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SPRING AG UPDATE & RICE DD50

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The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture is an equal opportunity/equal access/affirmative action institution. If you require a reasonable accommodation to participate or need materials in another format, please contact your County Extension office (or other appropriate office) as soon as possible. Dial 711 for Arkansas Relay.

In Arkansas County, the Cooperative Extension Service is still on the job.

The Cooperative Extension Service has been serving the people of Arkansas, from agricultural communities in rural areas to school children in the cities, for more than 100 years, through good times and bad. Our current era, in which we all face serious health risks from the COVID-19 virus, is no different.

Our agents are as available and ready to work as they've always been. While public health recommendations may limit in-person contact, we are increasingly available through online venues, including webinars and internet-based teleconferencing. And of course, we're still ready to answer questions and make recommendations by phone.



DD50 Program - DD50 Program is Live! While planting progress has only just begun, we do have rice emerged. With that in mind, the DD50 Rice Management Program is live and ready for fields to be enrolled for the 2020 season. All log-in and producer information has been retained from the 2019 season, so if you used the program last year you can log-in just as you did last year. Only field data from 2019 has been removed.

Access the program at <https://DD50.uaex.edu>. You can also access it through the Rice Advisor online app <https://riceadvisor.uaex.edu> along with many other calculators and rice production information. All this content is mobile friendly and works well on all devices. Prior to the start of the season, we hope to roll out the ability to opt-in to receive text messages when fields in DD50 near important dates such as final N timing, green ring, etc. If you have questions or need help, contact us at the Arkansas County Extension office or Dr. Jarrod Hardke directly at jhardke@uaex.edu.

A postcard is enclosed for anyone who wishes to enroll in the DD50 program through the Extension Office. Return the card or call the requested information into the office and printouts will be mailed to you.

Arkansas Spray Water Quality Testing - The weed science program as a part of the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture is collecting spray water samples and conducting a pH and water hardness analysis. **If you have water that is used for pesticide applications that you would like tested for pH and water hardness, please collect a 1 Liter sample (approximately). Also, please record the GPS coordinates of where the water sample was taken and a short description of the sample (location, city water, rural water, surface water, etc.). Once collected, either ship the samples directly to me (Tommy Butts) in Lonoke (2001 Hwy 70 E, Lonoke, AR 72086), or contact either of the Extension agents to drop it off, and we will coordinate a pickup.** Primarily we are looking at water that is used for pesticide spray applications, but this can include row crops, pastures, or anything else where this water is being used for pest control. We will analyze the samples this fall, and make sure to share the results again with any of the participants this winter.

The goal of this research is to build a database of spray water quality used for pesticide applications across the entire state of Arkansas. Once we have an idea of the range of pH and hardness across the state, we will be conducting greenhouse and field studies to evaluate how water quality is affecting our pesticide applications, and if there are any adjustments (acidifiers, AMS, other adjuvants) that we can make to improve the efficacy of our pesticides.

We began this spray water sampling in 2019, and we had approximately 40 samples submitted last year. Results from these initial samplings revealed a couple of interesting things. First, there were a wide range of spray water pH and hardness values across Arkansas. Spray water pH ranged from about 5.9 to 8.9, and water hardness ranged from about 10 to 350 ppm (very soft to extremely hard). Second, there seems to be no correlation between spray water pH and water hardness values meaning you may have a neutral pH but very hard water or maybe you have very soft water and a high pH. This further complicates the interactions between spray water and our pesticides. For more information: <http://www.arkansas-crops.com/2020/03/31/arkansas-quality-testing/>

Don't Lose Corn Yield to Early Weed Pressure - Weed control in Arkansas corn production has become more and more difficult over the last several years with the onset of glyphosate-resistant pigweed, mares tail, and ryegrass. Each of these weeds if not controlled prior to planting can rob corn of yield potential. To make matters worse, pigweed populations have been found resistant to 6 herbicide modes of action in at least one Northeast Arkansas County. The most recently widespread of these is pigweed resistance to PPO herbicides such as Flexstar, Sharpen, and Valor. Fortunately for corn producers, there are several herbicide alternatives to control glyphosate and PPO-resistant pigweed in corn. However, what is more alarming are the populations that have been found resistant to POST applications of HPPD (Callisto, Capreno) herbicides and on a lesser scale resistance to metolachlor and acetochlor PRE. Metolachlor resistance is not as widespread and may be limited to Crittenden county. For more info see [Metolachlor Resistance: What are the facts?](#)

Corn yield can be lost due to weed competition the first 6-8 weeks after planting depending on growing conditions. It is easy for us weed guys to focus only on pigweed control, but many other weeds, especially grasses can quickly cause early season yield loss if residuals are not used at planting. Atrazine and Dual II Magnum have been, and still are key players in corn because they provide cheap, effective broad-spectrum weed control. Knowing the specifics about pigweed populations from one field to the next is crucial for any successful herbicide program. You may be certain that HPPD and metolachlor resistance is not present on your farm but, it is a good management practice to change things up this year and use a different herbicide mixture because as we all know, pigweed populations can spread quickly through many methods.

Numerous herbicide studies on 6-way resistant pigweed have been conducted in Marion and Crawfordsville, AR the last four years. Herbicides containing pyroxasulfone (Anthem Maxx, Zidua, etc.) and dimethenamid (Outlook) have provided much better residual control with these pigweed populations than Dual II Magnum (metolachlor) or Warrant (acetochlor). These are all Group 15 herbicides but because of the difference in herbicide metabolism in resistant pigweed populations, Anthem Maxx /Zidua and Outlook have consistently worked better from a residual standpoint.

HPPD-resistant pigweed populations are resistant to POST HPPD applications but can still be controlled from PRE or from residual HPPD activity. Additionally, our research indicates that adding atrazine to any HPPD herbicide provides improved control over atrazine or the HPPD herbicide alone, including control of HPPD-resistant populations. What does all this mean? If growing corn in Northeast Arkansas, I would strongly consider a two-pass program starting with Zidua or Outlook up front at a minimum and following with a diverse postemergence application including the maximum allowable rate of atrazine (2 qts/acre). Atrazine continues to be very effective on even the 6-way resistant pigweed populations. Another approach would be to use an aggressive mixture at planting such as Acuron or Verdict plus atrazine and follow with a POST that includes the remaining atrazine and whichever HPPD you like ([see MP44](#)). The only downside to these robust PRE's is plant back to other crops if the corn stand is failed. Glufosinate (Liberty etc.) is an option on LL hybrids and when mixed with atrazine can add value to controlling a healthy pigweed population. It is a good idea to diversify and use a robust corn herbicide program regardless of where you farm to further delay local weed resistant issues.

Soybean Producers, We Need Your Feedback - Soybean protein concentration has traditionally been considered to be about 40% of soybean grain. Protein concentration, however, has been in a steady decline over the past 30 years, and the average protein concentration across the U.S. is about 34%. The decline in protein concentration makes soybean grain less valuable as an animal feed. The University of Arkansas is part of a national program supported by the United Soybean Board to develop management options that will increase soybean protein concentration. As part of that project, they are asking farmers to take 3 or 4 minutes to complete a short survey concerning farmers' interests in soybean protein concentration.

Please fill out the survey located at the following link: <http://bit.ly/SoybeanQualitySurvey>
Your participation is greatly appreciated.

CropCheck and FieldWatch for Arkansas Producers - Arkansas pesticide applicators working row and field crops will be able to identify herbicide-sensitive crops and adjust their spraying accordingly thanks to a unique online platform called CropCheck™ -- a pilot program being offered in partnership between FieldWatch® and the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture.

FieldWatch is a not-for-profit company that hosts registries that map locations of pesticide-sensitive crops and beehives. The effort is meant to help farmers prevent damage to their neighbors. The partnership between FieldWatch and the Division of Agriculture's Cooperative Extension Service will also enable Arkansas producers to have access to two other FieldWatch products, Driftwatch™ and BeeCheck™.

There is no cost to enroll or use the new registry, and enrollment is voluntary. Both commercial and hobby beekeepers can use the system, however only managers and owners of crop fields that are used for commercial production and are of at least a half-acre in size will have fields approved by the state data steward. The stewardship platforms provided by FieldWatch are not intended for homeowners or those with small gardens.

Pesticide applicators will have different options for viewing locations on the new system but **all users** in Arkansas, applicators, producers, and beekeepers, will need to go to <https://ar.driftwatch.org/> and create an account to get started.

FieldWatch, Inc[®], a non-profit company that helps applicators, growers of specialty crops and beekeepers communicate about the locations of crops and hives to improve stewardship. FieldWatch was created to develop and expand the operation of DriftWatch™, a voluntary online specialty crop registry program originally created by Purdue University in 2008. Today, FieldWatch offers an online national registry and tools that facilitate communication between commercial applicators and growers of sensitive crops and beekeepers.

UAEX Row Crop Text Message Updates - If you are interested in receiving rice production and management information notifications via text message, signing up is easy. You can also sign up to receive messages from other commodities and topic areas.

Text the number 69922 with the following word to join that list:

Rice

Weeds

Soil

Soybean

Cotton

Fieldcorn (one word)

Sorghum

Wheat

Once you've sent the list word to 69922, you should receive an automatic reply confirming your enrollment in the group. If joining multiple groups, each word must be sent as a separate text message. Reply STOP to cancel, HELP for help. Msg & data rates may apply. Terms & privacy: slkt.io/5eSz.

Staying Safe on the Farm Through Covid-19

During the COVID-19 pandemic, it is essential to practice healthy habits in every part of your life. Working on the farm is no exception to using techniques to keep you and others safe.

We really want to focus on basic recommendations for farm workers right now, and the biggest thing is that if you don't feel good, you need to stay home.

- Remember to try to wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds any time we're coming into contact with surfaces that you know others may have touched or could be a source of transmission.
- Maintain a social distance of at least six feet from others and avoid touching other people, avoiding customary handshakes. Try to avoid being in an enclosed space or area with other people, particularly for any length of time, and even if you are maintaining a safe social distance of six feet apart, let's try to stay out of those enclosed spaces.
- Avoid touching your eyes, face, nose. It's very easy to do. You do it more than you think, most of the time, but that can be a possible source of virus transmission.
- Any time you're using vehicles or farm equipment, assume that the last person to use that did not clean or sanitize it. So take time to sterilize the surfaces before use with disinfecting wipes, and wipe down surfaces as you go. Clean and sterilize all vehicles and farm equipment daily before you use them, especially those vehicles and common areas that you share with other people. You may need to make a solution of a third of a cup of bleach to a gallon of water. You will need to make that fresh daily to use to sterilize services where you don't have other options, such as wipes and other disinfectant products available.
- Any time guests or other farm workers feel the need to come to work even though they may not feel well, typically that's over fear of being fired. That needs to be a conversation between the boss and the worker, and find a way for that individual to stay home.
- The health of the farm and the crew depends on not spreading illness to others at the farm. Whenever tailgate or shop meetings need to occur, continue to maintain that safe social distance so that group of everybody huddled around just needs to get a little wider and further apart, and keep those meetings limited in length as much as possible.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Arkansas County Extension Office is closed to the public at this time. We are still available to assist you via phone or email.

870-946-3231 or 870-673-2346 arkansas-dewitt@uaex.edu

You can also contact any of the Extension agents through phone call, text or email. Their contact information is listed on the front page of this newsletter.

***A drop-off container is provided outside our office door for any soil samples or other materials you may need to deliver to us. We can also leave materials there for you to pick up at your request. We apologize for any inconvenience, but the health safety of our clientele and employees is of utmost importance at this time.**