

RiceFax: Midsouth/Texas Edition

Introduction:

Here is this week's issue of RiceFax. Some insect problems are turning up in both the Texas and southern Louisiana growing areas and in the Midsouth. In parts of the Midsouth, rains have further delayed planting.

Texas/S. La.:

Arlen Klosterboer, Texas Extension Rice Specialist: "Armyworm problems have come up suddenly, even in flooded fields. If there's a significant amount of foliage loss — something in the 20% to 25% range — we're advising treatments, particularly if there are a lot of little worms present. Reports have come from a number of areas starting late last week, and I'm advising people to check closely. Some guys are using Karate and others are applying methyl parathion. Other products also are labeled. There can be interactions with propronil and some insect materials, so that needs to be a consideration. Overall, the crop looks good, and about 60% is at a permanent flood."

Howard Cormier, County Agent, Vermilion Parish, Abbeville, La.:

"We're still battling saltwater. The western side of the parish got 7-8" of rain earlier this month but only about 1" on the eastern side, and you can find spots in some fields where rice is dying. The rain helped where it fell, but the ground is so dry that it's still hard to keep a flood on some fields because of lateral movement as water soaks into surrounding soil. Evaporation also is pushing up the salinity concentrations in some fields. With the rain, some fields are really turning around. We're at green ring in our early fields, and top dressing is going on and fields are being drained for weevil control."

Johnny Saichuk, Louisiana Extension Rice Specialist, Crowley, La.:

"We're getting all kinds of weird nutrient problems, including phosphorous, potassium and sulfur deficiencies. In some cases, plants are responding to applications, but in other cases they aren't. What appears to be sulfur deficiency has turned up in the southern part of the state, and we're not sure if we've gotten a response yet. I've heard of a few ar-

myworms but haven't had problems yet. Some people are draining fields for weevil control where they didn't have Icon or apply Karate or other materials earlier, and some weevil treatments were going out in northern Louisiana. In south Louisiana, some salvage treatments are being made for barnyardgrass, and we're trying to determine if we have some herbicide resistance as a factor."

Midsouth:

Joe Street, Mississippi Extension Specialist, Stoneville, Miss.:

"We're pushing 80% on planting, and herbicides are going out. We've got everything from planting to permanent flood, and people are back in the field after more rain in part of the state last Thursday and Friday. Armyworms are moving out of wheat into rice, especially young rice. I've been getting calls, and one guy lost 30 acres. It's not unusual for armyworms to move from wheat to rice, but this seems a little worse than normal. One factor may be that the rice is a little younger than we expect at

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this point in the season and that could make it more susceptible. Most treatments are with methyl and a few folks are going with Karate.”

Nathan Slayton, Arkansas Extension Specialist, Stuttgart, Ark.: “Everything is going on right now, from planting to putting on the permanent flood. We’re 84% to 85% planted. Overall, the crop looks good. There’s some worry about Command where rice is looking whiter than last year, but I think some people went a little heavier on rates this season. It may be okay, but we could see some thinning in spots. I looked at one field with a few armyworms and signs of chewing on leaves. Where it should have been 4" tall, it was only 2". We’re picking up some calls about zinc deficiency where soils have been so wet. People generally think zinc deficiency doesn’t exist until fields are flooded, but it’s already there. This weather has just prompted symptoms earlier than expected.”

Jay Coker, Consultant/Grower, DeWitt, Ark.: “Sporadic rain has helped keep herbicides activated but they’ve also forced us to delay numerous early season nitrogen applications where the ground couldn’t get dry enough to get it out. Over the next 10 days, we’ll have cases where we apply 30 units of urea and flush fields, and in other cases we’ll put out all our early season N and establish a permanent flood. Some cleanup treatments are being made for broadleaf and sedge escapes.”

Curt Johnson, Technical Services Consultant, Agrilience Tech Services, Dermott, Ark.: “We’re still planting due to delays with rain and wind. My growers are 60% to 65% planted. We’ve got fields that need to be flushed where soil has crusted, but no levees have been

pulled. On one hand, we could use a rain to help get rice up, but with the delays we’ve already had with rain, I don’t know whether to wish too hard for one. My growers are doing very little herbicide work right now because of the push to pull levees and finish planting.”

Bill Rushing, Lawhon Farm Service, McCrory, Ark.: “While some growers are finished or nearly finished planting, we still have guys with half their acreage unplanted. In some cases, if they don’t get it done in the next two weeks, they’re calling it off. Rain has continued to delay things. We had 1" to 1.7" last Friday. Our oldest rice is at four and five leaves, tillering and close to flood. Some Stam is going out. Rains have helped keep herbicides activated but we’ve also had to put out some high rates of Facet and Super Wham! where we were delayed. A pretty good armyworm outbreak is developing in wheat, and I’m telling growers to watch rice closely.”

Scott Holder, Helena Chemical Co., Cleveland, Miss.: “We’re 80% to 90% planted and could use a rain, which is hard to believe after all the rain we’ve had this month. But a half-inch would help some rice come up. Otherwise, flushing will start this week on a small percentage of fields. I’m seeing a bunch of armyworms in wheat and treated some, but they aren’t showing up in rice yet. We’re catching up fast, and some fields are moving toward a flood.”

Ross Wood, Agrilience Technical Services, Little Rock, Ark.: “We’re seeing some seedling disease with the hot, wet conditions, and chinch bugs are starting to pressure some fields. We’re trying to let rice get a little taller, then put on a shallow flood to deprive the disease of

oxygen and control chinch bugs. But right now, we’re having to grit our teeth and wait. We’ve been putting on a little fertilizer to help the plants along. The pressure is mainly south-east of Stuttgart, and I’ve heard that other farmers in the area are dealing with the disease. We’re catching up on some nutsedge control where we’re getting ready for the permanent flood.”

Bruce Beck, Extension Regional Agronomist/Rice, Butler, Mo.: “It’s been so dry here that there’s been no real letup in planting. People will be planting more as they finish grading fields. I think we’ll have somewhat more rice here, but it’s too early to tell for sure. The crop looks good. People have been consistent about flushing, partly for herbicide activity and also because they haven’t had much promise of rain.”

Roger Carter, Agricultural Management Services, Clayton, La.: “We’re wrapping up planting. I don’t anticipate any June planting. The rice looks good and fields are generally clean. About 10% is at permanent flood. North of here in Tensas Parish, it’s so dry that there isn’t enough soil moisture to continue planting cotton, and we’re beginning to need a rain here. One thing we’re finding that’s unusual is a concentration of what are called burrowing bugs at the base of cotton, sorghum, corn and soybean roots. We’re not sure if they’re feeding on roots. It’s a small, cylindrical insect that looks a lot like an immature stinkbug. It’s black with some red coloring. We haven’t seen them in rice but water may have taken care of them where we’re flushing or going to flood.”