All soybean fields have numerous insects in them; however, not all insects found in soybean fields are harmful. Of concern, but not yet a major threat, are more beneficial insects present than harmful ones.

During August farmers should have begun to check their fields on a regular weekly basis for harmful insects. Damaging populations may occur during the period of August 15 to October 15.

The following are some insects to check closely in the coming weeks:

**Stinkbugs:**
Stinkbug damage usually occurs on soybeans from August to October 15. However, early maturing varieties like Hill, Dare and Forrest may be attacked during July. There are three to four generations each year. Development of a generation from egg to adult requires from four to eight weeks.

Stinkbug damage results in discolored areas of beans, reduction in size of beans (which directly reduces yield) and quality damage which results in reduction in price per bushel.

Treat for stinkbugs where there is an average of one stinkbug one-fourth inch or longer per one foot of row.

**Bean Leaf Beetles:**
Bean leaf beetles are considered to be a major pest of soybeans in Louisiana. This insect occasionally damages young lodging soybean plants in May or June, but does most of its damage during the months of July and August. They not only defoliate young plants but also damage flower pods in the adult stage.

There are three generations each year.

For bean leaf beetles, treat when 40 percent of leaves are damaged from defoliation or when 10 percent of pods show feeding signs.

**Caterpillars:**
For leaf feeding caterpillars such as loopers and velvetbean caterpillars, treat when there is an average of eight worms one-half inch or longer per one foot of row. Heavy infestations usually occur from August through September. There are several generations of these each year and a generation requires 30 days from egg to adult.

When checking for insect populations, never take samples near the edge of the field because that is where the highest population is, and this may not be representative of the field.

Check six feet of row in five different locations per 50 acre field.

Because there are so many different insecticides that can be used to control various insects in soybean fields, we suggest that the growers call our office to obtain the latest available information as to which insecticide to use to control the insect currently present in his soybean field.

Most important of all: be sure your field justifies an insecticide application before applying. If it isn't needed, you are just running up your expenses, thus cutting down on your profits.