Planting Progress

The race is on this weekend. It’s time to see how much rice we can get in the ground before the next round of rain hits. With all the activity getting cranked up today I’ll be very surprised if we haven’t doubled the rice acreage planted by Sunday night (we’re currently at 7% if you were wondering).

Soil temperatures yesterday afternoon were in the mid-70s. Combine that with good moisture and proper seed depth – you’ve got a recipe for germination and emergence in no time flat (Picture 1).

I’ve been pleased to see that most fields that have already gone in and are now going in are getting “finished”. By that I mean seed is in the ground, levees are up, and gates are in. The field is “finished” and ready. Now just get the herbicide applications out before the rain to get them activated – start clean & stay clean (that’s good life advice in general).

If you have rice coming out of the ground already, be prepared to see a little “white ring disease” (Picture 2). Not really a disease, just a condition caused by cool conditions. If you haven’t checked the forecast – low temps will hit the 30s Monday night and possibly have a little frost with it. This doesn’t cause any real damage, it just doesn’t look pretty.

How Late is Too Late?

It’s that time of year – “when do I pull the plug on planting this variety or that?” It’s a question I appreciate people asking and I think people are asking it at the right point in time this year. With the rain next rain coming in a few days, if you want to make changes to your remaining acres you need to figure it out now so you’re aren’t trying to sort it out when it’s time to be back in the field.

The top targets (and rightly so) are Roy J and Taggart. These two varieties are essentially the latest maturing of anything we grow these days. They’re going to finish up 5-10 days after other popular varieties/hybrids.
Advantages – excellent yield potential even to early May; excellent lodging resistance for both – on a scale of 1-best to 5-worst, Roy J is rated a 1 and Taggart is rated a 2.

Disadvantages – they’re later. If these emerge May 1 you won’t be cutting them in August. A complaint from last year was that some folks had issues getting them to dry down late – these two were not the only ones.

Go ahead and dance for now, but be prepared to make some adjustments if we start to get pushed into May.

USDA Reduces World and U.S. Ending Stocks Forecast

In its monthly supply/demand report released on Wednesday, USDA reduced the 2013/14 U.S. all rice ending stocks forecast by 1 million cwt from last month to 27.3 million cwt. No changes to supply were made. Long-grain ending stocks were left unchanged as a 2 million cwt increase in domestic and residual use was offset by a decline in exports. On the short/medium grain balance sheet, domestic and residual use was increased 2 million cwt. This was partially offset by a 1 million cwt reduction in exports. The USDA referenced strong export competition from South America and Vietnam.

Table 1. U.S. Rice Ending Stocks (mil. cwt)

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2012/13</th>
<th>March 2013/14</th>
<th>April 2013/14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Rice</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium / Short</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
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Source: USDA, WASDE, 2014.

World rice production was increased 800,000 tons to a record 475.6 million tons. Consumption was increased 500,000 tons. Ending stocks were reduced by 500,000 tons from last month to 111.2 million tons. World ending stocks are 1 million tons above prior year levels.

Other fundamental news this week included a tender by Iraq for 30,000 metric tons of rice, part of which includes long-grain from the U.S., Uruguay, Argentina, or Brazil.

The USDA began release of its weekly U.S. Crop Progress reports this week. These are issued by NASS each Monday afternoon at 3:00 p.m. central time. This week’s report confirmed planting is off to a sluggish start.

The USDA reported that 15% of the rice crop had been planted as of Sunday, versus a 5-year average (5-YA) of 19%. All rice-producing states are behind the 5-YA, but Texas is furthest behind with 39% of the crop planted versus a 5-YA of 56%. Arkansas was estimated to be 7% planted as of April 6. Based on March planting intentions, 7% planted equates to 106,470 acres.

In the weeks ahead, traders will continue to monitor weekly U.S. export sales. Particular interest will be paid to the results of the pending Iraqi import tender. New crop futures could move through resistance at $14.40 if planting delays continue through the balance of April. At this point, the new crop contracts are anticipating a significant increase in 2014 acreage and a rebuild of U.S. rice ending stocks in 2014/15.

September rice futures have traded this week in a narrow 10 cent range from $14.27 to $14.37 per cwt. Following the USDA report on Wed.,
the Sept. contract settled 2.5 cents lower at $14.30. New crop basis levels around eastern Arkansas are currently in the range of 75 to 90 cents per cwt under Sept. futures. This equates to per bushel bids in the $6.03 to $6.10 range.

USDA is scheduled to release its next monthly supply/demand update on May 9. Forecasts for the 2014/15 marketing year will begin in the May report.

**DD50 Enrollment**

Some changes have been made to the online DD50 Program this year. Hopefully these and future changes will continue to make the program easier and more efficient to use. If you have any questions, or suggestions for improving the program, please let us know. You can access the online program here: [http://dd50.uaex.edu/](http://dd50.uaex.edu/).

**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 jhardke@uaex.edu.

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

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