Arkansas Rice Update

Dr. Jarrod Hardke & Scott Stiles

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DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System

How Much Rice for 2017?

My current prediction is 1.2 million acres of rice in Arkansas for 2017. That's probably more of a ceiling than a middle of the road prediction. We'll hit our head on it if we get there. That is if rice prices stay down and soybean prices stay up – if those two shift much in either direction we'll see acreage shifts accordingly.

Of the 1.2 million acres, I would expect 200,000+ acres of medium grain and 1 million acres of long grain. Of the long grain, probably 600,000 acres planted to hybrids and 400,000 acres planted to inbreds (pureline varieties).

Planting Dates

"Not so fast, my friend!" Lee Corso would say the same about the odds of continuing our recent field progress. Scattered and intermittent rain systems look to keep us in the shop for the next couple of weeks.

At some point we will come out of this rainy spell and get back in the field. When that happens, let's not get in too big a hurry to plant the whole world. The four earliest years of planting progress for Arkansas from 1981 to present have been 2006, 2010, 2012, and 2016. That's a record yield year (2012), a so-so year (2006), and two particularly bad years (2010, 2016). No matter when we plant, the dice continue to roll.

There are recommended optimum and absolute planting windows for rice in Arkansas. These are designed to provide you with the greatest opportunity to achieve success when you plant. The common refrain is "I have so many acres, I've got to start early so I can get through them all." That's like going duck hunting and shooting your gun empty before the birds show up: "I've got so many shells, I've got to start early so I can get through them all!" It usually doesn't work out too well in either situation.

Of course we're talking averages. One or two years in ten you'll be able to laugh in my general direction about how I was wrong, but I'll have been right the other eight times. Remember that Mother Nature is the house and the house always wins.

Wait to plant the majority of your acres inside recommended windows. Once you reach those dates and the short term forecast is favorable with warm soil conditions and adequate moisture, let it rip.

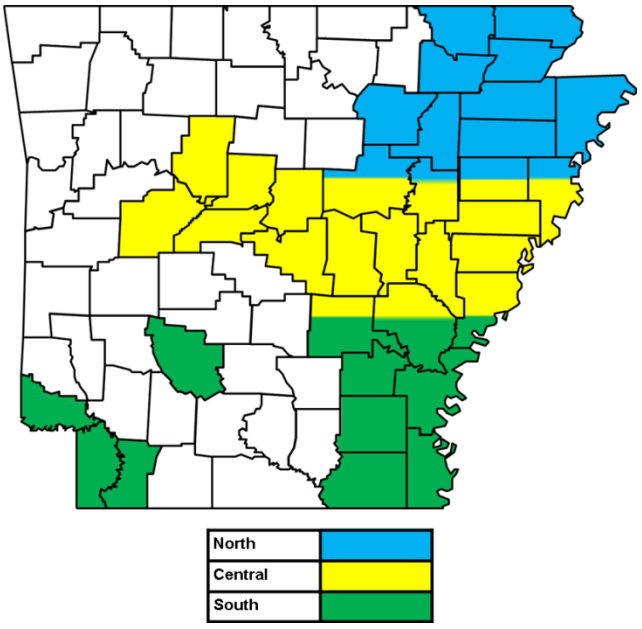
Table 1. Recommended rice optimum seeding date by geography.

General optimum and absolute recommended seeding dates by geographic region in Arkansas are based on yield potential and management considerations.

Geographic Region	Optimum[1]		Recommended Absolute[2]	
	Begin	Cut-off	Begin	Cut-off
North	April 10	May 10	April 1	June 5
Central	April 1	May 15	March 25	June 10
South	March 28	May 20	March 20	June 15

[1] Seeding during the optimum time frame does NOT guarantee high yields or suggest that crop failure cannot occur when rice is seeded during these times.

[2] Recommended absolute does NOT mean that a successful rice crop cannot be grown if seeded outside of the dates listed. Success may be evaluated and/or interpreted using various parameters (i.e. cropping system, cash flow, field reclamation, etc.) and may differ among specific cultivars.



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P and K and Liming

We should still be weeks away from any rice being planted which makes now a good time to address many of the questions coming in regarding phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) fertilization and lime applications in rice.

Yes, timing of P and K applications can have an effect on their utility in rice. Here's the general rule: the closer to planting P and K are applied, the less likely these nutrients will be fixed or lost which maximizes their direct benefit to the rice crop. Applying them weeks or months before planting increases the chances that P is "tied up" into forms not readily plant available, and K may be lost due to leaching. However, research has shown no difference in uptake between fall and spring applications.

Soil tests tell the tale! The lower your soil test levels, the greater the risk of applying P and K well in advance of planting. If you have Low or Very Low soil test categories for P or K, it would be a greater risk to apply the fertilizer weeks or months ahead of planting, especially if you are fertilizing with reduced rates or have not regularly applied P and K fertilizers. If soil test categories are Medium or Optimum, there is likely little risk in applying fertilizer early because we are primarily maintaining soil levels rather than building them.

Lime applications are generally not recommended going into rice. As rice prefers a slightly acidic pH (~5.5), liming generally benefits crops in rotation with rice. But if the pH continues to fall below 5.5 and even 5.0, there may be a benefit to rice from liming.

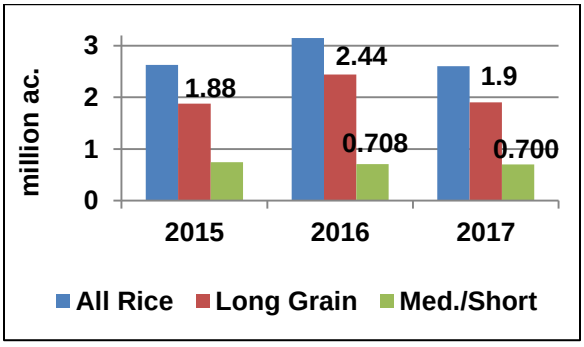
Lime applications are recommended to be made in the fall. This allows adequate time for pH to adjust and time to reduce any "tie up" of Zinc (Zn) and P. In general Zn availability will decrease as pH increases; and the same may also occur with P. Liming in the spring increases the risks these nutrients will be less available to young rice plants causing seedling deficiencies. It is best to delay lime application until after rice harvest. If still considering lime this spring, consider low rates, 1,000-2,000 lbs per year, spread over multiple years. This should minimize negative effects related to liming prior to planting rice. Please monitor the crop closely and be prepared to apply additional P and Zn fertilizer!

Market Update

Acreage Outlook for 2017

USDA's annual Ag Outlook Forum took place this week in Washington D.C. Included in the discussion was an outlook for 2017 planted acreage. Based on current market conditions U.S. long-grain acreage is expected to decline 22 percent to 1.9 million acres; very near the 2015 total of 1.88 million. Medium and short grain acres are projected to decline 1 percent to 700,000 acres.

U.S. Rice Planted Acres.



Source: USDA.

U.S. Long-Grain Supply, Demand and Price Outlook.

Supply:

On lower acreage, supplies are expected to tighten in 2017/18. Assuming harvested acreage of 1.89 million and a record yield of 7,500

pounds (167 bu./ac.), long-grain production is expected to total 141.4 million hundredweight (mcwt.). This would be a significant 15 percent decline from the large 2016 production of 166.5 mcwt.

Beginning stocks for the 2017 marketing year were projected at 31.7 mcwt., taken from the February WASDE. Imports are expected to increase by 500,000 to a total of 21 mcwt. With production included, this brings total supply for 2017/18 to 194.1 mcwt.

Demand:

Total demand is expected to be down in the upcoming year by 3 million to 175 mcwt. entirely on lower domestic use. However, exports of 76 million would be unchanged year-over-year.

U.S. Long Grain Supply and Use (mcwt).

	2016/17	2017/18
Planted (mln ac)	2.44	1.90
Harvested	2.40	1.89
Yield (lbs/ac)	6,927	7,500
Production (mcwt)	166.5	141.4
Beg. Stocks	22.7	31.7
Imports	20.5	21.0
Total Supply	**209.7**	**194.1**
Domestic Use	102	99
Exports	76	76
Total Use	**178**	**175**
Ending Stocks	**31.7**	**19.1**
Stocks-Use (%)	17.8%	10.9%
Avg. Farm Price ($/bu.)	$4.41	$4.50

Source: USDA.

Ending Stocks:

Long-grain ending stocks for the 2017 marketing year are expected to decline sharply—**by 40 percent from 2016/17 levels**. Subtracting projected demand of 175 million from a total supply of 194.1, leaves ending stocks of 19.1 mcwt. This would be the lowest long-grain carry-over seen since the 2013/14 marketing year total of 16.2 million.

Price Outlook:

The stocks-to-use ratio for the 2017/18 marketing year is expected to drop from 17.8 percent in the current marketing year to 10.9 percent; which is also the lowest seen since 2013/14. This outlook would indicate slight improvement in prices lies ahead. The 2017 average producer price was pegged at $4.50 per bushel; up marginally from the current 2016 projection of $4.41 per bushel.

2016 Rice PLC Payments:

Projected 2016 PLC payment rates are provided and updated monthly on the Farm Service Agency's ARC/PLC website at this link: ARC/PLC Program Data
Look under the heading "**Program Year 2016 Data**" for "**Projected 2016 PLC Payment Rates**".

As of February 9, FSA is projecting a 2016 marketing year average price for long grain of $9.80/cwt. or $4.41/bu. A projected PLC Payment Rate can be determined by subtracting the $4.41/bu. marketing year average price from the PLC Reference Price of $6.30/bu. This equals a projected PLC Payment Rate of $1.89 per bushel.

2016 Projected Rice PLC Payment Rates. (as of February 9, 2017)

	A	B	C	(A minus higher of B or C)
Unit: $/bu.	**Reference Price**	**Loan Rate**	**Marketing Year Avg. Price**	**Projected PLC Payment Rate**
Long-Grain	$6.30	$2.925	$4.41	$1.89
Medium-Grain	$6.30	$2.925	$4.455	$1.845

2017 Rice Farming for Profit

Here is a link to the updated and current 2017 Rice Farming for Profit publication.

Additional Information

Arkansas Rice Updates are published periodically to provide timely information and recommendations for rice production in Arkansas. If you would like to be added to this email list, please send your request to rice@uaex.edu.

This information will also be posted to the Arkansas Row Crops blog (http://www.arkansas-crops.com/) where additional information from Extension specialists can be found.

More information on rice production, including access to all publications and reports, can be found at http://www.uaex.edu/rice.

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