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RiceFax: Midsouth/Texas Edition

June 5, 2001

Much of our coverage area received at least some rain over the last week, and showers continue to hold back fertilizer and herbicide work in numerous parts of the Midsouth and southeast Texas. First signs of sheath blight are showing up in coastal Louisiana. The following reports were made late Monday afternoon and Tuesday morning.

Texas/S. La.:

David Mitchell, M&M Air Service, Beaumont, Texas: "We have chinch bugs after the rice on a spotty basis and will start spraying as soon as the weather calms down. There's no pattern to where they're being found. They're showing up in both new rice and old rice. They might be eating rice down to the water in one field and not even touching an adjoining field. We saw this same erratic, spotty pattern with armyworms earlier. We're on our second go round with propanil treatments. At least 50% of our rice is in permanent flood. We had a little rain Sunday but got at least 3" last Thursday. In our immediate area, it was

the first good rain in a while, and it really has helped the crops. It had been so dry that you couldn't tell the next day that it had rained. But in some areas around China and Winnie they want it to quit raining because they haven't been able to get fertilizer out."

Rusty Elston, Consultant, Pest Management Enterprises, Cheneyville, La.: "The crop still looks really good. We have about 500 acres left to plant and have everything from there to PI. About 10%, in fact, is at PI now. Herbicide treatments are going out. There are no signs of disease yet, but we've had a couple of rains lately and cloudy weather, so I'm expecting it soon. Karate treatments have looked super on rice water weevil. We had a lot of pressure and leaf feeding scars earlier, but treatments appear to be holding up well, at least to the green ring shot of nitrogen. Based on DD50s, we could be cutting our initial samples in the first part of August on some March rice."

Johnny Saichuk, Louisiana Extension Rice Specialist, Crowley, La.: "We're still seeing some P and K deficiency problems.

I found the first bit of sheath blight in lower Jeff Davis Parish and some stem rot in St. Landry Parish. These were very isolated cases last week, but with more humidity, we're going to have to watch fields closely for disease now. We expect rain all day today (Tuesday) and tomorrow."

Midsouth:

Rudy Randleman, Rudy's Field Service, Paragould, Ark.: "We got .4" to .6" of rain Sunday, and it's delayed pre-flood fertilizer and cleanup sprays. We've got 50% with a permanent flood now, 25% going to flood this week if everything works out and another 25% that could go to flood next week. We've gotten enough rain in the last 2 weeks that it's been a challenge to get fertilizer out and spray. Winds have made it difficult, too, around beans and cotton. We anticipated fields being further along but cool weather last week slowed growth."

Curt Johnson, Agronomy Production Specialist, Agrilience Tech Services, Dermott, Ark.: "Part of my area has gotten 2" to 3" of rain in the last 4-5 days and more

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is falling right now (late Monday afternoon). Some areas probably have picked up 1" or more. One customer at Linwood has been trying for 3 weeks to plant soybeans but keeps getting rain. It's been somewhat localized. Around Eudora it's been fairly dry and people have been putting out nitrogen and flooding. We've been applying Karate here and there for rice water weevils. We don't seem to be finding rice water weevil pressure around boll weevil eradication areas. I'm not sure if there's a connection but there may be some rice water weevil hibernation areas being sprayed in the process of going after boll weevils. We'll see some midseason applications in a week. I ran across plants this morning at green ring with some moved a quarter inch. We're not trying to push it at this point because we had to delay so many pre-flood nitrogen applications and don't want to load up plants too much. Wind has been a bear this year again. I made recommendations on one farm 2 weeks ago, and we've yet to make the treatment because of proximity to cotton and beans. That early dry spell let a lot of grass slip through."

Chuck Farr, Mid-South Ag Consultants, Crawfordsville, Ark.: "We're on our fourth or fifth rain in the last 14 days, depending on the area. It's been really wet when we need to start getting wheat out of the field. Hail has beaten up some crops, too. We can't get fields dried out to apply fertilizer. We get within a day or two and it rains again. A lot of guys in the area are applying fertilizer on wet ground and flooding it up, but we're still holding off to see if the weather will turn drier. We already have internodes starting to move a little but don't even have the levees marked. That tells you how wet it's been. Overall, the rice looks good. We just don't need more rain

for a while."

John Raymond Bassie, Bassie's Agri-Service, Cleveland, Miss.: "The rice is doing great. Some of our Cocodrie already is at midseason. All of mine is at permanent flood. We've been flooding by well or rainfall for the last two weeks. We're not treating anything right now."

Marvin Lott, Sales Rep, Jimmy Sanders, Inc., Cleveland, Miss.: "We've got permanent flood on some of the early planted rice and are coming up with the flood on the majority of the rice planted later. This crop is going to cost a little more than farmers anticipated, mainly because of the hot, dry weather and wind that hurt residual activity and forced them to flush more, then spend a little more on weed control. But overall, the crop the crop looks good. Pretty much everybody is happy with the rains over the last week. It helped save on pumping. A lot of Karate has been going out now that floods are in place. Some folks are applying Ordram."

David Guethle, County Extension Agent/Rice, Dexter, Mo.: "Some pre-flood nitrogen has gone on, and people are trying to clean up messes where there wasn't enough moisture for consistent herbicide activation. We've got a mixed picture on moisture right now. In parts of the county, growers have received enough rain that they had to delay putting out pre-flood fertilizer, though I think most of that has been applied now. In other areas, guys want rain to activate Facet and Bolero. For the most part, we've missed a lot of the rains that have gone through Arkansas and Tennessee. We're not critical yet, but growers may have to start irrigating corn again if it doesn't rain soon."

Joe Street, Mississippi Extension

Rice Specialist, Stoneville, Miss.: "These little rains are holding people back from finishing up pre-flood fertilizer on a lot of fields, and they're running out of time. Some are flooding up and putting it into water. It's not the best way to do it, but it may be the only option in a lot of cases. We're past midseason on some of the earlier Cocodrie and a week away from midseason on Priscilla and some of the other varieties. A few folks are treating rice water weevils. The weather is holding up people who want to use ground rigs and the rain and wind are keeping others from finishing herbicide treatments by air. It's beginning to hurt weed control in places. Overall, the crop still looks good, though some fields sure look better than others."

Brad Koen, Area Extension Rice Agronomist, Stuttgart, Ark.: "Things are looking really good. Warmer temperatures in the last 3-4 days helped, and rice seems to be responding to the nitrogen. Earliest planted fields should be at midseason by the end of this week. The big problem has been how the weather continues to delay fertilizer and herbicide work before flooding. There are fertilizer applications going out on wet ground, and growers are bumping up rates a little. It's not the best way to do it, but growers are feeling like they don't have a choice. We're going to have to watch those fields to make sure they have a good color through midseason. We're seeing a lot of weevil scars, even on dry seeded rice. We don't think that will be a big concern for dry seeded fields but could be an indication of problems in water seeded acreage."