Blast Confirmed in Greene County

Leaf blast was found in Greene County on June 19th in a field of Jupiter near Stanford. It was also found on a couple of fields of CL151 the following week. If you have a susceptible variety planted, make sure to up your watch & management for blast. Other varieties rated susceptible include Cheniere, CL 152, Francis, LaKast, Mermentau, and Roy J.

In the short term make sure to main a deep flood (4 inches). Research shows this will help minimize blast pressure. Also destroy field border rice, out of the flood, which is more prone to stress and be a nursery for blast spore development. Be ready to apply fungicide as heading approaches. For light blast pressure one application at boot split may suffice. Were disease pressure may be heavier, a second application in 3-6 days may be needed. Products for control listed in the MP154, UA Disease Guide, include Quadris, GEM, Stratego, and Quilt Xcel. If you find suspect blast leaf lesions we would be happy to check them for spores under the microscope.

Scouting for Sheath Blight Begins

Joint movement has started in most of our rice. Plan on scouting for sheath blight (SB) the next 3-4 weeks. According to Dr. Yeshi Wamishe, Arkansas Extension Plant Pathologist, some fields lose yield and profit potential from not receiving a fungicide application when SB threshold levels are reached. Other fields lose profit when automatic fungicide applications are made and SB levels are below threshold 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 RiceTec hybrids are rated moderately susceptible to SB and unlikely to need a fungicide application, but should be regularly scouted. RT CL 745, rated susceptible, is one to keep an eye on.

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

Quadris, Stratego, Quilt, Quilt Xcel, GEM, and Sercadis will generally provide from 2-3 weeks of protection from sheath blight, depending on product rate used. Use a high spray volume (at least 5gpa) to help with canopy penetration and foliage coverage for the best results.

Managing for the Smuts

The smuts (Kernel & False) can be managed with a properly timed application of a triazole fungicide. Late boot, just prior to heading is when to time treatment to help protect developing kernels from infection.

Both smuts are more likely to be a problem on fields with a history of the disease (s), where high nitrogen rates are used, and if a susceptible variety is planted. CL152, Francis, and Roy J are all rated very susceptible to kernel smut and susceptible to false smut.
**SOYBEANS**

**Early Timing Critical with Contact Herbicides**
According to Dr. Bob Scott, Extension Weed Scientist for Arkansas, to control Glyphosate (GR) pigweed, start clean at planting with either tillage and/or burndown herbicides.

Next, plan to use a residual herbicide at planting for all types of soybean systems - Roundup Ready, Liberty Link, and conventional. Herbicide options are available from Weed Science Society of America (WSSA) class 2 (Scepter, etc.), class 3 (yellow herbicides), class 5 (metribuzin, etc.), class 14 (PPOs like Valor and Authority), and class 15 (Dual, Zidua, etc.). Remember that none of the residual herbicides work very well unless activated by moisture (generally 1/2 inch or more needed) before weeds begin to sprout. The class 14 and 15 herbicides have been the most consistent in control of GR pigweed, generally providing up to 3 weeks of residual control.

Be timely with postemergence (POST) herbicide applications. Spraying early with WSSA class 14 herbicides or premixes – Flexstar, Blazer, Cobra (pigweeds need to be < 3 inches for these products to work) has provided the best results in University trails. For Liberty Link soybeans, your POST Liberty application will also need timed when weeds are small (< 3-4 inches). If you run even a day or two late, you may lose control of pigweeds that become big and drought stressed – this is why it is best to use a residual early to give a little more flexibility with time.

Think about herbicide chemistry. Herbicides like Flexstar (fomesafen), and Liberty (glufosinate) generally work as contact type products and have very little movement in the plant. Thorough spray coverage (15 gpa minimum spray volume by ground and 5 gpa with aerial applications) is a must along with small weeds (under 2-4 inches). Make sure to use a spray tip (often listed on herbicide label) designed to give good coverage.

If pigweeds are too big for the PPOs or Liberty to completely burn back the seedling, a live stub with healthy roots will be left ready to form regrowth. If you have LL beans, a second shot of Liberty 10 days after the first shot generally works to control pigweeds a little bigger.***

**Pipe Planner Program Focus**
We are looking for producers to set up a field or two using Delta Plastic’s computerized polypipe hole selection program, Pipe Planner. The NRCS has partnered with the U of A Extension Service to promote grower adoption of irrigation practices to improve water use efficiency this season. The Greene County Extension office recently received a flow meter to use to check well/riser flow rates needed to develop plans listing polypipe hole sizes with the Pipe Planner program. The flow meter was part of a grant award funded by the NRCS. Please give us a call so we can set up a time to come measure flow on one of your fields that is hard to water out uniformly.

We also want to welcome Mike Hamilton, our new U of A Irrigation Specialist. This new position is being jointly funded by the U of A and NRCS. Mr. Hamilton will help train consultants, Extension Agents, and NRCS staff to help implement irrigation tools in this region to help farmers water more efficiently.***

**Yield Contest Application Deadline August 1st**
The Grow For The Green Soybean Yield Challenge will be administered through the Arkansas Soybean Association (ASA) again this year. Producers in Greene County may compete in the Northeast Delta (east of ridge) or Northwest (west of ridge) divisions. They may also enter the Conventional (variety) division. First, second, and third place winners in each division will receive $7500, $5000, and $2500, respectively. Producer check off’ funds are used for the contest. Field entry deadline is August 1st. For more details, contact the ASA at (501) 666-1418 or swsoy@aristotle.net.***
**CORN**

**Yield Response to Foliar Fungicides**

Think carefully before pulling the trigger on a foliar fungicide application in corn. According to Kevin Lawson, U of A Corn Verification Coordinator, in 15 years of running the verification program, and on over 100 fields, he has only had to use a fungicide one time for control of Southern rust. Many fields in his program have cut over 250 bushels per acre without fungicides applied.

Lawson says that for corn grown in Arkansas, preventative fungicide applications are not likely to result in an economic return. However there are rare cases when a fungicide may help. They include years when conditions are favorable for Southern rust, for late planted corn, or for corn following corn in the same field.

Fungicide application should be made when corn is silking. Several fungicides are listed for control in the MP154, U of A Plant Disease Control Products guide.

**Corn at Growth Stage for Peak Demand of Water**

With current temperatures forecasted for the low 90s, May 1 planted corn, beginning to silk, is currently using 3/10th of an inch of water daily. Be sure to keep up with the plant’s irrigation needs as ear development gets under way. The next 2-3 weeks is the peak demand for corn water use where high yields can be made or broke.

Give the U of A online irrigation scheduler program a try to project irrigation timing for your fields. Water use tables are also available with this program which list predicted water use of a crop based upon its emergence date and the expected maximum daily temperature. The online program and charts can be used for corn, cotton, grain sorghum, and soybeans. You can set up a free account at this website: http://irrigweb.uaex.edu/

**GRAIN SORGHUM**

**Fungicide Research Limited**

According to Dr. Travis Faske, U of A Extension Plant Pathologist, University research on the need for foliar fungicides in grain sorghum in this region is limited. It is also uncertain what fungicides may be the most effective for foliar diseases and when to time fungicide applications.

Please let us know if you find any leaf spots that may be caused by a fungal pathogen. We would like to collect tissues samples to submit to the U of A disease diagnostic lab for analysis. We have confirmed sooty stripe on some fields near Stanford. This disease is more likely to be seen where sorghum has been recently rotated on the field.

Considering economic return from using a fungicide, it is more likely in a high yield situation (irrigated, good soil, good stand) when fungal disease is just beginning to form. You may want to check with your seed supplier to see if their hybrids are rated resistant to diseases like gray leaf spot. Finally, make sure not to mistake bacterial diseases and chemical/fertilizer burn leaf spots as fungal disease.
**GRAIN SORGHUM CONTINUED**

### Time to Scout for Insects

According to Dr. Glenn Studebaker, U of A Extension Entomologist, as sorghum begins to head you will need to check it weekly for insect pests. The first to watch for is the sorghum midge. This small fly will lay eggs in grain sorghum when it is flowering. Larvae feeding within individual kernels will cause them to blank. Treatment is recommended when an average of one adult midge per head is found laying eggs and at least 25% of the field is flowering.

Several caterpillars may feed on the developing sorghum heads. For earworms and armyworms the threshold trigger for control is one larva (1/2 inch or longer) per head. With sorghum webworms, 5 or more per head are needed to reach treatment level.

We are keeping an eye out for white sugar cane aphid, but have not seen or heard of any found in NE AR yet. They have been confirmed in SE AR. They can quickly develop to high levels that reduce grain yield and quality. They secret honeydew which a black sooty mold will grow on which blocks photosynthesis. Heavy amounts of honeydew can also hinder harvest equipment.

Studebaker advises the treatment level set for this new pest is when 25% of plants are infested with over 50 aphids per leaf. Insecticides used against most other aphids are not effect on the white sugarcane aphid. Transform received a section 18 for emergency use in AR in 2014 and is expected to be available again this year under section 18.

Make sure not to confuse the white sugarcane aphid with aphids seen on grain sorghum in Arkansas. The greenbug, corn leaf aphid, and yellow sugarcane aphid can often be found, but are rarely of economic importance.***

### IPM Meetings/Field Days Planned

- **July 7th** - Corn/Grain Sorghum IPM meeting
- **July 8th** - Rice IPM meeting
- **July 28th** - Soybean IPM meeting
- **July 30th** - Greene County Extension Agriculture Field Day

These meetings are all in planning. More details on locations, speakers, and topics will be emailed/texted soon.

Warmest regards,

Allen Davis
County Extension Agent-
Staff Chair

Dave Freeze
County Extension Agent-
Agriculture