

Field Notes  
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Our verification field in Vermilion parish is presenting several problems which will make for an interesting and challenging year. It is a field with a history of Newpath resistant rice, both red and outcrosses. It was left fallow last year and plowed several times. This year we water seeded Cheniere. As many farmers are experiencing this year, water seeded fields are being decimated by ducks. Most of the farmers I have talked to say Teal are the primary problem, but in our field it is Black Bellied Whistling ducks. I have never seen that many together. Wednesday morning there were well in excess of 100 in a 40 acre block. Any ridge or edge of the field has accumulated the evidence of their feeding as can be seen at right. One farmer told us that he cannot keep his propane guns going because neighbors turn them off at night.



Last week we were called to a hybrid rice field where there were issues with stand loss. We could not determine any specific cause, but did note the presence of thrips on nearly every plant. While the number was fairly large there presence was not especially alarming to me because I have always seen them on seedling rice. The field was treated with Dermacor which is not expected to control thrips. We also suspected some seedling disease. In the past we planted at high enough seeding rates to compensate for seedling loss, but the low seeding rates of hybrids magnifies any stand loss. Without a definitive cause we could only make a couple of suggestions; apply an insecticide or add some starter nitrogen. I followed up with the farmer who said he chose to add starter fertilizer and while the stand is still thin the seedlings are growing better. Nearby crawfish ponds may have had some influence on the decision.



We have not had to recommend an insecticide to control **adult** rice water weevils in several years, but yesterday we were called to a field where I took these pictures. They were in a field of water seeded Cheniere that was drained, but still damp at the time of the visit. The heavy feeding pressure is very evident as was some seedling disease. The combination of the two was resulting in seedling death and stand reduction. To add insult to injury, the field had been hammered by hail about a week before. It was clear the plants could not take much more. Ironically, the field was planted with Dermacor treated seed which will control the larvae very well while having little to no impact on the adults.

There were so many adult weevils that while kneeling down in one spot I was able to count no less than 5 weevils. We could find them on the soil moving from plant to plant in the middle of the day when they are usually hiding in cracks in the soil. The farmer mentioned he had been under some security lights a few nights before and he had seen thousands of weevils flying around. We recommended a foliar insecticide.

On the next page is a photograph of Command injury to drilled Cheniere. The farmer applied the herbicide himself using a well calibrated ground rig. He was able to associate the injury pattern with the first pass of each of two loads he applied that day. We discussed the situation with Henry Stefanski, the FMC representative in an effort to understand why it happened. The problem likely occurred in the process of loading the spray rig. Command 3ME is heavier than water. If the agitator was not running when the herbicide was added to the tank even though there was water in the tank the herbicide settled to the bottom of the tank where a larger dose was drawn into the sump and boom before it could be mixed thoroughly. Thus the first pass of spray contained a higher than desired dose of herbicide resulting in the injury. It also means the remainder of the area sprayed probably has less than the intended amount applied to it.

Even though there is considerable bleaching, long term consequences are not expected to be severe. We recommended that he keep the field moist, but not establish a flood until the new leaves are coming out green. It also means no other herbicides can be applied until recovery is observed. In this case the direct effects may not be as great as the indirect especially if broadleaf weed pressure becomes heavy before recovery is evident.

