

Field Notes

August 29, 2013

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On the preceding page are a series of photographs of our Jeff Davis parish verification field at and during harvest. This is the first rice in the verification program this year to have any lodging. Nitrogen fertilization should not be the reason for the lodging because we applied a total of 100 pounds of ammonium sulfate early then 200 pounds of urea just ahead of permanent flood followed by 85 pounds of urea just past internode elongation. The total actual nitrogen then should have been between 133 pounds (if the ammonium sulfate is omitted) or 154 pounds (if the ammonium sulfate is included). The farmers reported the previous 200 acres was completely lodged. In our field lodged rice represented about 10% to 15% of the field. It was extremely dry both from the field conditions and grain moisture standpoint.

Over the 17 years of conducting the verification program I have long hoped to have a year when all fields yielded 8100 lbs/A (50 bbls/A, 180 bu/A) or better. The last six years we have averaged more than that when second crop is included, but we have never had all fields reach that goal on first crop alone. If all goes well we will have four of five fields above this goal. The first field we harvested this year will be the exception. I can only wonder if we had replanted what would that field have yielded. We chose to stay with the original planting despite a poor stand in parts of the field. The chart below shows yields to this point. We expect to harvest our West Carroll field around September 10th to 12th.

Parish	Acres	Variety	cwt/A green	bbl/A green	bu/A green	cwt/A @ 12%	bbl/A @ 12%	bu/A @ 12%
Evangeline	38.0	CL111	87.67	54.1	194.8	83.68	51.7	186.0
Jeff Davis	39.3	CLXL729	87.30	53.9	194.0	86.11	53.2	191.4
St. Landry	52.4	Catahoula	94.09	58.1	209.1	87.25	53.9	193.9
W. Carroll	34.5	CLXL756	0.00	0.0	0.0	0.00	0.0	0.0
Vermilion	17.3	Mermentau	63.06	38.9	140.1	58.98	36.4	131.1

I have had a lot of questions about second crop given the lateness of harvest of the first crop. It is a difficult call this year. Historically any first crop harvested after August 15 is less likely to produce a good second crop than when harvested earlier. However, the past several falls have been mild. So which odds do you play, historical or short term. Tough call.

Some folks have decided to stop manipulating first crop stubble knowing that it will delay the second crop. That is probably a good decision. Others have chosen to flood up, but not fertilize and “take what they can get”. I’m not sure about that one. If it were my farm I would either utilize good production practices or not try for a second crop at all.

In the last edition of Field Notes I devoted significant space to Palmer Amaranth because of the serious nature of the discovery of it in the extreme southern parishes. Later I got a call from a farmer in Jeff Davis parish who said he saw the article and decided to check his fields. He found it scattered throughout his fields. He also said all plants appeared to be confined to the drill row. I feel certain we will see a lot more of it next year.