

Kudzu Bug Overwintering Emergence and Predictions for the Coming Season

From mid-March through mid-May 2015, Virginia Cooperative Extension Agents, Virginia Tech Faculty and Staff, and others began monitoring a 43-county network of sticky traps to determine overwintering emergence of kudzu bug in Virginia. Trap operators were asked to position the traps in any open area (e.g., open fields or lawns in urban or rural settings). The trap consisted of 4-inch diameter PVC pipe, 18-in long, with an end cap on top, suspended approximately 6 inches above the ground using a support stake (Fig. 1). A 12-inch band of sticky paper (Stable Fly Sticky Sleeve, Great Lakes IPM) was fitted all the way around the PVC pipe. Trap operators were instructed to check the trap at least twice a week for presence of kudzu bugs and to change sticky paper when necessary. Data, including zeros, were recorded until the date of first capture of kudzu bugs for each county. Visual reports of kudzu bugs by the trap operators were also accepted for first capture data.



Fig. 1. Sticky trap for monitoring kudzu bugs.

Results showed that kudzu bug adults began emerging from overwintering sites in early April (Fig. 2). We saw the same pattern last year, except that this year there were half as many counties (10) reporting catches compared with last year (18 counties). For the past several years we have conducted a statewide survey of Virginia soybean fields for insect pests from mid-July through early October. Last year scouts found only scattered kudzu bug populations, none of which reached threshold levels of 15 nymphs per 15 sweeps with a sweep net. With fewer counties showing evidence of overwintering this year, we are cautiously predicting another low-pressure year for kudzu bug.

