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Rice Update
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It seems like I keep on singing the same ole song every week, high temperatures and no rain. USDA reported this week that the rice crop rates as 1% very poor, 8% poor, 19% fair, 59% good, and 13% excellent. USDA also reported that 79% of our crop is heading.

High temperatures have been the case for most of rice through the heading stage. The average high at Stoneville this week was 5 degrees above normal and the average low was 3 degrees above normal. When looking at the temperatures from when we started heading (July 10th) til now (August 4th), we have averaged 3 degrees above the normal high and 1.5 degrees above the normal low. The forecast for the next 10 days calls for excessively high temperatures. I believe these high temperatures will impact rice yields this year. We will not know to what extent until we pull the combines through the field. Many producers have said that they are going to need excellent rice yields and pricing opportunities to help pay all of the bills this year. I am still optimistic that we will have a good year; however, the hopes of record yielding year are diminishing as the heat continues.

We began draining some rice in lower Delta last week. I expect to begin cutting some rice in that area around August 15th.

With the high energy cost this year, I have been getting several calls on how early can I drain rice without hurting yields. It very important that we adhere to our current draining recommendations and possibly a couple of days longer because the current heat and drought situation is expected to persist for several more weeks. It is imperative that rice has moisture til all of the grains are filled. If the soil is dry before total grain fill, the yields will be affected. Therefore, I would drain no early than our recommendation: top half of the panicles are straw color on heavy clay soils or top two-thirds to three-fourths of the panicles are straw color on lighter soils (silt loam and sandy soils).

We have treated for rice stinkbugs here and there. Across the board, rice stinkbug numbers have been low. I would still continue to scout and monitor for rice stinkbugs in case you do have a field at or above threshold levels. Our threshold is 3 rice stinkbugs per 10 sweeps for the first two weeks of heading and 10 rice stinkbugs per 10 sweeps the second two weeks of heading. Four pyrethroid insecticides are currently labeled and recommended for rice stinkbug control: Karate Z (1 gallon/50 to 80 Acres), Mustang Max (1 gallon/32 to 48 Acres), Prolex (1 gallon/62 to 100 Acres),

and Proaxis (1 gallon/25 to 40 Acres).

If you want to be added to my direct emailing list, email me at nathanb@ext.msstate.edu. Also, feel free to contact me at 662-822-7359.