

Field Notes
June 26, 2009
Johnny Saichuk



Last week the plants in the photograph at left were brought in to me. At first we could not find the culprit. The field was planted late and the problem was well developed by the time they were called to the field. The injury symptoms in some way mimicked what we have seen when Southern Green Stink Bugs attack rice. It is rare, but it does happen. The problem with that diagnosis was the lack of damage to the growing points which is characteristic of Southern Green Stink Bug damage.

In the photograph at right is the culprit; it is the South American Rice Miner (SARM). The brownish object in the dissected rice stem is a SARM puparium. We could only find one among all of the stems we split. This indicates they had been there some time and were now beginning to complete their life cycle and move out of the field. There would likely have been nothing to do unless they had been caught very early.





It has not made a lot of noise this year, but localized decline is still around. Last week we received two or three calls about it. One case I have been tracking for several weeks has been especially severe. This field had received a heavy dose of zinc chelate once the problem was diagnosed. According to county agent Stuart Gauthier it had improved, but as can be seen in the photographs above and to the right it did not go away.



Even though it has been hot and dry and progression of most disease has slowed, it have not gone away. In the photograph at right is a sheath blight lesion on Catahoula. This was taken in Concordia parish last Wednesday. It was definitely hot and dry. The white cotton-ball looking objects are young sclerotia forming. Sclerotia are masses of fungus material (hyphae) that look something like spaghetti under a microscope. They form a dense mass sort of like a ball of string, but denser. These are the structures that can survive harsh conditions from one year to the next. They usually float on the water's surface then infect stalks they contact. As you can see, sheath blight is alive and well. We have recommended fungicide in several verification fields and will probably recommend more.

