



If you have already seen Dr. Hummel's rice insect blog then you have seen a photograph similar to the one at left above and a better one of the insect shown in the photo at right. Dr. Hummel and county agent Glen Daniels of Concordia parish were asked to look at a field that was losing stand without clear evidence of cause. I mentioned to Dr. Hummel via phone that the previous day Rusty Elston, consultant in Rapides parish had to treat rice for thrips and that they might look for them there too. They did and they found them. The next day I visited the same field just to document them.

On the left is a photograph of the type of damage they cause. Thrips have a rasping mouthpart. They sort of sand off the surface and suck up the juices causing minor damage in most cases. However, high populations in drought conditions can warrant treatment. We have no official recommendation, but Rusty said the pyrethroids work for him. At right is a poor image of a thrip which I used to show the size of this pest. The thrip is the black object above the pencil point.

This is not a reason to go out looking for thrips in rice. We always have some of them and only in rare instances will they cause significant damage. The dry conditions we have had for the past several weeks contributed to the problem both from a stress point toward rice and the lack of other green material for thrips to feed on.

I hope the rain this past weekend makes some of these odd problems go away on their own.



In another field I took the photographs shown above. The soil in the field should appear almost black, but does not because of the heaviest deposition of iron from wells I have ever seen. Even from the road the field looked orange. The photographs do not do justice to what could be seen. At right is a close up of individual plants exhibiting what I speculated is a toxic situation due to the heavy iron deposits. The farmer indicated his rice was up and looked great until he flushed the field. He also said the wells did not produce the heavy iron levels until the Mississippi River rose. He is very near the river.

Because Dr. Dustin Harrell has done some work with Localized Decline, with which high levels of iron are associated and has been able to correct this problem with very high levels of zinc I told the farmer he could try the same thing here. This is going out on a limb without any data to support this situation, but clearly something had to be done or the rice was going to die. We also discussed several options in terms of water use to try to limit the amount of iron being deposited in the rice fields. I hope to follow up on these fields later.

Last week I finally had time to add CL111 to the DD50 rice management program. These numbers are new so let me know if they are accurate for you. One farmer told me he has rice that was planted in March so it should be at a certain growth stage by now. Neither the calendar nor the DD50 program can handle the unusual weather we had this spring. The best thing to do is split stems and look for the growth stages we have shown in meetings and earlier editions of Field Notes. Specifically look for crown node development, green ring (internode elongation), and later on panicle differentiation (PD).

I got a call from a dealer rep this morning reporting he has started picking up armyworms in the Evangeline parish area. Keep an eye out for them especially in dry fields.

Last week I also started getting calls about suspected glyphosate drift. With the wind blowing like it has been I was not surprised. The only reason I probably have not had more calls is because it has been so dry that a lot of soybeans have not been planted thus not as much glyphosate has been applied. It only takes a little glyphosate to do a lot of harm to young rice. In most of the cases I looked at last week I could not be sure the culprit was herbicide drift because the fields were so dry I had to consider moisture stress as one of the problems. In a couple of instances I suggested flushing and re-evaluating the field. If it was drift the problem will only get worse. If it was moisture stress it will get better. Unfortunately, I just do not know a better way to diagnose the problem when there are multiple sources of stress present than to eliminate one before blaming the other. I hope they all recover.

Glyphosate is not the only drift problem we have seen. Newpath drift on to conventional rice is also serious. The herbicide was labeled to kill rice and it does a good job whether it is applied intentionally or accidentally. We all need to be careful and try to be good neighbors.