

RiceFax

Midsouth/Texas

Where your crop comes first.

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Here is this week's *RiceFax*, sponsored by **Dow AgroSciences**, maker of **Grasp** herbicide. Subscriptions to *RiceFax* are free to U.S. residents engaged in rice farming or related ag professions. To request a subscription, please go to: agfax.com/subs.

OVERVIEW

Much of our coverage area received general rains over the last week, but dry conditions still linger over coastal Texas, especially west of Houston. The Midsouth crop is in relatively good condition. Rain has slowed down planting progress in the Delta since our last report. But as a couple of our contacts noted this week, so much of the crop has been planted in a single time period, and the rain at least added a little spacing between early seeding and the remaining acreage. These reports were made Tuesday.

CROP REPORTS

Chuck Wilson, Arkansas Extension Rice Agronomist,

Stuttgart, Ark.: "Due to rain, I don't think a whole lot more has been planted in the last week. We were approximately 80% planted a week ago, and it may be up to 85% now. Most places received good rainfall amounts, and it was certainly needed to get herbicides activated and give guys a break from flushing. Calls right now are mainly about weed control. Folks are trying to figure out how to deal with situations where weeds escaped herbicides when there wasn't enough moisture to keep them activated."

Brian V. Ottis, Rice Agronomist, University of Missouri Delta REC, Portageville, Mo.: "We're still on the fringe area in terms of rain. We've had 6-tenths here, but farther north the amounts were better. Sikeston got at least 1.5 inches. We're 90% planted, which is way ahead of our five-year average of 52% for May 2. With this rain, I think most people are in a holding pattern. All the rice, so far, went into the ground in a relatively short period, and it's going to be interesting to see how things go this fall when so much of it matures at the same time. We do have good conditions now for herbicides and still have anywhere from a 30% to 50% chance through Saturday."

David Mitchell, M&M Air Service, Beaumont, Texas: "A lot of our first Newpath applications are going out right now. We finally got rain Saturday, from 1 to 3 inches. We're probably 20 inches behind for the year, and the ground was so dry that the rain didn't keep some people out of the field for more than a couple of days. Our rice is down by about 25% again this year. We are seeing an increase in the num-

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ber of growers planting for the organic market. That part of the crop is probably up 10-15% this year. At one time we thought that would cut out application work, but we've been putting out some organic products, including fertilizer and also planting organic rice.

"There's no insect pressure yet, no sign of armyworms. Some growers are adding a pyrethroid as a preventive with herbicides, mainly for rice water weevils."

Scott Holder, Helena Chemical Co., Cleveland, Miss.: "Our rice has come up real good. There is a tremendous difference between this year and last year when it was so cold. Plants look healthy, and with all the rain we've had, Command has certainly been doing a satisfactory job of holding down grass. Over the last 10 days, we've received 2.5 to 4 inches of rain. The Cleveland area picked up 2.5 to 3 inches last Saturday night. We're 90% to 95% planted. We applied our first Newpath on Clearfield acreage, and some mixed fertilizer has been going out to get rice kicked off where we do have a stand. More rain is predicted tonight (Tuesday) and every day this week, so a lot of people want to make those applications as soon as they can."

Nathan Buehring, Mississippi Extension Rice Specialist: "Everything looks good right now. This last weather system dropped 2 inches of rain in a number of areas, but some places continue to miss most of the showers. Growers around Greenwood and Hollandale picked up maybe a tenth of an inch, and they're flushing now. A lot of herbicides went out at the end of last week. It's been a little cooler compared to how temperatures have been running, but they're still average or even a little above average. Overall, we've had pretty good weather for controlling weeds."

"The USDA said this week that we were 91% planted, but based on calls and farm visits, that figure seems to be a little optimistic. The report said we went from 73% to 91% in the last week but during most of that time rain was keeping a lot of people out of the field. I'm thinking the number may be more like 85%. Some fields in the south Delta will probably go to flood next week and more will be falling in line a week or so behind that."

Keith B. Shelton, Shelton Consulting Service, Inc., Lonoke, Ark.: "We're just now starting to spray a little. Command has been holding up pretty good. We thought by now this would have turned into a drought situation, based on the way things were shaping up in the first half of April. But we've been blessed with pretty good rains in the last couple of weeks. Command is just now breaking in some fields planted about a month ago. We're still waiting to get some rice planted. We made steady progress until it began raining. My earliest fields are at least 2 weeks from going

to flood."

Johnny Saichuk, Louisiana Extension Rice Specialist, Crowley, La.: "We've picked up some rice water weevil pressure that's bad enough in a couple of fields in the middle of the state to justify a treatment for foliar damage from adults. That's unusual. Weevil activity is showing up from St. Landry Parish all the way up to Concordia Parish, which indicates there probably was a flight last week."

"Thankfully, we've gotten rain in the last week, generally from 8-tenths up to 6 inches or more. On a widespread basis, totals ran 3 to 3.5 inches. That was the first statewide rain event since Hurricane Rita last year. Up until now, we've had small, scattered fronts, mostly in north Louisiana. I'm afraid that in south Louisiana this has created an illusion that things have turned around. But we'll need two to three more weather systems like that to flush the salt out of the surface water and the soil. In the worst places, it will take even more rain than that."

Garry N. McCauley, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, Eagle Lake, Texas: "Everybody is trying to make their final weed control applications and get fertilizer out ahead of the flood. Right now, 18% to 20% of the crop is going to flood. Calls and farm visits are focusing mainly on weed control. With the colder weather earlier, herbicides didn't work well, and weeds got bigger, and everyone is trying to deal with that. We received no rain here from that last system. Beaumont picked up 1 to 1.4 inches, but things are still pretty dry on the west side of Houston, and it's particularly dry south of here. Row crops are really hurting. On top of that, several thousand acres of replanted rice is just coming up."

David Hydrick, Hydrick's Crop Consulting, Inc., Jonesboro, Ark.: "Our rice is completely planted and completely up. For the most part, it's clean. We're doing a little herbicide work in a few fields. But with the rain we've had, herbicide activity has been good. Right now, we're just holding off and trying not to spend any money. We've applied some Newpath. Except for Command, that's about all that we've done in terms of weed control. A large part of our rice is running two to three leaves now, and it's off to a great start."

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