

RiceFax: Midsouth/Texas Edition

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Here is this week's issue of *RiceFax*, sponsored by the Midsouth and Texas staff of Valent U.S.A. Corporation, maker of Regiment and Bolero rice herbicides. We welcome your comments.

OVERVIEW

Texas and south Louisiana remain dry, dry, dry. In the central and upper Midsouth, fields are too wet in some areas for pre-flood fertilizer. More rain is in the forecast. In both regions, strong winds have delayed herbicide work on a broad basis.

These reports were made today.

TEXAS/S. LA.

Johnny Saichuk, Louisiana Extension Rice Specialist, Crowley, La.: "Things are kind of quiet. We need a rain. Overall, the crop in south Louisiana is just not moving due to too much cloud cover.

"It looks like we've finally gotten the rice water weevil situation licked in south Louisiana. It's been tough

getting some herbicide treatments made with these windy conditions. One flying service, I heard, counted 17 days straight with 25 mph or more. A lot of work backed up, and the wind was too strong at times to put out fertilizer. It's calmer now, thankfully, because we're getting into the 2,4D period down here."

Garry N. McCauley, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, Eagle Lake, Texas: "It's still extremely dry, and rainfall since planting started is running about half of normal. A few fields have been flushed 5 times. It's taken 3-4 just to get rice up in some fields. I still want to emphasize that we're losing nitrogen with all this flushing, and growers should consider making some early applications to compensate.

"Rice acreage is creeping up due to a somewhat stronger price situation. The projection has gone from 180,000 acres to 188,000 now, and there's talk of 195,000 by the time planting finishes.

"In the Beaumont area today there was talk about replanting some

real thin stands. We need to look closely at the economics of this. With 8-10 plants per square foot in a stand, consider keeping it and push a little harder with early nitrogen. We're at the end of the planting window or even past it, so there's going to be some yield penalty due to late planting if you do replant now."

Eddie Eskew, Jeff Davis Parish Extension Agent, Jennings, La.: "Rice looks good. Everybody is pleased with the stands. We had to spend more money on herbicides to take care of a bunch of junk left over from winter and spring when it was too wet to work fields. Overall, though, it's been as good a start as we've had in several years.

"We're approaching green ring and are spraying 2,4D on our oldest rice. Some rice will be in the boot in the next couple of weeks. It's been a pretty typical weevil situation here. About 70% of the acreage was treated, and the rest will be drained.

"Strong winds delayed treatments. We had 25 mph winds every

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day last week, but it's been calm for the last 3 mornings."

Dan Bradshaw, Crop Aid Agri Consultants, El Campo, Texas: "We're getting the flood on most everything. The wind blew pretty steadily for over a week, and it's been hard to get everything done, but we finally caught some time with less wind. With the cooler temperatures earlier, rice is off to a slow start, but its moving pretty good now."

"We certainly haven't had any rain to disrupt things. In April we had about .15", and this month the total is zero. In our general area, 40-50% of the rice has a flood on it, and other acreage is being flooded now."

"We've been putting on quite a bit of Regiment for alligator weed. That's one of our big problems. Even though it's only on 10% of our acreage, it can be extremely tough where you do find it."

"Our stands are more skippy than in the past due to dry planting conditions. We'll have different maturities because of uneven emergence. But at least it's off and running."

MIDSOUTH

Chuck Wilson, Arkansas Extension Rice Agronomist, Stuttgart, Ark.: "Things are kind of wet on a fairly wide basis, and we're hoping fields will dry out enough to make pre-flood fertilizer applications. But we've got another front coming, and that complicates things. Some growers are flying on a little ammonium sulfate to give plants a boost before the pre-flood N."

"We have reports of grape colaspis, but nothing widespread or severe like last year, just isolated cases. There are growers who've

had problems every year and have pretty much gone with Icon."

Dan Roach, Ind. Consultant, Cleveland, Miss.: "It's not raining right this minute, but there's a 70% chance. We've had periods of rain and wind, and that's backed up applications. I don't have any terrible problems, but delays with herbicide treatments are leaving us with some clean up jobs that we wouldn't have had otherwise."

"We need a break in the weather to get fertilizer out and initiate the flood. Maybe 5-10% of our rice is flooded and another 40-50% is headed toward it. Insects haven't been bad. We had one wheat field with armyworms lined up to go into rice. We sprayed the wheat and along the turnrow and found about 20 per row foot on the side of the rice field."

"Even though we've had heavy rains around here, south of U.S. 82 it's been dry, and we've had to flush rice around Hollandale to get it up and keep herbicides activated, and we'll have to keep flushing it to the flood if rain doesn't develop."

Wendell Minson, Bootheel Crop Consultants, Dexter, Mo.: "Probably 85% of the crop has been planted and is up to a stand. That's pretty good for us this time of the year. We'll start pumping up some fields to a permanent flood next week. Scattered areas have had too much rain. We've gotten at least some rain every week, and we haven't flushed any this year. Our stands look good, too. In general, we started planting a little earlier, and it was the right thing to do. Maybe 10% of my growers' rice hasn't been planted yet."

Ross Wood, Manager and Certified Crop Advisor, Almyra

Farmers, Almyra, Ark.: "We're slinging fertilizer like crazy ahead of the predicted rain. The wind has been a nightmare lately. Some fields have been on the books 14-20 days waiting for herbicide treatments. Now, we're having to go with only one treatment at about \$50 an acre and hoping it works."

"Otherwise, the rice looks good. We put a bunch of fertilizer out early and got it growing good. Maybe 5% is flooded now, and a bunch more is heading that way."

Jay Coker, Consultant/Grower, DeWitt, Ark.: "We've had ample moisture and temperatures to keep rice growing, and herbicides have been working like they're suppose to. We're off to a really good start. In this area we're just getting into the peak time for pre-flood herbicides and fertilizer applications, and we should see a lot of rice going to permanent flood next week."

Rusty Elston, Elston Crop Management, Cheneyville, La.: "Rice is 85% planted. It looks good and is growing fast. Weeds are growing fast, too, and we're doing a lot of herbicide work and flying on quite a bit of fertilizer. Some fields are going to permanent flood. The wind has really been whipping around, and it's delayed a few applications. But it's been a little calmer the last few days, and that's helped on scheduling."

"It looks like we have a lot of water weevil pressure, based on scarring. We're putting out pyrethroids and draining fields on crawfish lakes. I was hoping for one shot where we'll treat, but it may take two where we flooded early."