

# Arkansas Rice Update

Dr. Jarrod Hardke, Dr. Gus Lorenz, Scott Stiles, & Dr. Yeshi Wamishe

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## Crop Overview

No update last week with the Rice College Training and Rice Expo going on. Thanks to all who turned out for those events.

Rice harvest has begun on a limited basis in the south and central areas of the state. To this point, harvested area is too small to get a clear picture of overall yield expectations. Generally speaking, I don't expect yields to be quite as good overall as the past two years and a 5-10% reduction below the past couple of years seems likely. USDA projections released this week forecast Arkansas rice state average yield at 167.8 bu/acre (we tied the record with 168 in 2014). This seems very high and a number around 160 seems more likely – at this point, I'd say 158 bu/acre if I had to pick a number. More on this topic in the Market Summary below.

There is a possibility that we could see some interesting differences between rice planted in the southern half of the state compared to the northern half of the state. With earlier plantings, we generally expect higher yields, but those fields were heading and flowering during periods of extreme daytime and nighttime temperatures. So the benefits of planting early may not pay off this year as they have in others.

Fields in the southern half of the state that were heading from mid- to late-July experienced a stretch of nighttime temperatures at or above 75 degrees for 19 consecutive days with daytime highs hovering at 95 (Stuttgart weather station). In contrast, fields in the northern half of the state were typically behind due to later planting and stayed at 75 or higher overnight only a handful

of days during the same period and never for more than a few days at a time (Jonesboro weather station).

What does it all mean? Only the combine can tell. A very good crop remains a distinct possibility, just maybe not a record one. Although prices have improved, expenses have been high this year and we need a pretty good crop to hold the bottom line.

According to DD50 enrollment, 17% of fields have reached harvest moisture (20%) so far with a large portion of the crop set to get there in the next two weeks (**Table 1**). Of fields being harvested, it's been noted that moisture levels seem to be dropping pretty fast. So, watch fields getting close as they may be ready sooner than you think.

**Table 1. Percent of acres to reach 20% grain moisture by date.**

Date to Harvest	% of Acres
Reached 20%	17%
Aug 17-23	20%
Aug 24-30	32%
Aug 31 – Sept 6	22%
Sept 7-13	7%
Sept 14-20	1%
Sept 21-27	1%



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## Rice Stink Bugs Are Back

As noted a while back, rice stink bugs have been noticed in large numbers in grain sorghum fields. Now that those fields are drying down, RSB appears to be moving out looking for rice fields. Some fields are reaching 40 RSB per 10 sweeps. Keep scouting through the 4 weeks after 75% heading. Threshold is 5 RSB per 10 sweeps the first 2 weeks of heading; and 10 RSB per 10 sweeps the second 2 weeks of heading. After that, the majority of the grain in the field should be at hard dough and past the point of injury.

## Disease Update

**Bacterial Panicle Blight (BPB):** To date, there are no reports of BPB in commercial rice fields in Arkansas. Samples received for panicle blanking all tested negative. Panicle blanking from the samples appeared to be caused by drought stress, insect damage, or wind. BPB may not be detected easily in panicles that are partially blank or if the blank kernels are distributed across the panicle. In the presence of windy rain to carry the bacteria around and dew that may enhance bacterial development, the disease could be more prominent in late-planted rice. Experimental rice plots at Pine Tree and Stuttgart locations have shown low to medium levels of BPB (**Fig. 1**).

**Fig. 1. Panicles with BPB – typical symptoms can be masked by the growth of other microbes.**



**Autumn Decline:** No recent reports. However, crown rot (**Fig. 2**) with symptoms **somewhat similar** to autumn decline was observed in patches in a field of Mermentau. Roots appeared poorly developing while having regular healthy color. Reportedly, the problem areas were cut deep during leveling. Panicles in these spots were blank and damaged by wind. Leaves dried from tip down more likely from water stress (**Fig. 3**). The exact cause for such toxicity is not yet clear.

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**Fig. 2. Crown rot from unknown cause in field spots cut deep.**



**Fig. 3. Panicle blanking from field spots with crown rot. Leaves dried from tip down and physical injury from wind.**



False smut: Yes, temperatures are cooling down. We saw our first false smut (**Fig. 4**) yesterday (8/13) on CL151 in sheath blight experimental plots where seeding rate and nitrogen rate were excessive. False smut is favored by these two factors and lower temperatures than we had in the previous weeks.

**Fig. 4. False smut due to lower temps and excessive N rate.**



Brown sheath rot: This disease is considered minor and usually affects panicles as they come out of the boot (**Fig. 5**). It is more prevalent at the edges of fields towards the end of the season.

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**Fig. 5. Brown sheath rot is a minor disease that affects heads as they emerge from the boot.**



## Weekly Market Summary

The big market news this week was USDA's August supply/demand report and *Crop Production*. Links to both reports are below. The U.S. rice balance sheets are on page 14 of the WASDE report. World rice balance sheets are on page 24 and 25. Information on individual state rice acreage, yield and production projections are on page 12 of the NASS *Crop Production* report.

[World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates Report](#)

[NASS Crop Production](#)

The soybean supply/demand situation may be of interest as well. This month's adjustments to the U.S. soybean balance were a game-changer in terms of how much price upside we may see for the remainder of the year. Record soybean ending stocks on the World balance sheet and China's currency devaluations this week are also bearish for soybean prices.

The rice market's reaction to Wednesday's USDA report was fairly muted when compared to soybeans. Both the September and November rice contracts ended the day 8 cents lower. The rice futures market may be indicating that NASS was too optimistic about 2015 production. Arkansas' projected average yield for 2015 was just 10 pounds per acre less than last year. If traders were confident in these early projections both contracts would have topped simply on the 3.5 million hundredweight (cwt.) month-to-month increase in 2015/16 long-grain ending stocks.

## CBOT Rough Rice futures settlements (\$/cwt)

	September '15 Futures	November '15 Futures
<b>Aug. 7</b>	\$11.43	\$11.70
<b>Aug. 10</b>	\$11.86	\$12.13
<b>Aug. 11</b>	\$11.79	\$12.07
<b>Aug. 12</b>	\$11.71	\$11.99
<b>Aug. 13</b>	\$11.90	\$12.175
<b>Aug. 14</b>	\$11.85 mid-day	\$12.13 mid-day

For the time being, futures prices continue to inch higher. The charts may provide some insight as to where prices could be heading. Included first is the September weekly chart. Of particular interest on the weekly chart is the "gap" between \$11.96 and \$12.17, left back in

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late December. September futures traded into the gap Tuesday with a trade up to \$12.07. This gap is certainly a price range to continue watching for resistance.

Another technical tool frequently used is called Fibonacci Retracements. When looking at the move from the September contract's high of \$14.10 down to the May low of \$9.53, a 50% retracement would be at \$11.815--which has been traded this week. The next objective would be the 62% retracement, which is \$12.35.

## September 2015 Rough Rice, weekly chart.



The November contract is trading well beyond its' 62% retracement of the move from \$13.10 to \$9.78. The 62% retracement objective was \$11.83. The contract has traded up to \$12.34 this week. Heavy overhead resistance may be at \$12.40. Beyond that, there is a weekly chart gap left last October between \$12.495 and \$12.565. There are no guarantees in commodity trading, but markets have an uncanny ability to go back and refill chart gaps.

## November 2015 Rough Rice, weekly chart.



You can access rice futures quotes and charts at this link: [Rough Rice Futures Prices](#)

Closer to home, basis levels have turned weaker as rice futures test \$12. Basis at some locations weakened by 25 cents/cwt. this week. Mill delivered basis is generally 60 to 85 cents under September futures. Drier basis has widened out to \$1 to \$1.20/cwt. under futures.

As for crop progress, extremely dry conditions are allowing rice harvest in Louisiana to progress rapidly. NASS reported Monday that Louisiana's harvest was 40% complete—well ahead of the 5-year average pace of 25% for the week. Local reports indicate yields are "good".

In Wednesday's *Crop Production* report, NASS' preliminary yield estimates are generally down somewhat from last year. Louisiana's average yield was projected to be 150 bushels, which is about 8 bushels less than last year. Mississippi's yield was projected to be down almost 3 bushels from 2014 and Missouri down 5 bushels. Arkansas' average yield was projected to be 167.8 bushels; which is almost unchanged from last year being just 10 pounds per acre lower.

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State	Yield Per Acre (bushels)		Year-to-Year Change (bu./acre)
	2014	2015	
Arkansas	168.0	167.8	-0.2
California	190.7	186.7	-4.0
Louisiana	158.4	150.0	-8.4
Mississippi	164.9	162.2	-2.7
Missouri	151.8	146.7	-5.1
Texas	163.1	177.8	14.7
<b>United States</b>	<b>168.3</b>	<b>166.0</b>	<b>-2.2</b>

Source: USDA-NASS.

Of all the U.S. rice producing states, Texas was the one exception in that NASS projected a yield increase for 2015. The Texas state average yield was forecast to be 178 bushels, which is up almost 15 bushels per acre from last year. Per Monday's *Crop Progress* report, rice harvest is 22% complete in Texas; right in line with the 5-year average.

U.S. crop conditions overall slipped one percentage point last week to 69% good-to-excellent. This compares to 73% last year. Arkansas' crop is rated 71% good-to-excellent, which may explain the strong yield estimate in the August *Crop Production*.

State	Good/Excellent (%)	
	Week ending 8/2	Week ending 8/9
Arkansas	73%	71%
California	80%	75%
Louisiana	59%	62%
Mississippi	74%	77%
Missouri	61%	61%
Texas	53%	53%
<b>6-states</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>69%</b>
<b>2014</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>73%</b>

Source: USDA-NASS.

Of note, USDA lowered the 2014 average producer price estimate for long-grain in its' August supply/demand report to \$11.90/cwt.; down from \$12.10 last month. An official release of the PLC Effective Price from FSA is planned for October 29. **As a reminder, producers need to visit their FSA office to sign a contract to participate in 2014 and 2015 ARC or PLC programs. The deadline to enroll is September 30, 2015.**

#### Upcoming USDA reports:

September 11 (11:00 a.m. central):

- *Crop Production*
- *Supply/Demand (WASDE)*

NASS *Crop Progress* is released each Monday afternoon at 3:00 p.m. central.

[USDA-NASS reports](#)

FAS *Export Sales* are released each Thursday morning at 7:30 a.m. central.

[USDA-FAS Export Sales](#)

USDA-FSA information on projected 2014 and 2015 PLC payment rates is available at this link:

[ARC/PLC Program Data](#)

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The DD50 program can be accessed at <http://DD50.uaex.edu>. It has now been improved for use on both your computer and your **mobile 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 [jhardke@uaex.edu](mailto:jhardke@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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