



UGA extension

Ag Notes | Webster County and Stewart County | May 2017

Dates to Remember

July 13, 2017
Sunbelt Ag Expo
Field Day
Moultrie, GA

Vidalia Onions
\$10 for 10 pounds

We still have extras at the Webster County Extension Office!!

Ag Thoughts

By Dr. Laura A. Griffeth, *County Extension Agent*

As if things weren't challenging enough, the weather has definitely been like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde lately. A couple of weeks ago the temperatures didn't make it to 60 degrees, and today it's 93 degrees.

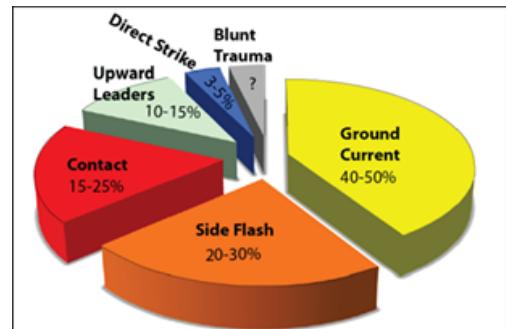
I have also had reports of lesser cornstalk borers already being found in volunteer peanuts. We normally think of LCBs as a hot and dry weather pest, but who knows anymore. Our peanut entomologist relayed information about a field in southeast Georgia with 60% damage from LCBs. So it definitely pays to be vigilant.

It's the beginning of what hopefully is a better year. Get off to a great start, and be timely with your production practices. Train wrecks can happen when things get delayed or put off until another day. Get your fungicides out timely. Get your POST herbicide applications out timely. I can't stress it enough – but BE TIMELY!

Lightning Deaths and Injuries

By Pam Knox, *Extension Climatologist*

Direct strikes only cause issues 3-5 percent of the time. The greatest cause of problems is ground current, where lightning hits the ground and travels along the surface (especially if the ground is wet, or if it is a body of water like a lake), killing people and animals a distance away from where the lightning hit. The second greatest is from side flash, where lightning coming down a tree or pole jumps out sideways to a person or animal standing near it but not touching it. This means that some conventional wisdom about lightning safety is probably not accurate and some lightning safety information overemphasizes the danger of direct strikes and minimizes other sources of injury. The only safe places to be in a lightning storm are in a well-constructed building which has metal circuits and plumbing which can serve as a conduit for the electricity or in a vehicle which can completely enclose you in metal (no convertibles!).



Peanut Injury Update

By Dr. Eric Prostko, Extension Weed Scientist

Peanut fields planted the week of May 5 that were hit by the heavy rains on May 4-5 are likely to have some level of injury. Here are a few thoughts to consider:

- 1) Valor injury should not be a surprise to anybody since this phenomenon has been observed for 13 years. Cracking peanuts (+1-2 weeks) treated with Valor that receive heavy rainfall will be injured almost all the time!!!
- 2) There is a good amount of UGA data to suggest that, in most cases, the peanuts will recover from this injury without yield loss even at a 2X rate (i.e. 6 oz/A).
- 3) Recent UGA research conducted by Drs. Jason Sarver and Scott Tubbs would suggest that there is no yield or economic benefit to replanting a peanut field if populations are at least 2.5 plants/ft (single row) or 3.0 plants/ft (twin row). Thus, I would not worry too much about Valor injury unless plant populations fall below these levels (assuming the stand is uniform and not skippy).
- 4) Contrary to older dogma, peanut j-rooting is not always caused by herbicides such as Dual or Warrant. In 2014, I found numerous peanut plants in my untreated plots (i.e. no herbicides) that are exhibiting this symptom. Many other factors can cause j-rooting including individual seedling vigor, environmental conditions (cold/wet), and soil compaction.



Pest Patrol Hotline

Cotton and soybean insect pest information is available via text alerts that direct users to an online recording. "Pest Patrol Alerts" or online recordings will be updated on a weekly basis and provide an overview of the current insect situation as well as scouting and management tips for cotton and soybean insect pests. After a new message is recorded, a text message is sent to alert users that a new recording is available. Users can subscribe to receive text message alerts for Georgia updates in two easy steps.

Step one: Register by texting "pestpat10" to 97063. (Or sign up online at www.syngentaus.com/PestPatrol).

Step two: Reply to the confirmation text with the letter "Y" to complete registration.

Thanks to Syngenta for sponsoring the Pest Patrol program.

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Peanut Pointers

May 2017 – Volume 54 Number 3

Dr. Scott Monfort, editor

Tractor Speed Effect on Plant Stand

Dr. R. Scott Tubbs, Extension Cropping Systems Agronomist

Tractor speed significantly affects the ability to place the appropriate number of seed in the ground. No matter what planter/seeding rate you are geared to achieve, it is only possible to reach this goal if you are dropping one seed for every hole on the plate as it spins. The faster the planter moves through the field, the more skips that occur, hence reducing plant stand. My data showed a 15-17% improvement in plant stand and a statistical improvement in yield by using a slow speed (around 2 MPH) compared to using a faster speed (about 4 MPH). While I realize that it is unrealistic to expect growers to cover the ground they need to cover while traveling at 2 MPH, the take-home message from this research is that the slower you travel at planting, the closer your plant stand will be to your targeted seeding rate, and the potential for higher yield to be achieved. Simply gearing the planter for an increased seeding rate does not mean that more seed are going to be dropped in the furrow – the tractor speed still needs to be at an appropriate operating level for the planter to function correctly and eliminate unacceptable error with skips. The cost of time from slowing down a little will pale in comparison to the cost of time and additional other expenses and potential losses of having to replant a field.

Making the Decision to Replant a Peanut Field

Dr. R. Scott Tubbs, Extension Cropping Systems Agronomist

Determining when to replant a peanut field can involve a number of factors in order to make the best decision depending on the situation. Here are a few important things to consider.

1. Is the plant stand that did emerge relatively uniform or very spotty? If it is very spotty, it may require a combination of techniques to optimize the eventual production for the field.
2. What is the average plant stand that emerged? Conduct stand counts in several places in the field. If plant stands are 2.5 plants per foot or more, then the decision to replant the field has a much lower likelihood of having an economical benefit.
3. How long has it been since the original planting date? If more than 3 weeks have already elapsed, then the chances of gaining any benefit from replanting a field are slim except in very extreme cases when original plant emergence is nearly non-existent (less than 1 plant per foot of row).
4. Evaluating the cause of initial stand failure – correctable errors or circumstances not easily remedied? If the poor plant stand was a result of planting poor quality seed, or into soil that was too cool or too dry, or with an inadequate amount of fungicide seed treatment, etc. – these things can be corrected. But if it was the result of a large family of hogs that live nearby but haven't been eradicated, or a poorly drained field that pools with any substantial rainfall, or any number of factors that are not resolved, then replanting may not be the best option if the situation could easily repeat itself.

When replanting is needed, the most consistent result from our research trials was that keeping the initial plant stand and replanting a new furrow several inches to the side and parallel to the original row was a better option than a burn down of the initial plant stand and completely starting over. If plant stands are at least 2.5 plants per foot of row (whether twin row or single row; strip-till or conventional tillage; and the stands are relatively uniform without large gaps in the field), the chances of gaining a return on the investment of replanting a field is very low. When stands are 2.0 plants per foot of row or less, the opportunity for return on the investment of was much greater.

Additional research has shown that even regularly occurring gaps of up to 3 feet in length do not cause a consistent decline in peanut yield when the field is properly managed. The indeterminate and viny growth habit of peanut allows it to compensate for gaps in the field by setting more pods per plant when it has room to grow and spread out. When there is more of a vine crop (flowers/pods that develop further away from the crown of the plant), it requires a close watch on maturity development to maximize yield and grade since a larger percentage of the pods may be developing later and need more time to gain size and weight.

In the event of replanting next to the original plants, the timing is important because the original plants will be further advanced in growth and can outcompete the new plants emerging later for water and nutrients, and especially space and light. This likewise causes a need to keep a close eye on maturity. Since there are multiple maturities growing in the same field, a longer period of time may be needed to maximize yield and especially grade. Additional research is being conducted in this area to assist with further details on how to best manage a replant situation.

May Climate Outlook

Pam Knox, Agricultural Climatologist

After 15 continuous months of above-normal temperatures in Georgia, don't you think it's time for a change? Well, in May we might actually get it. The latest outlook for May by the Climate Prediction Center puts us in equal chances of below, near, and above normal temperature. This is the closest to below normal that we have been in quite a while. And while "equal chances" means we have a 33 percent chance of each category, it's likely that the early part of the month will be quite a bit colder than average, although it's not clear at this point how long the chilly air will be around. So enjoy the cooler conditions for however long they stay.

The prediction for rainfall puts quite a bit of Georgia in a slightly enhanced chance of rainfall. Unfortunately, the highest probability for above normal rainfall is in northern Georgia, while the southern part of the state is in "equal chances". Which means they don't really know which way things will go. However, the drought outlook, which was also released at the end of April, does indicate that the NOAA Climate Prediction gurus think drought conditions in south Georgia are likely to remain and could even expand over the next month, which is not happy news for the producers who have been waiting patiently for wetter weather to plant their dryland fields.

Over the rest of the growing season, the chance of above normal temperatures continues all the way through winter, due to the long-term warming trend we have seen since the 1970s. Precipitation is not very predictable in the summer months, but we do know that climatologists are watching the eastern Pacific Ocean for signs of a developing El Nino. If one develops (early indications are pointing that way), then we can expect a less active tropical season, especially later in the summer. That could mean drier conditions in the August to October time period, unless you are one of the lucky or unlucky ones (depending on what you need) right under the path of whatever storm might develop. All it takes is one storm to cause havoc with heavy rains and flooding just where you don't want or need it—just witness the mess caused by Hurricane Matthew in eastern North Carolina last year.

The UGA Peanut Fertilization Strategy ... In a Nutshell

Glen Harris, Extension Agronomist – Environmental Soil & Fertilizer

Because the peanut plant is a deep-rooted legume that fixes nitrogen and is a good scavenger of "P&K", most people say it doesn't need a lot of fertilizer. That is not necessarily true, and if you come up short on something like pH or calcium, it could really reduce yields and quality. Therefore, if you follow this simple strategy that I try to mention at every county peanut meeting, you should take soil fertility out of the picture as far as a limiting factor.

1. **Soil Test.** This is the only way to know if your soil pH is correct, if your phosphorous and potassium levels are good, and if the pH to micronutrient relationships are in line to avoid zinc toxicity and manganese deficiency. Things like sulfur, cation exchange capacity (CEC) and base saturation are not that critical comparatively.

2. **Lime to a pH of 6.0-6.5.** Nutrients such as P and K are more readily available in this range and the nitrogen fixation process also needs pH in this range. Grid sampling and variable rate liming is a great tool to use to ensure good soil pH across the whole field.
3. **Apply P & K at planting if recommended.** There is no advantage to “split” applications of these nutrients like we do with nitrogen on other crops. And phosphorous is needed early for seedling root growth.
4. **Inoculate with the proper Rhizobium.** The official UGA recommendation is to inoculate only if you have been out of peanut in a certain field for more than 4 years. However, research studies have shown enough yield increase to cover the cost of inoculation even in short rotations.
5. **Provide Calcium to the Pegging Zone.** The traditional ways to accomplish this are either lime at planting or gypsum at early bloom time. If you have at least 500 lb/acre soil test calcium in the top 4 inches of soil (the pegging zone) AND a Ca:K ratio of 3:1 or higher, then you are not likely to see a yield response to calcium fertilization. However, all seed peanuts should automatically receive 100 lb/acre gypsum (calcium sulfate) at early bloom, and a lot of gypsum is applied “just in case” or as “insurance”. I wouldn’t argue with this strategy and would rather see you put your fertilizer dollars for peanuts into gypsum than into some “unproven” and “untested” product.
6. **Apply 0.5 lb Boron/acre.** There are a number of ways to apply boron, the easiest being foliar feeding 0.25 lb B/acre when tank mixed with your first two fungicide sprays. Also beware of products recommended at very low rates. For example, 6 oz of a 5 % liquid boron only gives you 0.025 lb B/acre.
7. **Foliar Feed Manganese when needed.** The best way to determine need is to tissue sample and then follow the foliar feeding guidelines if the levels are below threshold.
8. **Troubleshoot.** As soon as you suspect a low pH or nutrient problem in peanut, take soil and tissue samples from “good” and “bad” areas of the field. If you suspect nitrogen problems, dig up the roots and check for nodules which should be pink in color on the inside.

Germination Issues in 2017

Scott Monfort, Associate Professor

There were a higher number of acres planted in April this year compared to previous years. This is understandable with hotter than normal temperatures in March and April. A majority of the peanuts planted early are emerged and growing well. Thus far, I have only received a few calls regarding poor germination or stand issues. If you are having these issues in your county, please call and let’s talk about them. Like Scott Tubbs stated in his article, growers can still make a very good crop with fewer than 4 plants per foot as long as there are minimal amounts of large gaps observed. Every field will likely be different and needs to be handled accordingly.

Like I mentioned in the production meetings this spring, it would be wise for growers to keep a 1 to 2 pound sample from each lot they plant in order for them to have a sample to test germ if problems occur. There have also been some germination issues with tote bags compared to bags at one location. Please let me know if you are seeing similar problems in your counties. I need to know if this is a problem we need to look into. Below are a few pictures of some of the stand issues in an early planted field.



Stand Counts of less than 2.5 per foot

Several fields seen with plenty of volunteer peanuts



50# Bag
5+ per foot

Tote Bag
<3 per foot

Disease and Nematode Management Considerations for Planting Time

Dr. Bob Kemerait, Professor and Extension Specialist; Dr. Tim Brenneman, Professor, Peanut and Pecan Disease Management; and Dr. Albert Culbreath, Professor

Peanut farmers have the opportunity to use a number of products at planting time for the management of diseases and nematodes. Decisions as to what product to use over another, or to use a product at all, can be very confusing. Fighting seedling disease used to be simple- all growers used a fungicide seed treatment, and if they wanted some “stand insurance” they could also spray Abound in-furrow. Today, in-furrow applications are important considerations for the management of tomato spotted wilt, seedling diseases, Cylindrocladium black rot, white mold, and nematodes, not to mention thrips! Below are management options for the growers.

Note: The rates provided here are on a “per/A” basis. Typically, the full rate can be placed in single rows; the rate is typically halved per twin row. For example, Abound, 6.0 fl oz/A in-furrow for single rows becomes Abound, 3.0 fl oz/A in each of the twin rows.

Management of tomato spotted wilt: A number of products can be used to manage thrips on peanuts. However, only one product, Thimet (active ingredient: phorate) is effective in reducing the risk to this disease. The reduction in risk to tomato spotted wilt is not related to the thrips control that it provides, rather it seems to be associated with the response of the plant to Thimet. Thimet likely activates defense-response genes in the peanut plant that help to protect the plant from the virus. Growers who want to plant early (before May 1), or who want to use cultivars with spotted wilt risk points greater than those of Georgia-06G, might especially want to consider to using Thimet for management of tomato spotted wilt.

Management of seedling diseases: Peanut seed and young seedlings are susceptible to attack from a number of fungal pathogens. The two most important fungal pathogens causing death of peanut seedlings in Georgia are Rhizoctonia solani and Aspergillus niger. Fungicide seed treatments are a critical tool to manage seed rots and seedling diseases; currently nearly all seed is treated with Dynasty PD. Dynasty PD is composed of azoxystrobin, fludioxonil, and mefenoxam. However, growers can also protect the developing plants from seedling diseases with in-furrow fungicide applications of fungicides like Abound (5.7-11.4 fl oz/A), Proline (5.7 fl oz/A), and Evito (2.3-3.5 fl oz/A). These fungicides are typically used to compliment seed already treated with a fungicide seed treatment.

The most effective in furrow spray for stand establishment has been Abound, although Proline also has activity on these pathogens and Evito is labeled for this use as well. The benefits of these products have not been as consistent in recent years, and research is underway to determine the factors involved.

Management of Cylindrocladium black rot (CBR) and early-season white mold. Proline (5.7 fl oz/A) applied in-furrow has been an important treatment for the management of CBR. Though this disease has been less widespread in recent years, an application of Proline in-furrow is still useful where there is a threat of CBR. When favorable conditions, such as very warm weather, occur early in the season, in-furrow applications of Proline also offer some protection from early-season white mold. The extent of the protection is likely less than that provided by banded applications of Proline 3-5 weeks after planting. Decisions to use Proline in-furrow should be made based upon a) risk to CBR, and b) risk to early-season white mold (although there are effective alternatives for white mold).

Management of nematodes. Nematode-resistant cultivars continue to hold up well against even high populations of root knot nematodes. However, growers electing to plant a susceptible cultivar like Georgia-06G in fields infested with the peanut root-knot nematode should consider the use of a nematicide. Popular

nematicides for peanut production in Georgia include Telone II (4.5-6 gal/A), Velum Total (18 fl oz/A) and AgLogic 15G (7 lb/A). To prevent injury to seed and seedlings, fumigation with Telone II should occur 10-14 days prior to planting and when soil conditions are not too dry (powder) nor too wet (mud). Fumigation with Telone II can provide excellent control of nematodes but DOES NOT control thrips. Growers who use Telone II must still apply something for management of thrips.

Velum Total is a combination of fluopyram for management of nematodes and also imidicloprid for management of thrips. Growers who use Velum Total do not need to add any additional thrips control product in the open furrow. Note that imidicloprid does not reduce the risk to tomato spotted wilt. Also, use of Velum Total does provide additional early-season management of leaf spot diseases. The extent of this protection from leaf spot is such that growers should be able to skip the 30-day after planting fungicide application for leaf spot, unless they have planted a very susceptible cultivar like 'Georgia-13M' or TUFRunnerTM'511'. A question that often arises is, "If I use Velum Total, do I get any protection against seedling diseases as well?" The "bottom line" to this question is that use of Velum Total should complement a seed treatment and be good "stand insurance" and we would not add anything else. The biggest factor by far to reduce the impact of seedling disease is the quality of the seed and putting that seed in the right soil conditions at the right time.

AgLogic 15G (7 lb/A) is for management of thrips and nematodes. AgLogic does not reduce the risk to tomato spotted wilt. The rate is lower than what was historically used for Temik 15G (10 lb/A). Additional research is needed to assess the efficacy of the 7 lb/A rate on management of nematodes. In high risk field it may be advisable to use a combination of these nematicide options.

Scientists Say Agriculture Is Good for Honey Bees

Monday, May 8th, 2017

In a recent study, researchers with the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture found the overall health of honey bees improved in the presence of agricultural production, despite the increased exposure to agricultural pesticides. The study, "Agricultural Landscape and Pesticide Effects on Honey Bee Biological Traits" published in a recent issue of the Journal of Economic Entomology, evaluated the impacts of row-crop agriculture, including the traditional use of pesticides, on honey bee health. Results indicated that hive health was positively correlated to the presence of agriculture. According to the study, colonies in a non-agricultural area struggled to find adequate food resources and produced fewer offspring.

"We're not saying that pesticides are not a factor in honeybee health. There were a few events during the season where insecticide applications caused the death of some foraging bees," says Mohamed Alburaki, lead author and post-doctoral fellow with the University of Tennessee Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology (EPP). "However, our study suggests that the benefits of better nutrition sources and nectar yields found in agricultural areas outweigh the risks of exposure to agricultural pesticides." Alburaki and fellow researchers established experimental apiaries in multiple locations in western Tennessee ranging from non-agricultural to intense agricultural production. Over the course of a year, colonies were monitored for performance and productivity by measuring colony weight, brood production and colony thermoregulation. Colony thermoregulation, or the ability to maintain an optimal temperature within a hive, is an important factor in brood development and the health of the resulting adult bees.

According to the study, hives located in areas with high to moderate agricultural vegetation grew faster and larger than those in low or non-agricultural areas. Researchers suggest the greater population sizes enabled better colony thermoregulation in these hives, as well. Meanwhile, bees located in a non-agricultural environment were challenged to find food. Although fewer pesticide contaminants were reported in these areas, the landscape did not provide sustainable forage. In fact, during the observations, two colonies in the non-agricultural areas collapsed due to starvation. Disruptions and fluctuations in brood rearing were also more notable in a non-agricultural environment. Interestingly, brood production was highest in the location that exhibited a more evenly distributed mix of agricultural production, forests and urban activity.

"One possible explanation for this finding could be the elevated urban activity in this location," says Alburaki. "Ornamental plantings around homes or businesses, or backyard gardens are examples of urban activity that increase the diversity of pollen in an area. Greater pollen diversity has been credited with enhancing colony development." Researchers also evaluated trapped pollen from each colony for pesticide residues. Low concentrations of fungicides, herbicides and insecticides were identified, but at levels well below the lethal dose for honey bees. Imidacloprid was the only neonicotinoid detected, also at sub-lethal levels.

Agricultural pesticides, particularly neonicotinoids, are considered by some to be a key factor in declining honeybee populations. The UTIA study found that higher exposure to pesticides in agricultural environments did not result in measurable impacts on colony productivity. "We train agricultural producers on careful selection and conscientious application of pesticides to reduce bee exposure," says Scott Stewart, Integrated Pest Management Specialist with UT Extension, "but it's becoming more clear that the influences of varroa mite and food availability are more important factors in honey bee health than agricultural pesticides."

I apologize if the following words are too harsh, but they are true. Unfortunately, some know the feeling all too well. The beef business has risks, and one risk is bad-tempered cows, cows that want to kill you. Most cows respect their caregivers and have only goodwill. But for those of a different temperament, get them out of the pen. You should have no room in the pen for killer cows.

While calving time brings out maternal behaviors, acceptable behaviors always must include respect for the producer, the primary caregiver. Never, never assume a cow will not harm the very person who cares most for the cow - you; no exceptions. The truth is the same for bulls, but at this time of year, the cow is the one which we, as producers, are interacting. Once again, never, never assume a cow will not harm you.

I was reminded of this the other night as I turned the corner to walk past the local recreational facility. I was met by several massive tigers. Fortunately, they each were in their cage. Long story short, I walked away. But I still was thinking that if a cage door had come open, what would I do? Let me repeat, they were big, full-grown tigers. The tigers reminded me of how small I was and no match for a tiger or cow. The outcome would be the same.

An issue today is how we visualize the critters of the world. We view animals on electronic devices - cellphones, television or many other various monitors - in the safety of our home. The hazards are minimized on the devices and we can become haphazard, or take our safety for granted. Through time, one develops a feel for the rogue cow or calf with a quick look or maybe an intense stare-down. Early signs exist regarding those animals that you just know are not going to be a good co-habitation experience.

I remember, while working the cows in the solid handling facility, the last cow that came through. She made several attempts to leave, and tried to double-stack the chute, or in other words, push by the restraining gatekeeper and join the cow already in the chute. She indiscriminately and defensively kicked the chute wall. She was diagnosed as pregnant, so now what? Keep or cull? Oddly enough, that would be debated in many cattle circles. I pondered, "If a producer always sorted into the trailer the last few heifers or cows to come through the chute, would life get simpler?" So, keep or cull? Those with adequate help (who have agility included in their job description) might consider keeping this cow. For those who are more "do it yourself," the answer sways toward culling. Ask the business partner; the answer is "maybe." Ask the emergency response team; the answer is "cull." Ask the night calving crew; the answer is "cull." Ask the family; the answer is "cull." Then ask, "Why is she still here?"

In reality, ornery cattle are just ornery and have no business in the cattle population. They are dangerous. Is behavior or temperament passed on from one generation to the next? Absolutely. Can producers select for mild-mannered cattle? Absolutely. Can producers control the destiny of their herd's attitude? Absolutely. Should bull breeders castrate the bull calf with an obvious attitude? Absolutely. Quit making excuses for bad-tempered cattle. Some say they are just scared and want to get away. Some say the issue is the producer. I say, just work with cattle that work for you, not against you.

The question often asked is what to look for, and the answer is this: Cattle that routinely challenge the producer should be sold. Cattle that are very aggressive and are put in a defensive mode easily should be sold. Cattle that are overreactive to the chute environment should be sold.

Awhile back, the Dickinson Research Extension Center purchased a set of yearling steers for summer grazing that had no love for humans. Even as castrated males, their hatred for people and their desire to do bodily harm was real. And I am not making this up. Having ultrasounded several thousand cows, nervous, high-strung cattle are obvious. One can obviously feel the tense, nervous cow, rigid on the outside but shaking on the inside. She needs to go. When buying bulls, ask questions on bull attitude and, for heaven's sake, don't buy temperamental bulls that challenge the fitting crew, the handling crew, the sale crew or, in the worst-case situation, the buyers. Bulls with an attitude can be neutered and placed in the feedlot well before sale time.

Mysticism surrounds the concept of conquering the wild and taming the untamable. But let's leave that to others. Friends and family like us to come home, and so we should, safely. Of course, you have another side to this story: the overly tame cow, or particularly a tame bull. Respect is still the appropriate response. Remember those rare stories when someone adopts a tiger and assumes the tiger is a big pet. No, it is not. The "tame" bull has taken too many lives. Always respect cattle; care for them, but be safe.