Crop Progress

“Rainy night in Georgia, Kentucky rain, Here comes that rainy day feeling again, Blue eyes crying in the early morning rain…” That sums up a radio playlist that would’ve been appropriate this spring. Are we having fun yet? Not so much…

Survey says: we were 53% planted as of Monday (Fig. 1). It may still be higher than that, but we’re definitely not much higher. Seeing the rice in the ground up and down the state it looks more like at least 60% has been planted to date (maybe closer to 70%?). It’s hard to believe, but next week we’ll hit May 1.

Rainfall amounts over the past week (Fig. 2) have been somewhat shocking. For most, we weren’t expected to get but a relatively small amount of rain on Sunday. Then it kept raining on Monday and rain showed up in the forecast for Wednesday. Wednesday’s rain turned into a lot and more showed up on Thursday. I want off of this merry-go-round. It’s clear that others do to, and so the calls have turned to rice yield potential going forward as we stare down May plantings.

Fig. 1. AR Rice Planting Progress 2007-2018.

Fig. 2. Rainfall accumulation for the past 7 days (NOAA).

Fig. 3. March planted rice starting to finally green up and show a good stand.

How Long to Keep Planting Rice

The forecast for next week looks better than our recent ones, so hopefully can get in another planting run. Based on questions received of late, folks are clearly thinking about when they might switch from rice to soybeans. Late harvest is a concern as we delay, but what about yield potential? There’s data for that!

If we go through the yield data from planting date studies at Stuttgart the past few years (Table 1) we can see some interesting trends (this doesn’t include all planting dates, just ones of
Arkansas Rice Update

Drs. Jarrod Hardke & Bob Scott

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University of Arkansas, United States Department of Agriculture, and County Governments Cooperating

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current interest). Generally speaking, there isn’t much difference in yield potential between planting this coming week and planting out to May 20. Yes, individual operations need to consider harvest conditions (when and how).

The three years in the table, 2015-2017, give us a snapshot of the range of conditions we might encounter this year. In 2015, we were hot and dry and plantings were relatively late. In 2016, we were able to plant very early, but ran into high nighttime temperatures in late July. In 2017, we planted early and had mild growing conditions throughout the season.

In 2015, our mid-April planting saw yield declines before rebounding to higher yields in early May. In 2016, response was mixed based on cultivar maturity as some cultivars declined steadily by planting date and others dropped before rebounding some. In 2017, we saw a decline in early May before somewhat of a rebound in mid-May.

There is no way of knowing exactly how 2018 is going to shake out. The data says the yield potential won’t change much over the next few weeks, but of course anything can happen in an individual year. Weigh your individual risks related to yield potential and harvest timing/ability when deciding how long to continue planting rice or switch to another crop.

Some still have reservations about small plot data – “there’s a difference between yield plots and whole fields” I’m often told. I readily acknowledge that can be true so we look to add more power to our data – Fig. 4 shows field yield averages from the Rice Research Verification Program. Across 459 fields over 36 years, the story is the same – there is not much difference in yield potential over the next few weeks, on average. Again, anything is possible in one year, but we still have time for success, and in some years, still near optimal yields.

Fig. 4. Average grain yield by planting date – RRVP fields 1983-2017.

Table 1. Percent of optimum grain yield by planting date, 2015-2017, Stuttgart, AR.

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1 Grain yield data from 459 RRVP fields.
2 Day that week begins on (approximate across years).
Where Does Loyant Fit in My Weed Control Program?

Build a herbicide program, then use Loyant if needed at preflood. What that means, is Loyant isn’t going to be the backbone of your weed control program. The backbone still needs to be residual products in some combination of Command, Facet, Prowl, Bolero, Sharpen, and League depending on your needs.

If these don’t keep us clean then we can use other products such as Ricestar, Clincher, Propanil, or Loyant (to name a few). Loyant is a good herbicide that we’re excited to have, but it should be a “I’ll use it if I need it” product, and probably NOT be on every acre in every program.

BUT, if you have barnyardgrass that is resistant to other modes of action or problems with annual sedge, then you might be the exception. In these situations you may need to plan on including Loyant in your preflood program to control weeds you otherwise can’t.

Loyant is a preflood herbicide – we want to spray it and then have the field flooded in 7 days or less (3 days or less even better). It is for post-emergence control of broadleaves, aquatics, and some grasses. It is NOT a residual product. So if we’re getting to flood timing and we’re clean, we may need to apply another residual herbicide to keep us that way, but we won’t need to spray Loyant if the field is clean.

Remember the rate on Loyant is 1 pt/acre + 0.5 pt/acre of MSO. Apply immediately before flood or it can be applied post-flood.

Fig. 5. Deeper seeding depth (1 in.) on some drill sections helped to prevent blackbird damage in this grower field.

Fig. 6. Rice planted a week ago (4/20) making good progress.

New DD50 Program is Live!

Check out http://DD50.uaex.edu for the overhauled DD50 Rice Management Program. You will need to create a brand new log-in this year (no accounts will be carried over from last year as in the past). We have tried to make this version extremely user friendly, but in doing so it is a little different than the old version. If you run into any issue, please call or text me directly at 501-772-1714 or send emails to riceadvisor@uaex.edu.

This new version looks and functions great on mobile phones and tablets in addition to devices.
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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