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Rice Update
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USDA at the first of week reported Mississippi was 83% planted and 75% emerged. Rice planting started on the Monday following the heavy rains received the previous week. Progress has been good through the week and will be halted today due to an approximate half inch of rain received last night. Rice that remains to be planted are in areas that have been the wettest all spring. Five more days of dry weather will help get the rest of the crop in ground with the exception of rice that will be planted behind wheat.

Crop condition as reported by USDA on Monday is 1% Very Poor, 3% Poor, 23% Fair, 65% Good, and 8% Excellent. So far this season, rice growth and development has been slow. This weeks warm weather has helped this rice crop tremendously. With warmer temperatures, rice has started to grow at a faster pace. As a result, some rice fields are going to flood.

This week I have been receiving calls on thin rice stands. To determine the actual plant density, I would take random stand counts throughout the field. What I generally do is count the total number of plants in 3 linear foot of row at each random spot on a 7.5 inch spacing that is 1.875 ft² and on a 10 inch spacing that is 2.5 ft². Take the total number of plants in 3 foot of row and divide that by 1.875 for a 7.5 inch spacing or 2.5 for a 10 inch spacing. Plant stands of 10 plants per ft² should be sufficient enough if managed properly. If plants stands are below 10 plants per ft², I would begin at a looking at how big of an area is below 10 plants per ft². If there are only small areas below 10 plants per ft², it will probably be fine and not need replanting. If the area is 20% or more, I would begin looking at possibly replanting or planting more rice into the thin areas.

So far, there have been no major weed control issues. With the wet weather, Command has worked extremely well. Most of the fields treated with Command will get or have gotten another herbicide application before the flood for any broadleaves and grasses that are in the field.

The biggest issue this week has been herbicide drift. As of today, this is not a widespread issue. We have had cases of both Newpath and glyphosate drift. Distinguishing between the herbicides can often be difficult and even a trained eye can be fooled.

When rice is at this stage, the most important objective is to determine what plants are alive. Newpath and glyphosate are very similar in terms of mode of action. In susceptible plants, these herbicides kill the roots to kill the plant. Therefore, when trying to determine what plants are alive, I begin looking at the roots. Roots that are white in color indicate that the plant is still alive. Roots that are brown in color means that those roots are dead. In these drift situations, Newpath or glyphosate can kill off most the roots on the plant and as a result a new root system will have to regenerated to survive.

Most Mississippi rice producers have become familiar with what herbicide drift looks like. However, I did include a picture on the next page for your reference. If you have any problems that will need to be addressed, I will be around the telephone all weekend.

Some of you already know, but I wanted to officially announce that we have a new rice Web site www.rice.msstate.edu. This Web site contains the latest information on rice from Mississippi and other rice producing states. Check it out and if you have any suggestions please let us know.

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.

