

Evangeline Ag News

News and information for our parish's agricultural producers and dealers

August 2011

E-MAIL LIST UPDATING

If you have an e-mail address, please call our office at 363-5646, or send an e-mail to me at (kfontenot@agctr.lsu.edu) or my secretary, Susan Fontenot at (slfontenot@agctr.lsu.edu). We will put you on our electronic mail list to receive this newsletter as well as other informational rice bullets that we receive during the year.

Also, this is a very convenient way to send in **DD-50** information and also to receive the printouts on the field.

You may also visit the LSU AgCenter home page at (www.lsuagcenter.com) where you may find information on many different and varied topics. For rice-specific information, go to the following site where you will find current information dealing with many facets of rice production and the industry itself:
www.lsuagcenter.com/en/crops_livestock/crops/rice

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

August 1 Private applicators may apply 2, 4-D and similar herbicides

August 1 - September 15 Commercial Air and Ground applications of 2, 4D containing compounds require a "waiver" from LDAF prior to application.

August 24 Sweet Potato Field Day, Chase

SWEET POTATO FIELD DAY SET FOR AUGUST 24, 2011

The LSU AgCenter will host an On-Farm Sweet Potato Field Day Wednesday, Aug. 24, 2011 in Northeast Louisiana.

The program will begin at the West Carroll Extension Office at 7:30 a.m. and participants will caravan to the field site. The AgCenter office is located on La. Highway 17 in Oak Grove.

Presentations by LSU AgCenter research and extension personnel will include information on the U.S. Department of Agriculture Specialty Crop Research Initiative-funded production research, the LSU AgCenter sweet potato breeding program, sugarcane beetle, weeds and virus vectors.

Participants will return to the Extension Office for a short program and sponsored lunch.

More information is available from [Tara Smith@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:Tara.Smith@agcenter.lsu.edu) or [Myrl Sistrunk@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:Myrl.Sistrunk@agcenter.lsu.edu).



RICE HARVEST UNDERWAY

Across Southwest Louisiana the 2011 rice harvest has begun in a big way. Some producers were harvesting as early as the last week of July, but now in the second week of August, things are really wide open. Yields look to be very good; some are variable ranging from mid 40 to mid 50 barrels per acre. Most comments from producers are that the rice is yielding well. As always there are some lower yielding fields that had some problems earlier in the season. Overall the harvest looks to be progressing very well and fast, with the very dry weather conditions we are now experiencing. Small showers tended to slow things up in the earlier days of harvest.

Some of the factors that could have led to some yield lag include, increased disease pressure, especially with sheath blight. There are some reports of problems even in fields with fungicide applications, some with two applications. High nighttime temperatures and rainfall during pollination periods could also account for some of the differences this year. Before long the later planted rice may show some panicle blight damage at harvest due to the high nighttime temperatures and other factors at flowering. For the most part the harvest is proceeding well, and yields look to be very good.



SECOND CROP OR “RATOON CROP” RICE

Producers planting the new conventional, as well as the Clearfield and Hybrid varieties, should

consider the possibilities of a second crop to assist in recouping even more from their investments in the rice crop. To assure adequate time for a second crop to develop prior to the onset of cold weather, first crop should be **harvested before mid-August**. Normally rice planted by or before **April 15** in Southwest Louisiana has the most potential for meeting a mid-August deadline.

While cooperation from the weather is essential for ratoon rice production, cultural practices play a critical role in maximizing ratoon rice yields. Every management decision in the main crop will in some way impact the ratoon crop. Planting date, fertilization and weed, disease and insect management in the main crop will all influence ratoon rice development and yield. Excessive nitrogen fertilizer applied to the main crop can delay regrowth of ratoon rice. Severe disease pressure in the main crop may cause death of tillers and prevent regrowth from these plants, which will severely reduce or eliminate ratoon production. Therefore, a foliar fungicide applied to the main crop can be beneficial to the ratoon crop.

Field conditions at main-crop harvest will influence whether a ratoon harvest should be attempted. If the main crop is harvested under muddy conditions and the field is excessively rutted, ratoon rice production will be difficult and is not recommended. Excessive red rice in the main crop will also limit ratoon rice yield and quality.

After assessing the stubble to assure it is viable and capable of ratoon production, an application of N fertilizer is necessary for high ratoon rice yields. Nitrogen fertilizer applications should be made to a dry soil surface and a shallow flood established immediately after harvest. This procedure will facilitate rapid regrowth and efficient use of applied N fertilizer. Recent studies with N fertilization rates in the ratoon crop indicate that a rate of 90 pounds of N per acre is sufficient for most commonly used rice varieties.

Dr. Saichuk has said many times, “When the combine is finishing the field, the plane should be

dropping fertilizer, and the well started.”

USA RICE FEDERATION: NATIONAL RICE MONTH SCHOLARSHIPS



Back-to-School plans that include September rice promotions could earn scholarship awards. **High school seniors** who include promotions for U.S.-grown rice in their back-to-school plans could earn up to \$4,000 in the USA Rice Federation National Rice Month (NRM) Scholarship Contest **sponsored by Dow AgroSciences**. To qualify, students must conduct rice-themed promotions in their local communities during September. The contest will take place in the six major rice-growing states of Arkansas, California, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri and Texas.

Three scholarship prizes totaling **\$8,500** are available. The **grand prize is a \$4,000 scholarship** and an expense-paid trip for the winner and a chaperone to the **2011 USA Rice Outlook Conference** to be held **December 7-9, 2011 in Austin, Texas**, for the award presentation. Second Place winner will receive a **\$3,000 scholarship** and Third Place winner, a **\$1,500 award**.

Entries must be submitted by **October 14** and will be judged on creativity as well as effectiveness in promoting rice, NRM, and the importance of rice in the entrant's state.

Initiated by an act of Congress, this September marks the **21st Annual National Rice Month Celebration**.

For more information and a USA Rice Federation National Rice Month Scholarship Program entry form, visit the USA Rice Web site. For more information, contact Kim Broome at (703) 236-1446, kbroome@usarice.com or Randy Jemison at (337) 738-7009, rjemison@usarice.com.

FALL ARMYWORM INVASION IN PASTURES

Local cattlemen and other livestock and hay producers are on the lookout for an invasion of their pastures and hay fields by an army, which is devouring their grass and chewing into profits. This invading force is made up of millions of armyworms, searching for lush, tender, green forage, which they consume at an alarmingly fast rate. One of the best indicators of worms in a pasture will be large numbers of white cattle egrets walking around and feeding on these worms, leading to the joke that our cattlemen have become white chicken farmers.

The main pest in these pastures is the Fall Armyworm. This worm is brown with a black head, yellow stripes down the back and a light-colored, inverted Y on the front of the head. They are usually about 3/4 to 1 1/2 inches long for older larvae and have four pair of prolegs. The coloration of this pest may also vary with the material it is feeding upon. This description also fits the regular armyworm which along with the Fall Armyworm feed on several types of vegetables, soybeans, corn, sweet potatoes and other crops and grasses at different ages and stages of growth.

These worms can produce from 5 to 10 generations in a year. We usually see the most damage from the summer and early fall hatch-outs. The adult female moths may lay up to 2,000 eggs in clusters of 25 to 100 on the blades of grasses.



The **eggs** are round, white and side by side and may be partially covered with some of the scales from the female moth's body which may give them a "hairy" appearance. Moths will also be attracted to lay eggs on white, yellow, and red test plot flags, just as they will on red markers around a football field full of lush tender

grass. These egg clusters are an indication of large numbers of worms to come.

Eggs normally hatch in 6-10 days and the young **caterpillars** begin feeding, especially at night or during cloudy weather. This larval or caterpillar stage is the stage we most often see and also causes the damage to our forages and lawns. The larvae progress through six instar growth stages in 3-4 weeks, with the last instar being the largest and consuming 80-85 % of the foliage eaten during the insect's life. Full-grown larvae then pupate in a silk cocoon, usually under leaf litter or in cracks in the soil for 7-10 days.



The **moths** will emerge from this stage and the cycle is started over again. Normally when the moths emerge they tend to fly northward sometimes very long distances (100-200) miles before they begin to lay eggs. The entire life cycle of the insect may take anywhere from 24-30 days and is somewhat temperature dependent.



The LSU AgCenter entomologists recommend controlling these worms when population levels average 1 per sweep of sweep net or 2 worms per square foot, when checking several different areas in the field. This also varies when this invasion moves from the field to the lawn, where homeowners show little tolerance, and areas to control are much smaller with more intense applications of pesticides.

Pesticide application rates are given at a low and a high range, with the judgment call for the rate being size of the worms, severity of the infestation, and how thick or tall the grass being treated is.

There are several different pesticides that can be used to control Armyworms in pastures, and hayfields. One of these is **Sevin**, which is composed of the active ingredient Carbaryl. Sevin comes in

several different forms and strength formulations, a 4 lb. liquid, 80 % wettable powder, and an XLR 4 lb. formulation. Sevin can control armyworms when applied at the .5 lb. active ingredient rate per acre. This usually works out to 1 pint but can be up to a quart depending on the strength you wish to apply and the formulation. One important word of caution is that Sevin is a stomach poison, not a contact killer. The worm will have to eat the Sevin on the plants before it will kill, so don't be too hasty after application to decide if it worked or not. Give it a couple of days to show some good control. Another note, don't cut the grass on a lawn or shred a pasture right after treatment. Remember the insecticide is on the leaf and the worm has to eat the leaf to be affected. They will not eat cut, dead, drying out grass.

Another pesticide that many homeowners use is **Malathion**. Malathion does control armyworms when used at a rate of 1.5 - 2 pints per acre. It also is an excellent mosquito product when used as a 2% or 5% spray and is probably one of the most frequently used pesticides by homeowners.

Another product used the last couple of years on various caterpillar pests was **Confirm** that has been replaced by a product called **Intrepid**. Intrepid is a biological that interferes with the caterpillar's ability to shed its skin capsule. As caterpillars grow they go through several molts, or skin sheddings, increasing in size with each molt. Once the worm eats the Intrepid, when it molts it will not be able to shed the head capsule of its old casing. As such it will die in short order being unable to form a new casing and also unable to feed. Intrepid is applied at a recommended rate of 4-6 ounces per acre active ingredient. Due to the container size and cost of this pesticide it may appeal only to individuals who have very specifically located acreage to treat. However, it is one of the safer pesticides with regards to proximity of homes and other animals to the treated area.

Other products available at local agribusiness dealers that are labeled to control Armyworms include:

- **Tombstone** @ 1.6 to 2 oz. per acre, active ingredient is Cyfluthrin
- **Permethrin** @ 4 to 8 oz. per acre, permethrin is the active ingredient
- **Methyl Parathion** @ 1 to 1.5 pts. per acre
- **Pennacap** @ 2 to 3 pts. per acre

Another biological type insecticide to use is one of the **Bt Insecticides**, which contain the active ingredient Bacillus Thuringiensis. This is actually a live Bacillus or bacteria, which when the insect eats it, forms an enzyme in the digestive tract and will kill the worm in a 2-3 day period. This is one of the safer pesticides that have been developed, as it is non-harmful to humans, pets, or beneficial insects. There are many different trade names for the Bts such as **Dipel, Biobit, Foray, Javelin, Vectobac**, and others.

As always anytime you use any type pesticide there may be a grazing or harvest interval which is found on the label of the pesticide. For the pesticides mentioned in this article the following Grazing or Haying Restrictions exist:

- Methyl Parathion / Pennacap M - 15 day grazing or harvest restriction
- Sevin – 14 days grazing or harvest on improved Pasture; 0 days for rangeland (unimproved)
- Malathion - 0 days; allow spray to dry before grazing or harvesting
- Confirm - 0 days; allow spray to dry before grazing or harvesting
- Bt Products - No Grazing or haying restrictions

With any of these pesticides remember that the label is the law when it comes to rates and labeled uses.

EVANGELINE PARISH RICE NITROGEN RESEARCH PROJECT; RESULTS OF “NSTAR” PLOTS

**DR. DUSTIN HARRELL, AGRONOMIST
RICE RESEARCH STATION**

This article is from Dr. Harrell, with the results of

an in-parish research project on R & N Farms, with Richard & Neal Fontenot cooperating with Dr. Harrell.

Fertilizer nutrient research trials near Vidrine, Louisiana on land farmed by R & N Farms were harvested yesterday. The rice variety grown was **CL151**. The trials are focused on P and K application rate and timing on both the main and ratoon rice crops.

In addition, a large scale nitrogen soil test for rice (N-STAR) validation trial was also harvested yesterday using a commercial combine. The NSTAR trial had three treatments:

- 1) The normal farmer’s N application rate which was 140 lbs. /acre total which unofficially yielded 45 dry barrels;
- 2) The NSTAR 100% relative grain yield (RGY) recommendation which was a scant 30 lbs. N/acre and yielded 43.5 dry barrels;
- 3) The 95% RGY NSTAR recommendation was to apply no N at all and it yielded 37 dry barrels.

This project will possibly be an ongoing research program both on the Rice Research Station and at several off-station locations in different parishes. With the increasing costs of all rice inputs especially fertilizer, you can realize how important this research could prove down the road to all producers.

Here is another interesting tidbit for you. Did you know that the small plot research combine with a 5 foot header pictured left cost almost as much as the new state of the art combine with a 30 foot header pictured on the right!



If you have any questions, contact me at 363-5646, 230 Court Street in Ville Platte.

Keith A. Fontenot

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