Several Educational Meetings/Field Days Planned (Programs Enclosed)

The 2nd annual **Greene County Agriculture Field day is set for July 22nd**. Resource conservation will be the main focus. CEUs will be given to those needing credits. See the enclosed program for times, topics, speakers, and locations. The field day results from the collaboration of several public and private partners.

The 4th annual **Arkansas Rice Expo is scheduled for August 1st** at the Grand Prairie Center in Stuttgart. Numerous U of A, Division of Agriculture researchers and Extension professionals have worked hard to plan a fun and educational day for the whole family. See the enclosed inserts for more details.

Have you ever thought about using your land for a wildlife or agitourism business? Then think about attending the **Outdoor Business Workshop for Landowners set for August 5th in Alicia, AR**. A pamphlet with fees, contacts, and all the other specifics is enclosed.***

Consider Sheath Blight Levels & Potential

As rice reaches the panicle initiation stage (greenring), you need to begin scouting for sheath blight (SB). According to Dr. Yeshi Wamishe, Arkansas Extension Plant Pathologist, this disease is responsible for many dollars of lost income for producers every year. Some fields lose yield and profit potential from not receiving a fungicide application when SB threshold levels are reached. Many other fields will lose profit potential when growers make automatic fungicide applications when SB levels are well below treatment level.

CL151AR is a semidwarf variety rated susceptible to sheath blight. Fungicide treatment is recommended for it, and other varieties rated susceptible or very susceptible, when 35% positive scouting stops are recorded for a field, and there is a favorable forecast for continued disease development. For the taller, moderately susceptible varieties, like Roy J, 50% positive stops is used to trigger a fungicide application. A positive scouting stop is when you find sheath blight lesions present.

Most of the RiceTec hybrids being grown are rated moderately susceptible to SB and are less likely to need a fungicide application, but should be regularly scouted.

Sheath blight is more likely to be a problem on fields with a history of the disease, when high nitrogen rates are used, for thick stands of rice, and during cloudy, damp conditions. Wamishe advises that the sheath blight organism can grow up the plant and across the canopy one inch every 24 hours under the right conditions. The message here is to scout fields twice a week when conditions are right for sheath blight development. The producer’s goal is to protect the plant’s top three leaves which are responsible for a large part of kernel fill.

Quadris, GEM, Stratego, and Quilt will generally provide from 2-3 weeks of protection from sheath blight. Use a high spray volume (at least 5gpa) to help with canopy penetration and foliage coverage for the best results. Sercadis (fluxapyroxad) is a new fungicide available this year from BASF. It falls into a different fungicide family than the strobies and triazoles and may be good to incorporate for resistance management. U of A research data is lacking, so check with your BASF rep for recommendations on use. ***

Several Tools Being Evaluated for Irrigation Management

With all the rain seen this year, irrigation has the been the last thing on most folks minds. However, most early planted soybeans are setting pods and will require significantly more moisture from now until maturity, requiring wells to be fired up.

Several irrigation tools are being evaluated & spotlighted by the U of A working in partnership with the Greene County Conservation District and local NRCS. Massey Farms near Light, is cooperating to help determine the water and energy saving potential when modern irrigation tools are used. Recent work by land grant schools in the Mid-South, document a 25% reduction in water use is common for those using proper polypipe hole sizing, surge valves, and irrigation timing.
For the Massey demo field, irrigation timing is being determined by use of the updated online Irrigation Scheduler program, and use of an ETgage (an inexpensive, convenient, practical tool to track soil moisture deficit for a field). To provide uniform watering, while minimizing water lost at the bottom of the field, holes were punched in the poly pipe using the Phaucet program developed by the NRCS. To minimize water lost to deep percolation at the top of the field while better wetting the crop's root zone at the bottom of the field, a Surge Valve is being used. Finally, soil moisture sensors are installed in the field to provide constant feedback on the soil moisture status at 6, 12, 18, and 36 inch soil depths. All of the tools will be discussed at the field day on July 22nd.

Make sure to visit the new U of A row crop irrigation website to access information about each of these tools and to set your field up with the online irrigation scheduler. You can also download the Phaucet program. Here is the site:
http://www.uaex.edu/environment-nature/water/irrigation.aspx

Soybean Insect Update

Make sure to regularly check soybeans for foliage and pod feeders. According to Dr. Glenn Studebaker, Arkansas Extension Entomologist, foliage feeding worms you may find in soybeans include the corn earworm, soybean looper, green cloverworm, velvetbean caterpillar, garden webworm, yellow striped armyworm, beet armyworm, and fall armyworm. Before bloom, treat for any of these worms if they cause over 40% defoliation. After bloom, treat for over 25% defoliation.

When soybeans start setting pods they should be watched very closely for corn earworms. They prefer to feed on pods rather than foliage and can at high levels of infestation cause significant yield losses. Fields with plants not covering the row middles are the most often infested. This is often the case on late planted and doublecrop beans.

The threshold to treat for earworms in soybeans is 9 per 25 sweeps. Sweep deep into the canopy to get more accurate estimates of worm numbers. You also need to observe plants for presence and degree of pod feeding. If you have row beans, the insecticide threshold trigger is 2 per row foot (28,000/acre) that are 1/2 inch or longer (hopefully beneficials are working on the smaller worms). T

Studebaker notes that several synthetic pyrethroids and carbamates are labeled for control of corn earworm. He also advises using some of the “softer insecticides” in other chemistries like Belt, Steward, and Tracer. They are not as harsh on beneficials in the field. In addition, earworm resistance seems to have increased to pyrethroids the last couple of seasons resulting in them not being as consistent for controlling earworms as they have in years past.

We are monitoring bollworm (corn earworm) moth trap numbers on traps set in Fontaine, Mounds, Paragould, and Stone wall. Trap numbers were low and trending downward from late June to mid July. We expect them the trend back up as the next generation of moths emerge the next couple of weeks.

Stinkbug numbers also generally build up in August. Remember stinkbugs can feed for several weeks making a dent in soybean yield and quality. Make sure to treat them when threshold numbers are reached (9 stinkbugs per 25 sweeps or 1 per row foot (14,000/acre) when using a shake sheet).

Some soybean growers may also be considering applying a fungicide to their crop. The U of A Extension service does not recommend a blanket application of a fungicide unless you have disease present in the field or are in the seed production business. The main two diseases to scout for are Frogeye leaf spot and aerial web blight. Check out the MP 154 which gives more details on the need to use foliar fungicides in soybeans. More details on disease control will be provided in your August newsletter.***

Warmest regards,

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