollar we keep in our pocket, and we might make it through the season without treating some fields. Peanuts still need to be scouted for soybean looper and other caterpillars even if diflubenzuron is applied.

We will likely be seeing lots of three cornered alfalfa hoppers (TCAH) in the next four to six weeks. That is normal for this time of year. TCAH adults are highly mobile and can move in and out of fields very quickly. Though feeding may result in some minor yield loss, there are no cost effective insecticides that provide good efficacy and residual activity. This combined with the risk of flaring spider mites makes an insecticide application for TCAH very risky. We only want to treat an insect with an insecticide if the value of the loss it will create is greater than the cost of control. Pyrethroids are cheap, but if you have to spray several times (because of short residual, reinfestation, and relatively poor initial efficacy) and/or you flare spider mites it would have been better to leave the TCAHs alone.

Potato leafhoppers (PLH) become abundant in some fields every year, but infestations in peanut in 2025 are the highest I have ever seen. With that said, growers are rightfully concerned. The question of what to do when PLH is present is not an easy one to answer. There are no recent data on the relationship between the injury caused by leafhopper

feeding (hopper burn) and yield. Indications are that hopperburn does not have much impact on yield. That, coupled with the risk of flaring mites with insecticides, leads me to recommend that most growers avoid spraying potato leaf hopper. I'm sure some of you have done online searching and found information from VA and NC that suggests treating PLH when hopper burn is seen on 25% of the field. I am not discounting this recommendation, but I have not been able to locate the data to support the recommendation. A shorter growing season in the VA/NC growing region can also result in some insects having greater impact on yield than they do in Georgia.

Spider mites are present in Georgia, and we should be watching for infestations developing in peanut. Pay particular attention to non-irrigated fields and dry corners of fields that have not received adequate rain. Early detection and treatment is important for effective mite management.

August/September 2025 Peanut Pointers-Irrigation Update

David Hall, Jason Mallard, Phillip Edwards, and Wesley Porter

Each season brings its own challenges and farmers must find the best strategy, tools, techniques, and technology to help address these challenges. Thus far, 2025 has been all over the board with moisture as some areas have had good rainfall while others have seen those undesired periods of several weeks of very dry weather. Driving across the state, ryland fields with drought stress are visible from the truck seat. Fortunately, we were all spared a major hurricane as it was steered away from us. Hopefully we will continually be spared as many are still recovering from last year's storms.

For weekly peanut water requirements, please refer to the graph in figure 1 (the UGA Checkbook). Keep in mind that these requirements are for peanuts that were planted between mid-April and mid-May and that they are to be considered for both irrigation and rainfall. This graph should give you a good idea on where we stand for peanuts on August 25 according to approximate planting date windows. Most growers that planted in this time frame have already reached peak water use during the month of August and the daily water use has already started to decline. DO NOT get behind on irrigation as the weather can just as easily become hot and dry over the month of September. If you fall behind with hot and dry weather it is difficult to catch up with irrigation only. The GA 12Y peanut variety has been planted on many acres this year. This variety will require several more weeks in the ground for peak maturity. Many times, once digging begins, we forget that peanuts that were planted later in the season or a certain variety will need to be monitored closely for sufficient moisture due to the longer growing season. Shorting your peanuts two to four, and up to six weeks and beyond of irrigation if the fall becomes dry will negatively impact yield. It is critical to continue to manage irrigation until you make the decision on digging. For more information on the end of season peanut irrigation termination see the Extension Precision Ag and Irrigation Blog post at: Finalizing Peanut Irrigation | Extension Precision Ag and Irrigation.

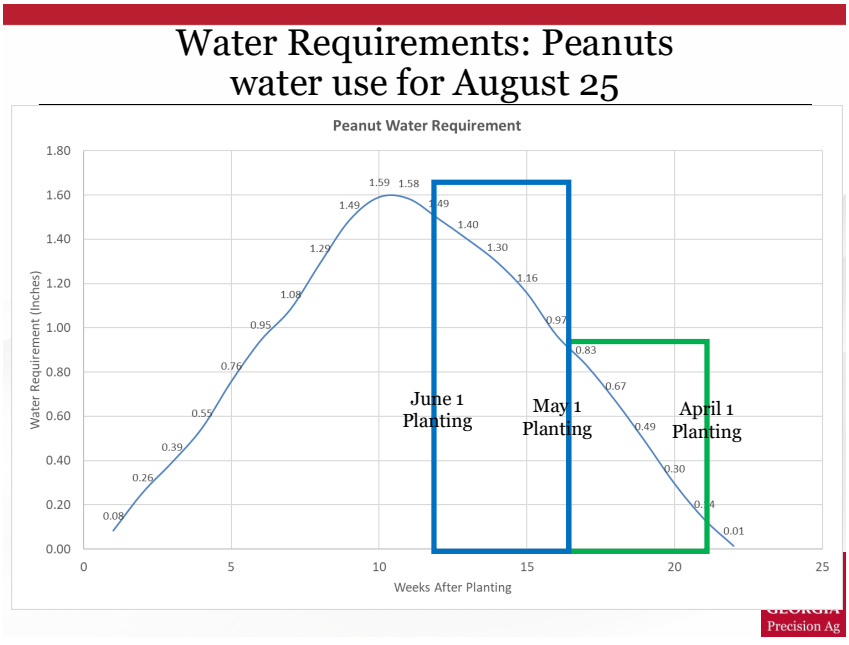

Figure 1. UGA Checkbook for Peanuts with the estimated August water requirements highlighted.

For those of you using a soil moisture sensor or Irrigator Pro as your irrigation scheduling method, they will provide critical data that can aid in the prevention of both falling behind and losing deep moisture and over-irrigating. Most of the irrigated peanut crop has achieved canopy closure and that will help keep soil temperatures moderated and utilize irrigation and/or rainfall more efficiently.

One point to keep in mind about using Irrigator Pro, especially if you're a new user and this is your first year running it, if you planted in the mid-April – mid-May window, you will hit the "R3 – Drying Out" growth stage during the month of August, if you haven't already. According to the crop model, this growth stage will occur at roughly 95 DAP. You will notice that the app will tell you to stop irrigating for about a week. This is to intentionally withhold water once a maximum fruit load occurs on the plant and to stress the peanut plants so that it will stop flowering and allocate resources to maturing the peanuts that are already on the plant. So, if you see this occur and feel like your field is getting dry, don't panic its part of the model. This is how the soil moisture needs to be handled to ensure the plant reacts appropriately physiologically. I would make the statement to not let the field get too dry during this period. If you were already drying out and see deep moisture depleting rapidly you may want to still irrigate to prevent falling behind later in the season. If you had wet conditions during plant development, plant roots sometimes do not enter those deeper depths. It is important to maintain adequate moisture within the active root zone. Through monitoring soil moisture sensors in certain areas, we are noticing, a majority of moisture is being utilized from the shallower depth sensors. In this situation if you aren't seeing moisture being utilized from deeper depths be sure to maintain good moisture where the plants are utilizing moisture. It's times like these situations when one may question the accuracy of a soil moisture sensor. The tried and tested method of using a 1-3-inch diameter auger and drilling down near the sensor while noting the moisture level can help validate the data being logged and transmitted.

It seems this season as we have received rainfall several times it has been in large rain events. When these heavy downpours happen, we need to keep in mind two things which impact how much of that rainfall we capture and are able to utilize for our crops. They are the water intake rate and water holding capacity of our soils. When we receive those 3" rainfall events we may only infiltrate or "bank" 0.75" or 1" of it according to rainfall intensity and soil conditions.

Also, something to note, as we move later in the season is to prepare for harvest. I have just written another Extension Precision Ag and Irrigation Blog Post with the help of Ashley Smith on proper Peanut Inverter Setup. More information about that topic can be found here: Peanut Inverter/Digger Set-Up | Extension Precision Ag and Irrigation.

If you have further questions about irrigation requirements, scheduling, harvest prep, or other related questions reach out to your local UGA County Extension Agent.

September Peanut Pointers

Scott Monfort

Agent Maturity Trainings: Two cotton defoliation/peanut maturity/precision ag trainings are scheduled for the first part of September. The training in Tifton will be September 3rd after the Cotton and Peanut Research Field Day (2pm) and the training at the Midville REC will be on Monday September 8th (8:30-9 am). Please bring samples with you to the trainings.

Maturity Boards: Please let me know if you need maturity boards ASAP and I will try to get some for you. Does anyone need a new basket? I can try to get some made, if needed.

Keep a maturity clinic log book: It would be helpful for you to keep a Maturity log of all of the samples you run. This will help you keep track the progression of some fields over time. Try to get planting date and go back and ask your growers for their digging dates for the fields you checked. You can also help us out even more if you can get their yields and grades for each of the fields also

Current Situation: The early-planted (April) irrigated crop seems to be anywhere from 3 to 5 days ahead of schedule. The May-planted peanuts seem to be more on track with the normal 140-145 maturity dates, especially the irrigated fields. The non-irrigated crop also looks pretty good across a majority of the growing area. However, you should look closely at the non-irrigated fields as the blooming and pod set might have been shifted backwards 1-2 weeks due to the dry and hot conditions in June. We are beginning to observe white mold and leafspot because of the wet weather and shorter rotations. An increase in diseases can also influence maturity recommendations. We do not want to lose too many leaves, so encourage your growers to stay timely with their fungicide applications.

Let's Talk Maturity: First, please tell your growers that we need no more than a 200 average pod sample (180-220), not 400 pods. This is extremely important to get an accurate read on the field maturity. Another key part of a maturity sample is to see all of the sample laid out on the board. For example, I have seen several fields where the front edge indicated the field to be ready to dig in 5 to 7 days. However, there were a good many pods still in the yellow and light orange categories. If the sample does not have any coal black pods or have any peanuts letting go in the hull (golden colored skin instead of pink colored skin), I would encourage the growers to give them a little more time. This will allow the peanuts to gain weight and increase grade. Remember all you can do is suggest to growers what to do based on the sample they bring you.
Depending on the crop load and whether the peanuts are coming loose in the hull, growers may need to dig them early, go to full maturity, or let them go to frost. Another issue has been the sporadic rains received in many fields during the season, causing them to stop and start blooming during the season causing some dryland field to have two crops (split crops). These fields can be difficult to make a decision on whether to dig or not to dig.

Things to keep in mind/questions to ask to ensure the best prediction of maturity:

- **How do the vines look? Do you have a lot of disease in the field?**
- **How do the pegs/pods look?**
- **What is moisture now compared to a week from now, etc.?**
- **What is the short and long-range forecast? Temperature and Moisture?**

- **Please encourage growers to segregate irrigated and non-irrigated acres.**
- **Do not take a risk in contaminating good quality peanuts with non-irrigated that might have aflatoxin (dryland corners).**

Non-Irrigated Fields (most dryland fields are in good shape this year)

- **Dry hot weather can reduce yields and have increase insect issues (LCB and Spider Mites).**
- **Do not harvest and blend dryland peanuts with irrigated peanuts even if they look okay. Especially in seed fields.**

Irrigated Fields

- **Do not stop irrigating if hot and dry – You may need to keep irrigating up to digging**
- **Keep an eye on late season TSWV --- canopies could crash quickly**
- **Some fields running 3-5 days earlier than normal**
- **Keep a good watch on Seed Fields --- Disease, maturity, problems?**

Replanted Fields: Please ask your growers to let you know which fields were replanted because of stand issues. Some of these fields might have a split crop while in other fields might have a more typical layout on the board. Knowing which fields were replanted will just help you understand any inconsistencies observed on the maturity board.

Late Season Temperatures and Moisture: Once the minimum temperature drops into the lower 50's and upper 40's you will see the maturation process slow but not stop. Based on conversations with fellow specialists, it is believed the maturation process does not stop until the temperature drops into the low 40's or lower. The "normal" minimum temperature at Tifton is typically around 60 to 63 degrees on October 1st and 50 to 55 degrees on November 1st. Therefore, if we have "normal" minimum temperatures through October and early November, then we should see the maturation of fields planted in early to mid-June continue until optimal maturity is reached. Moisture is another important factor. Temperature will not matter unless we have moisture. We need several rain events through the next six weeks in order to produce a late season crop unless irrigated.

Risk of Frost or Freezing Temperatures: Every year, the late planted crop is at risk of being subject to frost or freezing temperatures. The 2025 season will not be any different. Please remember that if there is a risk of a frost/freeze, the best thing to do is leave the peanuts in the ground. They are insulated in the ground. Peanuts need to be inverted no less than 48 hours before a frost or freeze to reduce the risk of causing damage to the peanuts.

<u>RUNNER-TYPE VARIETIES</u>

- **Dyna Grow 913:** This is an early to medium- maturing peanut (135 to 140 days). **Need More Information**
- **Arnie:** is a medium maturing peanut (140 to 145 days). **Need More Information**
- **AUNP 17:** is a medium maturing peanut (140 to 145 days).
- **FloRun '331':** This is a medium- maturing peanut (140 to 145 days).
- **FloRun '52N':** This is a medium- maturing peanut (140 to 145 days).
- **Georgia-06G:** Georgia-06G is a medium maturing peanut (140 to 145 days).
- **Georgia-09B:** Georgia 09-B is a medium maturing peanut (135 to 140 days).

- **Georgia-12Y:** This is a medium-to-late maturing peanut (150 days +).
- **Georgia-13M:** This is a medium-to-late maturing peanut (140 to 145 days) --- May not follow board perfectly.
- **Georgia-16HO:** is a medium maturing peanut (140 to 145 days). **Some Peg Strength Issues Observed**
- **Georgia-18RU:** is a medium maturing peanut (140 to 145 days).
- **Georgia-20VHO**: is a medium maturing peanut (140 to 145 days). **Some Peg Strength Issues Observed**
- **Georgia-22MPR**: is a medium-to-late maturing peanut (145 to 155 days). **Need More Information**
- **Georgia-23RKN**: is a medium maturing peanut (140 to 145 days). **Need More Information**
- **Georgia-24NHO**: is a medium maturing peanut (140 to 145 days). **Need More Information**
- **TIFTNV High OL:** is a medium maturing peanut (140 to 145 days).
- **Tifguard:** is a medium maturing peanut (135 to 140 days).
- **TifNV-HG:** is a medium maturing peanut (140 to 145 days).
- **TUFRunnerTM '297':** is a medium to medium-late maturing peanut (145 to 150 days)
- **TUFRunnerTM '511':** is a medium to medium-late maturing peanut (145 to 150 days)

Water Requirement vs Water Supplied

R. Scott Tubbs and Wesley M. Porter

The amount of rain received during the crop season plays an important part in determining yield. But the timing of when received is as important as the quantity received, if not moreso. The planting date of the crop therefore plays a crucial role in maximizing production. The water requirement needed by the crop is similar in terms of quantity (albeit affected by heat/humidity [evapotranspiration]), but the crop stage at which a rainfall event is received can be quite different depending on when the crop was planted. Thus, the management of the crop and the yield potential should take the planting date into consideration, monitoring both the timing and the quantity of water received compared to the water demand of the crop at its current stage of progress.

This article includes comparisons of the water requirement for peanut vs the water received for several different crop seasons (UGA Weather Network near Tifton campus was the source for actual rainfall - http://www.georgiaweather.net) . The 2019 season was dry for peanut. Regardless of whether planted early (Fig. 1) or planted late (Fig. 2), the period of peak water-use was under a severe deficit for the majority of growth. The largest benefit to early planting that year was that conditions were a bit wetter toward the end of the season which should have helped reduce threat of aflatoxin and aided in digging. The late planted crop tracked favorably with rainfall received for the first half of the season, but ultimately was devastating during peak flowering and pod fill. Statewide average yield in 2019 was 4170 lb/ac.

In the 2021 crop season, rainfall quantity and distribution was more abundant and uniform. The early planted crop (Fig. 3) had water demands met for almost the entire crop season, except for a 3-4 week stretch when weekly rainfall dropped to roughly 0.5 to 1.0 inches short of the crop demand. The late planted crop (Fig. 4) started off wetter than normal, and received less rainfall than needed for a 7-8 week period during peak water use. Then at crop maturity around the time when digging was required, there was a narrow window to get the crop dug on time between heavy rainfall events. Statewide average yield in 2021 was 4450 lb/ac.

We don't know how the rainfall distribution will finish the season for the current crop, so overall yield determination is difficult. However, several useful points can be gleaned from these graphs. In Figure 5, it shows that our early planted crop had adequate rainfall for the beginning of the season. However, things turned dry (and hot) just before and up through peak water-use. Adequate rainfall rebounded recently as all harvestable pods are now set and we're just looking to fill these pods and maintain yield potential. The mid-season dry spell could affect maturity, causing a split crop that will need careful attention to determine whether to dig early, or wait and progress a larger portion of the later developing pods (risking the front edge of the most mature pods). The late planted crop (Fig. 6) is tracking nicely in terms of water demand vs water requirement. The dry spell earlier this summer shouldn't cause bimodal distribution on crop maturity for these later peanuts. However, September and October are historically much drier months than July and August, which could make reaching the peak water demand on this crop a challenge, resulting in an overall deficit that can only be made up with irrigation. Peanuts planted in this range (early June) are only around 86 days after planting at the time of writing. The harvestable portion of pod set is still in progress, since a flower that initiates today will have enough time to fill and reach the basket. The jury is still out on how to manage later-planted peanuts for maturity. Pay close attention to those maturity boards, some should need to come off early and others will need to push 10-14 days late.

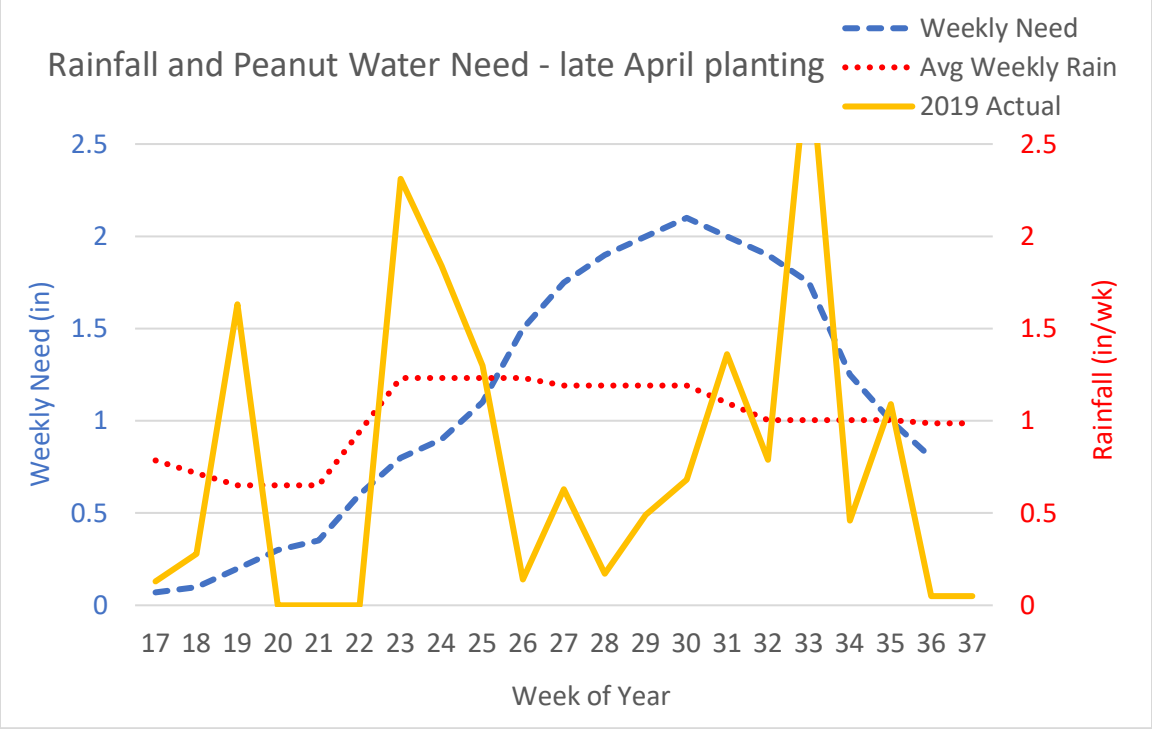

Figure 1. Water requirements of peanuts planted in late April (early planting) with 30-yr average and actual rainfall in 2019 (a dry season).

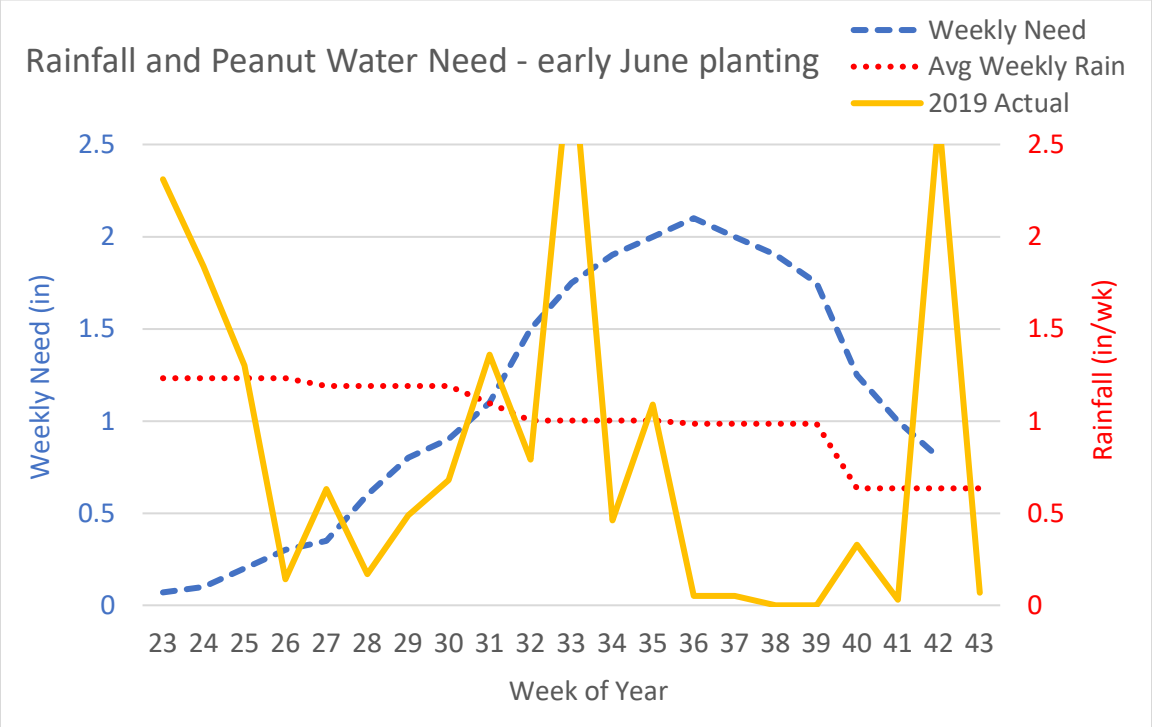

Figure 2. Water requirements of peanuts planted in early June (late planting) with 30-yr average and actual rainfall in 2019 (a dry season).

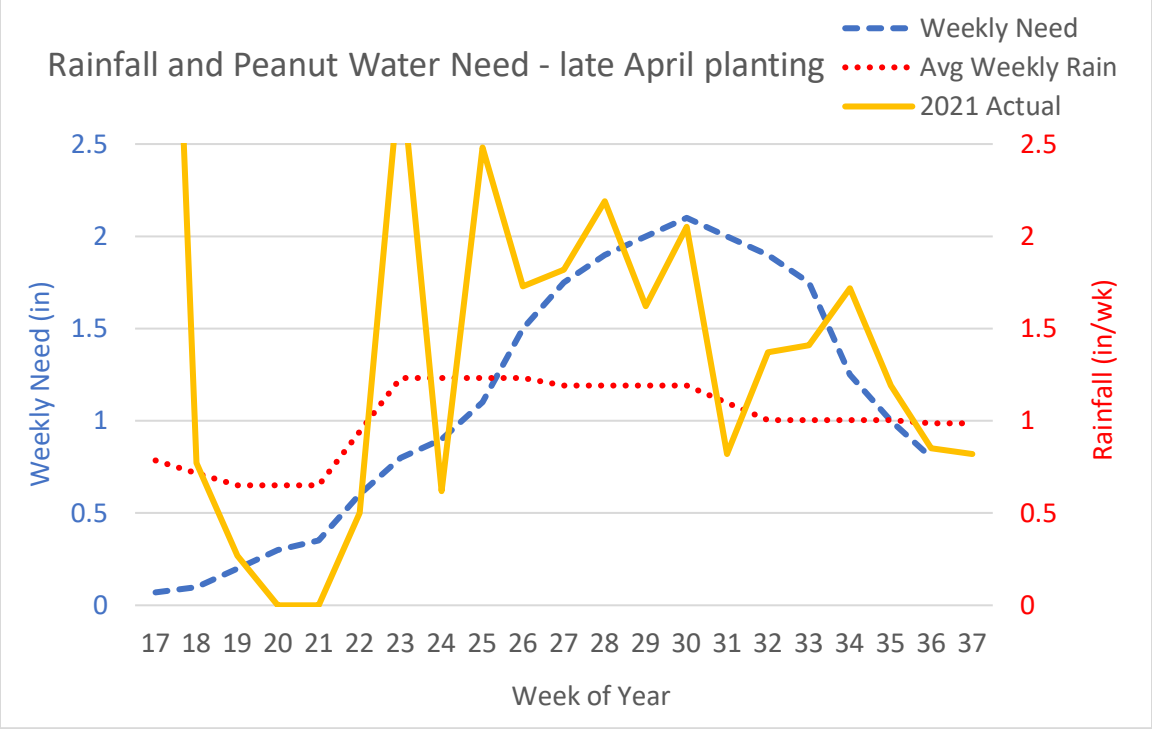

Figure 3. Water requirements of peanuts planted in late April (early planting) with 30-yr average and actual rainfall in 2021 (a wet season).

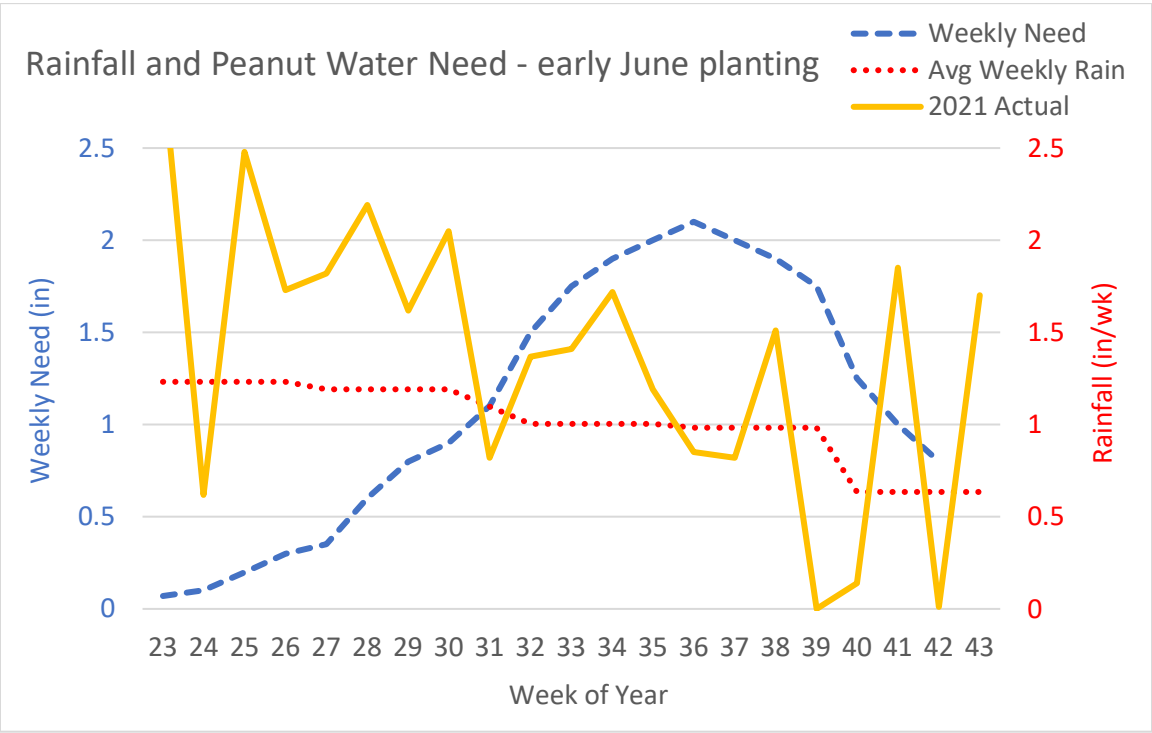

Figure 4. Water requirements of peanuts planted in early June (late planting) with 30-yr average and actual rainfall in 2021 (a wet season).

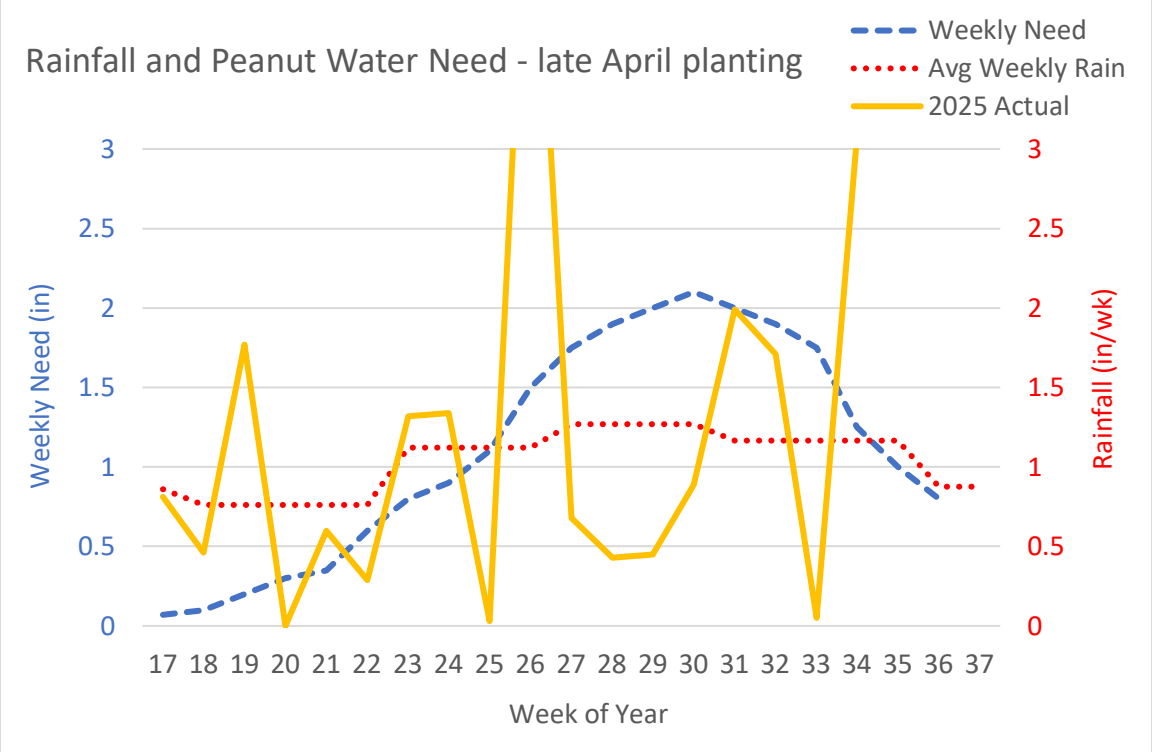

Figure 5. Water requirements of peanuts planted in late April (early planting) with 30-yr average and actual rainfall in 2025 (thus far, a wet season).

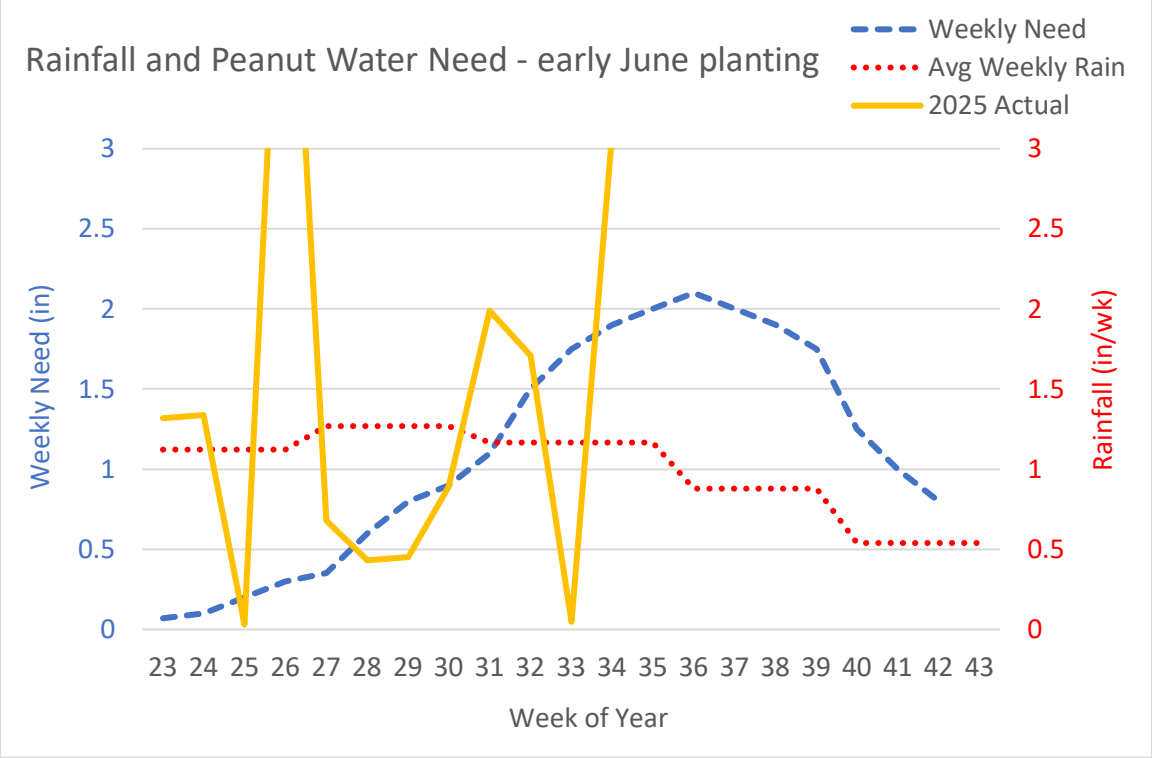

Figure 6. Water requirements of peanuts planted in early June (late planting) with 30-yr average and actual rainfall in 2025 (thus far, a wet season).