RICE

Planting Time!
After a long, cold winter, the race is on to grow another crop. The optimum time to seed rice in NE Arkansas is from April 10 to May 10. Dr. Jarrod Hardke, U of A Extension Rice Specialist, notes that one benefit of delayed planting from recent rains, should be a quicker, more uniform emergence, since soils have had time to warm. Make sure to pick up a seeding rate guide (sliding cardboard gauge) from your AG retailer or the County Extension Office.***

DD50 - Track Crop Development, Pests, Chemical Cutoff Dates
The DD50 report is a one page summary of what to expect on your crop throughout the season. Growth stages, pesticide cut off dates, pest scouting windows, and fertilizer timing are just a few areas listed on the report. Please list the total number of acres you plan to manage with each report generated for your farm. Complete the enclosed DD50 enrollment card and return it to the Extension office to get reports for your fields. It may be more convenient to enroll online at http://dd50.uaex.edu/ ***

Herbicide Resistance Management
Barnyardgrass (BYG) is our major rice weed. According to Dr. Bob Scott, U of A Extension Weed Scientist, we need to rotate herbicide mode of actions (MOA) available for BYG control, to promote herbicide resistance management. Many fields have propanil and/or quinclorac (Facet) resistant BYG. Adding to the concern, Newpath (imazethapyr) resistance showed a substantial increase last year while clomazone (Command) resistance has been confirmed in a few fields.

Many use Command at planting as their main weapon for grass weed control. A couple of delayed PRE options to consider are Bolero and/or Prowl mixed with propanil or Facet, if needed, for emerged grass. They could be tank mixed with Newpath for Clearfield rice. Clincher and Ricestar fall into the other main MOA for POST grass control, with no BYG resistance yet seen. Regiment and Grasp also provide BYG control as long as ALS cross-resistance is not present. The take home message - use multiple MOAs to preserve your short list of weed control weapons. Call the Extension office if you suspect herbicide resistance, so we can collect seed samples.

The Sharpen label has changed this year to include POST applications after rice reaches the 2 leaf stage. Scott, says Sharpen is a group 14 herbicide (MOA), the same as AIM and Valor. When used PRE, Sharpen may fit as a good burndown partner for control of marestail, morningglory, pigweed, and other small seeded broadleaf weeds. It can also provide residual control of pigweed if activated by a rain or flush. Scott adds that for POST applications, it also has good contact activity on the sesbanias, and several aquatic weeds. While a MSO plus AMS is required for burndown applications, a COC is recommended POST to avoid crop injury. For more details, check BASF’s supplemental labels, available at the State Plant Board Web site, http://170.94.200.136/prodreg/***  

Rice Information - Smart Device & Computer Updates
Timely information is available in several formats to those using smart phones, tablets, and laptops. Following are the links/contacts to sign up for/view electronic rice updates:

Arkansas Rice Update (weekly) – email jhardke@uaex.edu
Arkansas Extension website - http://www.uaex.edu/default.aspx
Greene County Extension website (newsletters, meetings, pest updates) - http://www.uaex.edu/counties/greene/
Greene County Extension Text/email updates – email Allen or Dave (contact info back of this newsletter).***
Rice Continued

Plant Food Needs
To grow good rice, producers need to soil sample (4 inch depth) every 2-3 years to access nutrient availability. Many soil test reports that come through the Extension office, call for phosphorus (P), potassium (K), and zinc (Zn) fertilizer. Regarding K, if soil test levels fall under 130 ppm (parts per million), potash is needed.

Considering P and Zn, the trigger to apply fertilizer is determined by both soil nutrient and pH levels. For P, fertilizer is needed if soil test levels fall under 25 ppm. In addition, for soils with a pH over 6.5, P fertilizer will be recommended when the soil test P level drops below 35 ppm. For these higher pH soils, phosphorus stays tied up longer than it does on more acid soils, even in flooded conditions. Keep in mind that research shows applying P fertilizer when soil test P levels are high can actually reduce rice yields in some situations, so do not make automatic applications.

The critical soil test level to apply Zn fertilizer is 2.5 ppm for light textured soils and 4 ppm for clays. Once again, pH levels above 6.0 will increase the need for Zn fertilizer with a 10 pound granular recommendation given to help build soil test Zn levels. For the more acid soils (pH under 6.0), a liquid Zn (chelate or ZnSO4) application or a Zn seed treatment become options. On a final note, since high pH soils can tie up P and Zn, on fields requiring lime, the lime application is generally made the fall before the crop that rotates with rice, unless the pH reading is 5.0 or lower.

Thinking about nitrogen (N), don’t forget about the U of A’s Nstar program. It is the Extension Service’s newest way to determine N fertilizer needs for a rice crop. Dr. Trent Roberts, Assistant Professor for soil fertility, initiated the research for, and heads up, the Nstar program. He advises that this new procedure determines a soil’s organic N level, which stays more stable over time, compared to inorganic N (ammonium and nitrate). Nstar accuracy & success depend upon proper soil sampling, a consistent crop rotation, and proper irrigation/water management. So far, some fields using the program have called for more N fertilizer to achieve optimum yields while others have called for less N. Call the Extension office for more details about Nstar, or if you want to volunteer for a demonstration.

Wheat

Foliar Fungicide Decisions
According to Dr. Jason Kelley, Extension Feed Grains Specialist, producers should carefully evaluate the use of foliar fungicides for wheat disease control. Economic returns for fungicide application are greatest when a susceptible variety is planted, weather conditions favor disease development, and the fungicide is properly timed. The overall goal is to protect the flag and flag-1 leaves through the beginning kernel fill.

Historically, the greatest returns for fungicide use have been seen from controlling stripe rust, followed by Septoria leaf blotch, and then Stagonospora leaf and glume blotch. Powdery mildew usually does not develop on the upper leaves, while leaf rust usually arrives late in the season. The economic return for controlling powdery mildew or leaf rust will not likely be as great as for controlling stripe rust, or the blotches.

Fungicide efficacy ratings were comparable for most products sold in Arkansas, for most of our target diseases. Application timing and rate may be more important than which product is applied. Target fungicide application from flag leaf emergence (Feekes growth stage 8) up to early flowering (growth stage 10.5.1). Research shows disease which develops after flowering should not affect kernel fill, and subsequent yield.

Scout your fields on a weekly basis from late-March through April to access disease development. Disease thresholds are available as guides on the need and optimal timing of fungicide application. They are listed in the MP 154 (2014 Arkansas Plant Disease Control Products Guide).
Corn

Fertilizer Needs
According to Dr. Jason Kelley, Arkansas Extension Feed Grains Specialist, corn nitrogen (N) fertilizer recommendations have been streamlined this winter. For most growers shooting for 200 bushels plus production, 220 units of N is recommended for our lighter soils while the rate bumps up to 290 units for our more inefficient clay soils. For those with dry land fields or fields with production in the 150 bushel range or lower, drop the N rate 60 units for both soil types. Apply 40% of the total N near or at planting.

P and K fertilizer recommendations remain the same based upon the yield goal (125, 150, 175, and 200 bushels per acre). Fertilizer rates recommended by the U of A were formulated to replace the nutrients removed with the grain, plus provide additional plant food to build soil test P & K levels up to a medium range over 8 years. Don’t forget about Sulfur (S) and Zn. Corn grown on sandy soils is most likely to see low levels of these nutrients and respond to supplemental fertilizer. Zn deficiency is more like on soils with a high (6.0 plus) pH.

Use a Mix of Herbicide Chemistries
Many brands of herbicide are available for corn weed control. Several contain atrazine which has been the long time standard for broadleaf weed control. It is a group 5 MOA that works great to broaden the mix of chemistries used on the farm when thinking about herbicide resistance management. Most producers also include a group 15 herbicide (alachlor, metolachlor, Zidua, etc.) in their program to provide residual grass control. Another good choice for your herbicide program mix is one of the group 27 products. Mesotrione (Calissto) has been around for several years now, and like atrazine, adds diversity to the chemistries being used on the farm. Tembotrione (Laudis) and isoxaflutole (Balance) are a couple of other group 27 compounds sold alone or in package mixes. There are also a few herbicides available with the group 14 or group 2 MOA. You might consider using them sparingly. Recall in RR soybeans we are now relying heavily on the group 14 herbicides (Valor, Flexstar, etc.) to fight GR pigweeds. In regard to the Group 2 compounds (ALS inhibitors), pigweeds in many fields may already show resistance to them. Make sure to mix it up and use more and different chemistries for sustainability.

Soybean

More Traits Coming Soon!
Most producers are familiar with the “Flag The Technology (FTT)” program. Different color bicycle flags are used to identify the type of herbicide trait being used in a field. The primary goal for adopting FTT is to keep crops safe from herbicide injury which sometimes occurs from off target drift or miss application. Currently four herbicide traits are being identified with flags. They include: RED – Conventional crop (contains no herbicide tolerance trait), GREEN – Liberty Link crop (tolerate glufosinate), WHITE – Roundup Ready (tolerate glyphosate), and YELLOW- Clearfield & STS crops (tolerates imazethapyr). A limited number of flags will be available again this year in Greene County.

We are also looking for tech teams (producers-commercial applicators-crop advisors) who will work together to try a new online version of FTT. Please call us at the Extension office if you would like to participate or have a team in mind. Producers, commercial applicators, and crop advisors can all set up FTT accounts online. Accounts can be set up with limits on who can view field data entered, to protect account holder privacy.
COTTON

Early May Optimum Time to Plant

Don’t get in a hurry to plant cotton. It is more likely to come up to a vigorous, healthy stand, if you wait for soils to warm into the high 60s, usually seen in early May for this region. Remember, cotton sets its yield potential the first 30 days after emergence.

Good news! We are happy to welcome back Dr. Bill Robertson. He begins work as Extension Cotton Specialist for Arkansas later this month.***

Upcoming meetings & field days.

April 15 - Livestock Field Day, Batesville Research Station
May 2 - AR Forage & Grassland Council’s - Forage Bus Tour, Pocahontas Livestock Auction Barn

Have a great year,

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