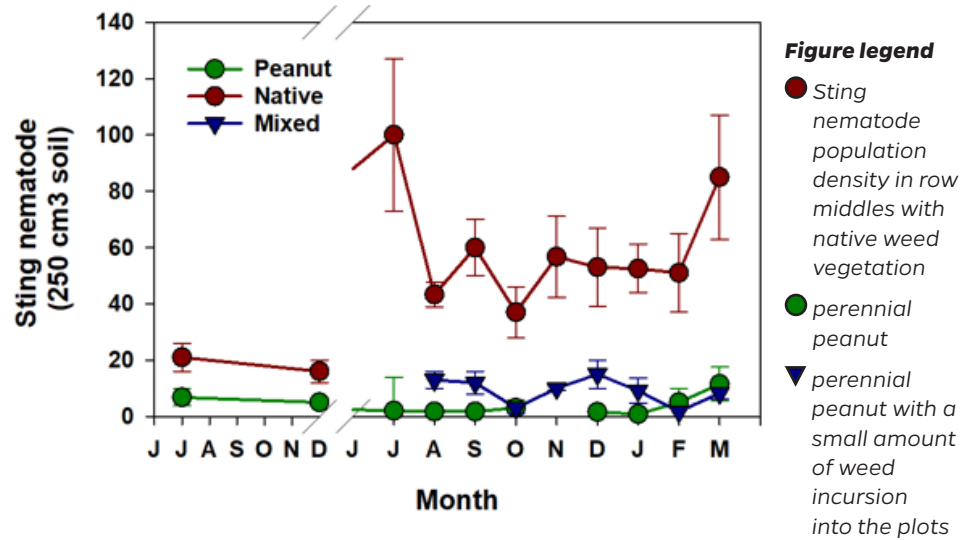


# Cover Crops and Nematicides: Comprehensive Sting Nematode IPM

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Two ongoing CRDF field experiments evaluate the efficacy of nematicides and cover crops for managing the sting nematode *Belonolaimus longicaudatus* in young trees with HLB. Perennial peanut (resistant to sting nematode) plots were established in row middles for comparison to middles managed by mowing the native vegetation. A second trial in the same grove compared three registered and three non-registered nematicides for nematode control and tree response. Perennial peanut in the row middle reduced sting

nematode populations by up to 94% in the second year after establishment. The effectiveness of the cover crop should become increasingly important as the tree root systems colonize the row middles. To the degree that the nematicide products reduced the sting nematode, the tree root systems and trunk girth have responded with increased growth – as much as 25% more girth and 58% more feeder roots than untreated trees. However, the vegetative growth in these young trees was at the expense of fruit growth in the first two years

of production. The results to date suggest the need to compare the management of sting nematode in replanted trees affected by and free of HLB. Protective tree covers make such comparisons feasible. If young HLB-free trees respond to nematode management with greater growth than those affected by HLB, the profitability of nematode management will increase and trees are likely to better tolerate sting nematode when the protective covers are removed. (Abstracted from Citrus Industry, June 2021).

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