



The above view looks like nitrogen streaks in rice, but it is not. This is a field of hybrid rice and the streaks are the result of spray patterns created when Newpath was applied by ground in strong wind. The direction of the streaks is in a north-south alignment which is in line with the prevailing strong winds we have had for the past several weeks. The pattern of any spray device whether it is aerial or ground based can be affected by wind. When traveling with the wind the pattern is of one width then when traveling against the wind the pattern width changes. The result is areas of over application of material in some parts of the pattern and under application in others. Because this is a hybrid variety and hybrids only have one copy of the Clearfield gene, they almost always exhibit some degree of injury symptoms. They usually grow out of it in a short period. This year high winds and lower than normal temperatures the past week or so have put rice under stress. It is my opinion that under these conditions uptake of herbicides is normal, however the ability of the plants to metabolize the herbicides is weakened thus we have herbicide injury. This would explain the wide diversity of herbicides applied, varieties affected and the frequency of calls complaining about herbicide injury. Once the winds subside and temperatures return to normal and permanent flood is established I expect the problems to gradually go away.



It may be some consolation to know that problems do not restrict themselves to commercial fields. Above is a photograph of Dr. Dustin Harrel's plots on the Rice Research Station. The pretty yellow plots are not part of some fertility experiment and are not supposed to be yellow. Both Dr. Linscombe and I have discussed it and think it is Permit injury. We think there is some varietal sensitivity because not all varieties are showing the same degree of sensitivity. We also believe it is temperature related. It appears the problem is greatest when temperatures are below normal.

The photograph at right is of CL111 showing Newpath injury symptoms. This demonstrates that under certain conditions even varieties with two copies of the Clearfield gene can have some injury. The areas affected in the field where this was taken were also associated with pattern problems like those shown in the first photograph.





Last week Benet Augustine called to say he was losing stand in a field where there was obvious digging action around the base of plants. The plants showed chewing injury to the base. When Barrett Courville and I visited on Tuesday, it had rained the night before and was uncomfortably cold. There were no signs of fresh soil movement. We did manage to find a black beetle which I remembered looked a lot like a sugarcane beetle based on literature I had seen. Finding only one was not enough to confirm this insect as the culprit.

The next day Dr. Natalie Hummel went back to the same field. By this time it had dried and warmed up some. They were able to find fresh signs as shown at left in the picture provided by Dr. Hummel.



More digging around followed and they were able to find the sugarcane beetle shown at left thus confirming the problem. She had some voucher specimens with her to compare to those found in the field which made the identity of the pest certain. The bug is about a half inch long, a little smaller than a June Beetle.

According to Dr. Hummel there are reports of sugarcane beetle feeding on rice in Louisiana many years ago. She has posted this information on her insect blog. So add this one to your repertoire. I hope this is an isolated incident never to return.

In other fields damage has been associated with everything from chinch bugs to thrips. Every year there are reports of chinch bug injury; thrips are another story. Last week it was billbugs. Who knows what will be found next week.

In another field checked by Keith Fontenot and I we found this colaspis grub. By the time I visited the field with Keith he had already been there and described the injury as “text book” colaspis injury. The only problem was that they (there were others with him on the earlier visit) were never able to find any grubs. At the first visit the field was drained and dry. When he and I visited a permanent flood had been established. In an act of desperation I decided to try using a weevil bucket and check for grubs like we would for rice water weevils. In the first sample this grub appeared. In all likelihood the grubs at the time of the earlier visit were considerably smaller and much harder to see in dry soil. Because this one is near maximum size we got lucky. I have been told some folks are already using this technique in the field with some degree of success. In either case not much can be done about them, but it is good to identify a problem rather than blame it on something else such as drift.



In our verification field in St. Landry parish we noticed a lot of very small beetles like the one shown below. The leaf blade is of 3 leaf rice so you have some idea of size. I had no idea what they were or if they might be a problem so I took them to Dr. Hummel. She said they are predators and were probably feeding on other insects such as thrips or aphids. The point is that not everything we find in fields on plants are the enemy. As Dr. Hummel said, the use of seed treatments may increase diversity in the field and could be more beneficial friendly. I guess time will tell.



I had a request from someone in the field who had attempted to download the Rice Production Handbook from our web site onto an iPad or similar device. He said the file was too large to download and wondered if we could break the document up into chapters. That request has been granted thanks to Penny Ringe in Baton Rouge. If you go to the rice web page and click on Publications then click on the Rice Production Handbook it will bring up a page. At the bottom of the page are the various chapters in PDF format. You can click on them individually and download them. I tried it this afternoon and it worked. It took a while to figure out how to save it which has nothing to do with the download and everything to do with my state of computer literacy.



While out with Keith Fontenot we came across this relic that brought back so many memories I had to stop and photograph it. It is the remnants of an old pumping engine that probably ran on crude oil. My grandfather had a cotton gin that ran on one very similar to it. I can remember the ballet it took to get it started. Once running it was steady as a rock. Based on the size of this one it probably generated around 50 horsepower at about 100 revolutions per minute. These old monsters had tremendous torque and could run continuously for days or months at a time.