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RiceFax: Midsouth/Texas Edition

May 29, 2001

The Texas and southern Louisiana crops are progressing with few hitches. Much of the Midsouth received at least some rain over the weekend and into Monday. In a number of places, accumulations of 1" to 3" were reported. This will delay pre-flood fertilizer and herbicide work.

Several of our contacts this week noted that high winds have delayed herbicide applications. The rain complicates ground application scheduling even more. They also reported that grass has taken a big growth spurt over the last week in many fields, and that will increase control costs.

The following reports were gathered Monday afternoon and Tuesday morning:

Texas/S. La.:

Dan Bradshaw, Crop Aid Agri Consultants, El Campo, Texas: "A whole lot of the crop is under flood and looking good. We've had a few light showers but could use a rain on the remaining crop that hasn't been flooded yet. Some of our rice is just past PD but most is at PI. There's no indication of disease. We sprayed a couple of fields Saturday for army-

worms where we killed the grass and sedges in the field and the small armyworms shifted to the rice, which mostly was at three leaves."

Arlen Klosterboer, Texas Extension Agronomist: "I'm hearing about a few weed problems here and there but nothing widespread. We're 90% emerged and 40% to 50% at permanent flood. An early reminder that our rice field days are June 26 at Eagle Lake and July 12 at Beaumont."

Mitchel Smith, Garwood Implementation & Supply Co., Garwood, Texas: "Everything looks good and almost all the crop is at permanent flood. We're at the tailend of putting out Ordram and starting PD applications on some of the earliest rice."

Keith Normand, Extension Agent, St. Landry Parish, Opelousas, La.: "Our crop looks good. There are no alarming situations or anything out of the ordinary. It's been a pretty good season so far. We've got rice all the way from PD down to seedling and tillering stages. We've got a flood now on 80% to 90% of the crop. We do need a good, widespread rain. Some areas have caught showers but other parts of the parish have had no significant accumulation for weeks."

Johnny Saichuk, Louisiana Extension Rice Specialist, Crowley, La.: "We could use a rain to trim pumping costs, but otherwise the crop in south Louisiana looks pretty good. Growers continue saying rice isn't responding to N like it normally does. We're not entirely sure of the reason, but it could be that the crop is growing so rapidly that it's using nutrients faster than normal. So far, no disease on the rice, but I found blast on a perennial barnyard grass. We're finding some damage caused by what's called the turtle bug, a small black true bug. It feeds on lower parts of the sheath and can kill those leaves. If it feeds deeply enough, it can kill the plant. We don't have thresholds or treatment recommendations, as such. If it's severe, treatment has to be considered. We're also getting more reports of potassium deficiency. We're still not sure what causes it, since some fields have more than adequate levels. Sometimes fields respond to an application, but draining and drying appears to be the best option."

Midsouth:

Ross Wood, Certified Crop Advisor, Almyra Farmers, Almyra,

Continued on next page

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Ark.: "It's been too windy to get anything sprayed, especially with all the beans planted around us. As things get delayed and vegetation gets bigger, we'll have to increase the amount of propanil in a lot of treatments. Probably 70% has been sprayed, and we're trying to flood up now. The wind has died down, but we had enough rain early in the week to slow things down again. Rain was scattered, from .1" in one place I checked up to .8" in Almyra."

Dan Roach, Ind. Consultant, Cleveland, Miss.: "We got plenty of rain in places, up to 2" in areas south and north of Cleveland and .3" to .75" in other places around here. It's a mixed blessing in the rice. We're about 50% flooded and were set up to do treatments and fertilizer work early this week on a big part of what's remaining. But that's on hold in a lot of fields. We do have some late fields that needed the rain to make a stand. A couple of fields of Cocodrie are at quarter-inch joint movement now and will be ready for midseason next Wednesday or Thursday. We're running about 2 weeks ahead of normal on a large part of this crop. Wind has delayed spraying, and treatments already had backed up before the rain started."

Wayne Dulaney, Dulaney Seed Co., Clarksdale, Miss.: "In the cool weather last week, the rice stopped growing but the grass kept going. We've seen some grass jump from two-leaf to tillering in the last week. With all the cotton around us and the wind, we're confined to ground rigs. We got .6" of generalized rain last Wednesday pretty much from Ruleville to Tunica, and it was Saturday before a lot of people could get back into the field, then we got another 1.5" of rain Sunday night. We've got zero acreage flooded but expected to get a big part of it done this week

but the rain will delay herbicide and fertilizer work now."

Scott Holder, Helena Chemical Co., Cleveland, Miss.: "We got .5" of rain in areas east of Cleveland Sunday night. There are reports of 2.5" in northern Sunflower County. We expected a lot of rice to go to flood this week, but we're waiting for things to dry up now. In the next 7-10 days we could have 80% or more of the acreage to flood if the weather cooperates. Wind has made it tough to finish herbicide treatments in a few places. In most cases, we've worked around it."

Kevin Fisher, Consultant, Pro-Ag Services, Wynne, Ark.: "We got about .5" of rain Sunday night and from 1.75" to 3" in several areas over the last week. We had a bunch of fertilizer set up for today (Monday) but the rain shut us out. The earliest fields are far enough along that we've actually started draining a few of them for straighthead. According to the DD50s just before the cool snap last week, our first field will be ready for midseason on June 5, so we're probably 7-10 days ahead of what we consider normal. We're just trying to clean up acreage to go to flood. Depending on the area, we're 50% to 75% flooded. Where growers didn't keep things flushed, we're having to come back with Ordram or Facet in the flood for barnyardgrass and broadleaf signalgrass."

Terry Erwin, Morehouse Parish Extension agent, Bastrop, La.: "The southern end of the parish has caught some fronts and is in great shape for moisture, but the northern end is bone dry and needs a rain for everything. Rice looks good, and we're just prior to permanent flood on the majority of it. Some of the 1- and 2-leaf rice is being flushed again. No rice water weevils are evident, but we've already got reports of stinkbugs in corn with

some treatments being made."

Joe Street, Mississippi Extension Rice Specialist, Stoneville, Miss.: "Everything is moving fast and furious. This crop is surprising a lot of people in how quickly it's moving to midseason. Some folks have already made midseason fertilizer applications. The main questions I'm getting now relate to fertilizer applications. With the rain, some are asking if they can put out fertilizer in standing water, and I'm telling them it's not the best thing. Some locations got good rains over the weekend, but around Greenville accumulation was very light. We're to the point that 50% to 60% is flooded, maybe a little more than that. We have two crops this year -- an early one, then another one planted a little later. We're ready now to flood that second crop."

Brad Koen, Area Extension Rice Agronomist, Stuttgart, Ark.: "A lot of farmers are fertilizing and flooding up. Rice looks good, which it always does this time of the year. Some folks in central Arkansas did get quite a bit of rain, which is hindering fertilizer work. If I had to guess right now, I would say more money will be spent per acre this year on herbicides than in the last two years. Lack of rain really hurt grass control, and growers are finding quite a bit more grass than expected. It's going to be pretty expensive to clean up. We've got some fields that are a couple of weeks away from midseason. We always have a few farmers at that point about now, but it's more widespread this year. Earlier maturing varieties have forced us to make management decisions quicker, and this season's conditions also have pushed the crop along faster. In a couple of weeks we'll have rice reaching midseason all over Arkansas. Based on our planting date studies, yield potential could be very good."