



Alabama
Extension

Improving Peach Production in Alabama “Building a Sustainable Future for Alabama’s Peach Industry”

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Introduction

Peach production plays a vital role in Alabama’s agricultural economy, representing the state's most extensively cultivated fruit crop. Peaches account for 58% of all fruit and nut crop acreage in Alabama, underscoring their significance within the state's horticultural sector. However, producers encounter numerous challenges each growing season as they work to maintain a healthy and productive crop. Key concerns include fluctuating environmental conditions, effective pest management strategies, and market competitiveness, all of which require careful planning and adaptation to ensure sustainable production.

Peach production in the southeastern United States has historically been one of the most pesticide-intensive fruit crops. The Alabama Cooperative Extension System is committed to promoting the adoption of environmentally sustainable pest management strategies while preserving the high crop quality demanded by consumers. A critical component of this effort is identifying and implementing management practices that incorporate reduced-risk pesticides, ensuring both ecological responsibility and agricultural viability.



Program Objectives

Objective 1: Increase grower knowledge by providing the most up-to-date research-based information and IPM strategies.

Objective 2: Development and implementation of reduced-risk pest management strategies.

Objective 3: Increase marketing efforts and promote the Alabama peach industry.

Educational Methods

- Publications
- Instructional Videos
- Individualized Consultation
- Production Meetings
- Webinars
- Hands-On Demonstrations

By employing a diverse range of delivery methods, we ensure that each grower has access to timely, relevant information essential for their success in the industry.

Education



One-on-one consultation plays a vital role in the success of Alabama peach producers.



Multiple short videos and webinars were produced. This video discusses the impact of Armillaria root rot on peach production in Alabama. July 2024.



Promoting Alabama grown peaches to Child Nutrition Directors within the Alabama Education System participating in the Farm to School Program.



Several timely fact sheets and publications were developed to increase grower knowledge of various management strategies. This publication discusses the management of San Jose scale. August 2024



Alabama Peach Production Meeting

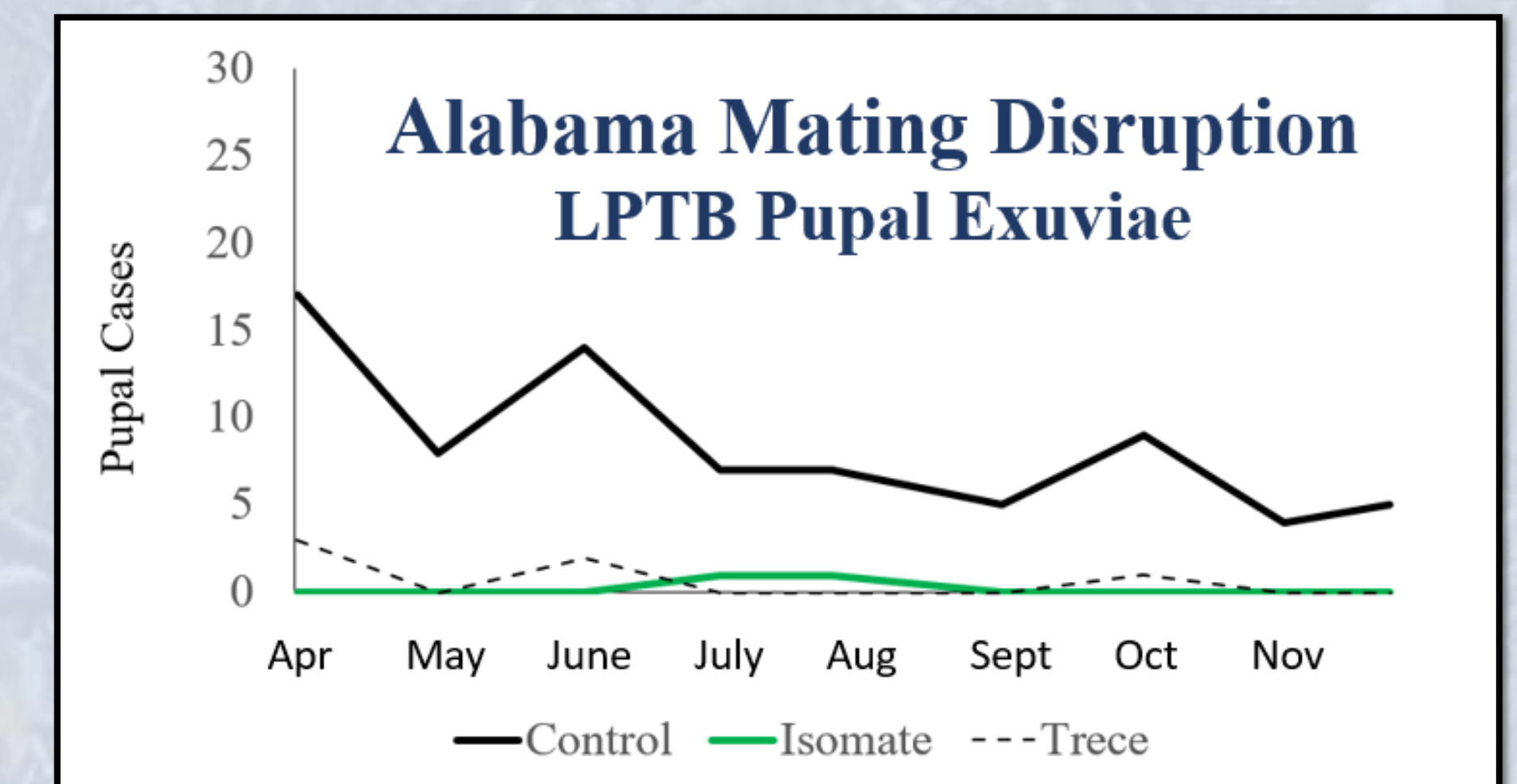
The Alabama Peach Production Meeting is held annually each January in Chilton County, Alabama, serving as a pivotal event for the state’s peach growers. This meeting represents the culmination of extensive research efforts conducted by Auburn University and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, providing attendees with the latest advancements in peach production, pest management, and orchard sustainability.



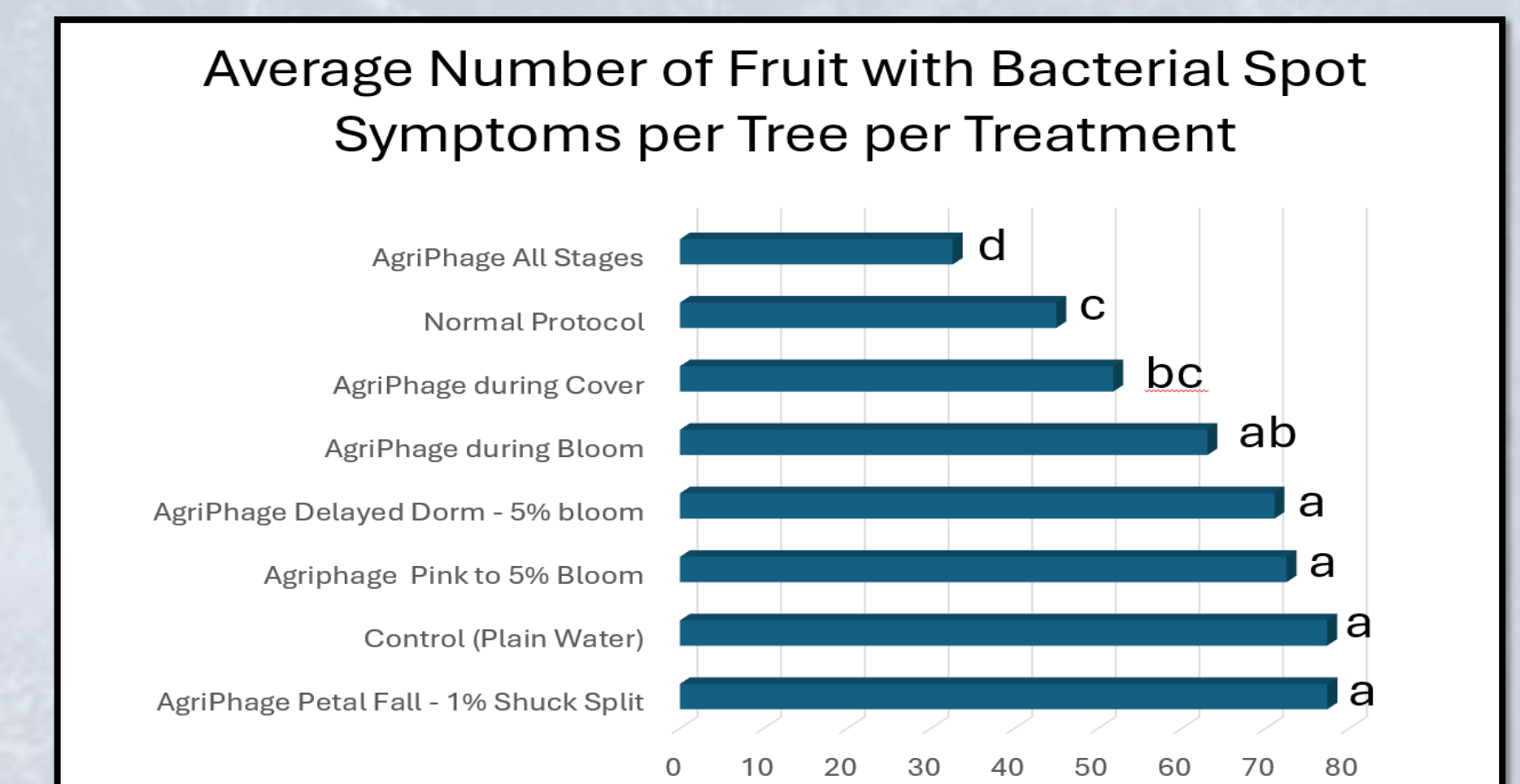
Environmental Sustainability

Exploring Organic Pest Management Options

Evaluating the Role of Mating Disruption in Borer Management



Utilization of Bacteriophage for Controlling Bacterial Spot in Peach



Outcomes

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System's Peach Production Programs have demonstrated significant educational and economic impact.

- Among both in-person and remote meeting participants, 100% reported an increase in knowledge gained related to peach management.
- 80% of respondents indicated an increase in revenue due to pesticide savings and/or increased yields.
- 66% of surveyed peach producers expressed a heightened interest in adopting reduced-risk pesticides for pest management, reflecting a growing commitment to sustainable agricultural practices.
- According to the Census of Agriculture, peach production in Alabama has expanded by 23% since 2017. With this growth, the industry's potential economic impact now exceeds \$70 million annually, underscoring its importance to the state's agricultural economy.



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