

Field Notes
July 16, 2009
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Over the past two or three weeks I have had several calls and/or plants brought in showing the symptoms shown in these photographs. At first glance one might think it is bacterial leaf blight. I showed some plants to Dr. Groth and he ruled that out. Herbicide injury or salt damage is also a possibility that will not fit all situations. I have begun to believe it is probably a consequence of isolated areas of fields where plants simply dehydrated for one reason or another.

The dark gray to black spots within the dead tissue is from secondary organisms. In the early stages the tissue is very clean; just completely desiccated. I do not like that in many instances the flag leaves are affected, but there really is not anything we can recommend to correct the problem at this point.



We have drained one verification field in south Louisiana and one in northeast Louisiana for entirely different reasons. The field in Acadia parish is CL151 that we hope to harvest in a couple of weeks. The field in Madison parish was drained to prevent straighthead. The land is in rice for the first time and is planted to Cocodrie which is very susceptible to straighthead. As we were checking the field yesterday I split some stems and noticed three nodes. I told the farmer (a first time rice grower) that if we were to drain for straighthead now would be the time. Keep in mind that he had just finished getting a good flood on the field. Suddenly it occurred to me that we had all the conditions for straighthead (land never in rice before planted to a very susceptible variety) and had to drain.

We will solve one problem and introduce others. Our grass control has been touch-and-go all season. We finally were able to apply Clincher after we had large barnyardgrass. With water following Clincher we have kept it in check and the rice has out-grown it. Draining may enable the barnyardgrass to recover. We will just have to wait and see.

Sink bug pressure has been light for the most part. We sprayed a couple of fields and will probably spray a few more. Most of the fields requiring an insecticide application have been north of US 190. I suspect the heat at the critical times kept the numbers down.

I am concerned about the high night time temperatures where rice is pollinating. In saying that I have caused some confusion about when pollination occurs. Most rice pollination occurs in the middle of the day, between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. The high night time temperatures introduce stress which results in either poor pollination or aborted grains.

Next week we may recommend draining a couple more fields – all for harvest. This is going to be a looonnnng season.