Field Notes
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I have had so many calls about fungicide use I decided to add a special edition of Field Notes just to get the word out. I also found out the table in our publication Rice Varieties and Management Tips has the headings messed up. Table 5 provides Dr. Groth's ratings of variety by disease reactions. This happens when the tables are converted, but I should have caught it during the last review and did not. So I have included the corrected version here as well.

When we check verification fields for disease we begin after green ring with fairly casual scouting. After panicle differentiation (PD) we begin to scout more carefully. We walk through the field stopping about every 50 to 75 paces. This forces us to take a random sample. At the stop we look for any signs of disease. If any is found the spot is considered a positive stop. Then we rate the stop subjectively from 1 to 10 where 1 would be only a single lesion or two and 10 would be complete infestation.

As we are walking if we see other hot spots commonly called "birds nests" of sheath blight or any other major outbreaks we note them even though they are not part of the random sample.

When we finish we compare notes. If infestation is moderate to heavy, that is, 3 out of 10 stops are positive and/or severity at the positive stops is 5 or better we know we will use a fungicide and the issue becomes one of fungicide selection and timing. In those cases we are able to go back to the "hot spots" to gauge the movement of disease in relation to the crop without continuing to scout the entire field.

If infestation is light we continue to scout the field each week in a different pattern until we reach the "go or no go" point. If the key disease we are concerned about is Sheath Blight then we reach that point at or just before 50% heading.

With the introduction of Narrow Brown Leaf Spot and the Cercospora complex we have had to make the decision often without finding severe Sheath Blight because by the time the symptoms of Narrow Brown Leaf Spot (NBLS) appear it is too late to apply a fungicide. The time interval between infection and the appearance of symptoms is the problem with this disease.

Dr. Groth's data indicate fungicides should be applied to control NBLS when rice is in mid- to late boot (panicles are 3 to 4 inches in length in the boot). We do not get wrapped up in panicle length because during periods of rapid growth panicles may be 3 inches long in the morning and 4 inches long late the same day. Just use common sense.

We also take into consideration the variety's reaction to disease. For example, the hybrids seldom need more than a treatment to prevent NBLS. Cheniere is very susceptible to sheath blight, but is moderately resistant to NBLS. In the first case we might recommend only propiconazole and the second only a strobilurin.

The active ingredient in Gem and Quadris does **not** control NBLS. It is necessary to use a fungicide containing propiconazole at 6 ounces per acre to control this disease. This is why Quilt and Stratego have become so popular of late; they contain Quadris and Gem respectively plus propiconazole. Using propiconazole requires compromise because it cannot be applied to headed rice. When it is applied to rice in the boot stages it may exhaust its ability to control Sheath Blight if that disease moves in later.

The decision to use fungicide, the combination to use and the rates required is one of the most difficult judgment calls in rice pest management. Too little of the appropriate material applied too early results in money spent poorly and poor results in disease control. Too much adds more to the debit column and wastes material. Application made too late is also a waste of money and fungicide.

Knowing the history of disease on your farm is one of the best means to reduce the risk. In areas of the state where Kernel Smut and False Smut are consistent problems propiconazole containing fungicides are necessary. Careful scouting is another tool that can aid in the decision making process especially if Sheath Blight is of concern. A little luck does not hurt either.

Remember, fungicides control fungal diseases. They will not control Bacterial Panicle Blight.

Table 5. Reaction of Rice Varieties to Major Diseases, Disorders and Insects

Variety	Blast	Sheath Blight	Narrow Brown Leaf Spot	Bacterial Panicle Blight	Brown Leaf Spot	Leaf Smut	Straight-head
Banks	MR	MR	R	MR	MS	MR	MS
Cheniere	S	S	VS	MS	MR	S	MR
CL131	MS	VS	VS	VS	MR	MR	S
CL161	S	VS	MS	S	MR	MR	MR
CL171	MR	VS	MS	VS	MR	MR	MR
CLXL729	R	MR	R	MR	MS	R	MR
CLXL730	R	MS	R	MR	S	R	MR
CLXP744	MR	MR	R	R	S	MR	MR
CLXP745	MR	MR	R	R	S	R	MR
Cocodrie	S	VS	MS	VS	MR	MS	S
Cybonnet	MR	VS	MS	S	MR	MR	MS
Cypress	S	VS	MS	VS	MR	MS	MR
Della	S	MS	MR	MS	MR	MS	S

Dellrose	S	MS	MR	MS	S	MS	MR
Spring	VS	MR	MS	MS	MR	MR	MS
Trenasse	MS	VS	S	S	S	MS	MR
Wells	S	MS	R	VS	MR	MR	MR
XL723	MR	MR	R	R	S	R	MR
Bengal	S	MS	R	VS	MR	MS	VS
Jupiter	MS	MR	R	R	MR	MR	MR
Pirogue	MR	MR	R	MR	MR	MS	MR