

RiceFax: Midsouth/Texas Edition

From Looking South Communications, Owen Taylor, Editor

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Here is this season's first issue of *RiceFax*, sponsored by the Midsouth and Texas associates of Valent U.S.A., maker of Regiment and Bolero rice herbicides.

We welcome your comments and suggestions.

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OVERVIEW

The Texas and coastal Louisiana crop has gotten off to a late start due to wet, cold conditions.

Much of the Midsouth right now needs a rain to bring up planted rice. Lack of rain also has worked against preemergence herbicide activity.

A good deal of flushing is underway, based on reports from several areas in the region. The following reports were made Tuesday.

TEXAS/S. LA

Dan Bradshaw, Crop Aid Agri

Consultants, El Campo, Texas:

"We've gotten off to a slow start due to cold conditions. It just hasn't been the kind of weather for growing rice. Rice ranges from early fields that are 10 days away from flooding to some where we're still flushing to make a stand.

"Where we have Command we haven't needed to come back with a followup herbicide application. In fields with a more conventional program we've made the first application, and we're about to make our second application on some of the Newpath rice. In the next 10 days we'll be doing a lot of cleanup work to get ready to go to the flood.

"No insect treatments have been required. We've been seeing some chinch bugs and a few yellow sugarcane aphids in the rice. The aphids are more a curiosity on the rice than a problem. No armyworms have developed yet."

Johnny Saichuk, Louisiana Extension Rice Specialist, Crowley, La.: "If we can catch three days in a row without rain that quali-

fies now as a dry spell in south Louisiana. The weather has sure been holding us back, though we're getting some rice planted now. We're off to a late start. Even on some warmer days we've had a cloud cover, so that's delayed growth.

"Overall, we're 80-90% planted in the south part of the state or will be to that point by late this week.

"We're finding water weevils everywhere, and we've been spraying on a fairly wide basis since last week. Very little Icon-treated seed seems to have gone out. We're just getting cranked up on weed control, and we're starting to spray quite a bit."

David Mitchell, M&M Air Service, Beaumont, Texas: "The amount of rice we have this year is going to be a good deal short of what we expected. Wet conditions really held people back. Probably 30-35% has been planted. Very little grain sorghum and milo got planted. It's been a constant cycle of rain followed by just a very small window when growers could plant. We're estimating that

Continued on next page

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in our own business there will be 4,000 to 5,000 fewer acres to work this season.”

MIDSOUTH

Michael Browning, Tri-County Farmers Association, Brinkley, Ark.: “We’re running pretty hard trying to keep up. It’s been dry, and we didn’t receive more than a tenth of an inch of rain when the last front moved through over the weekend. We’ve got a chance for rain later this week, and 1.5" to 2" wouldn’t hurt a bit.

“A lot of folks have already started flushing, and we’ll see more this week and next week if we miss the rain again. It’s been four weeks since we’ve had significant rainfall.

“Overall, we’re about 85% planted, and probably 50% of that is up. We’re getting pretty close to spraying some Super Wham and Facet. With the earlier planted rice, fewer acres were treated with Command simply because people were concerned about moisture. In the last 10 days most of the rice has had Command. But those fields will need to be flushed if we don’t get good rainfall. We’ve still got adequate

moisture for planting, but barely. If we go much longer without rain we’ll be flushing to bring up these later fields.”

Joe Street, Mississippi Extension Rice Specialist, Stoneville, Miss.: “People are going hard and heavy in the field now. Everyone was counting on a rain over the last weekend, but what rain fell was mainly in the north Delta. Growers were telling me last week that they would start flushing if they missed that rain.

“The early rice planted in late March and early April is up. Most of it is up to a pretty good stand, too. Cocodrie will again be our main variety. Wells may increase a little. There’s a limited amount of Francis. I expect we’ll see some increase in Clearfield varieties.”

Rusty Elston, Elston Crop Management, Cheneyville, La.: “Most of what we’ve planted is up, but we’re really on the front edge of planting. Maybe 20-25% has been planted, so far, but that number is going to change in a hurry. At least 90% of my rice is water planted, and we’ve been waiting for the ducks and coots to leave. We caught a window in the last 5-10 days to plant some of our drilled fields, but none of that

is up. We haven’t done any herbicide or fertilizer work yet.”

Dan Roach, Ind. Consultant, Cleveland, Miss.: “We’ve probably planted 50-60% of our acreage. A few herbicide applications are beginning to go out on the early rice. We need a rain. Maybe 5% is up. As far as planting progress goes, we’re at about a normal point, maybe even a little ahead.”

Ross Wood, Manager and Certified Crop Advisor, Almyra Farmers, Almyra, Ark.: “We’re at about 90% planted, with 50-60% up. Command went out on most of it, and it’s been too dry for it to do much of anything. We’re having to come back and spray it now.

“Overall, the rice is mostly just breaking through and getting one true leaf. Just about everything had an Icon seed treatment, so we’re sitting pretty good on the question of early pest pressure.”