

Mississippi Crop Situation – Rice, May 21, 2009

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After the heavy rains over the previous weeks, the fields have begun to dry out. Now, everyone has been left with numerous decisions to make. Most of the common questions have been involving rice replanting. This year we will probably replant more rice than we have in a long time. Rice can normally tolerate wet weather, but two weeks of wet weather was excessive. Rice that was planted into moisture and had a couple of days before the rains set in appears to have enough rice to make a stand. Rice that was planted dry or into ground that had been worked up before planting is the areas where most of the rice will need to be replanted. Making a decision on whether or not to replant is difficult and there is no textbook answer. Looking back through the data, a uniform population of 5 plants/ft² (3.33 plants/ft of 8" row or 4.2 plants/ft of 10" row) will result in yields approximately 10% less than a stand that 10 plants/ft² or better. Thin stands of rice can yield well if they are uniform and managed properly. A lot of the rice that I have been looking at has not been as uniform as we would like with plant stands ranging from 0 to 20 plants/ft² in the same field.

As a rule of thumb, if you can ride your turn row and see rice down the drill from one end of the field to the other, I will generally keep the stand even though it may be thin. If you cannot see the drill row from one end to the other, replanting will be necessary.

Decisions to replant spots, bottoms or the whole field will be made on a case by case situation. I will replant spots if it is no more than about 10 to 20% of the field. Planting spots more than that will result in difficult management and lower milling yields due to two different maturity dates. On several fields we have recommended planting the bottoms. This is mainly where the water stood for a longer period of time. When replanting only a couple of the bottom patties, the water and herbicide decisions can be made a lot more easily.

If there are several areas where the rice did not emerge, rice replanting will be necessary. In these cases I am recommending burning down with glyphosate at a rate of 1.5 to 2 qts/A and starting over. Leaving a stand of rice in the field and planting into it can result in lower milling yields at harvest due to the rice left out there being excessively dry at harvest. Also, this will give you a clean seedbed to start weed free.

Rice that is planted after May 20th can be variable in yield. Last year was probably the worst case scenario for late planted rice with yields averaging 100 to 125 bu/A. This was mainly due to the wet weather at heading. In 2007, late planted rice yielded well due to the abundant sunshine at heading. Looking over our planting date information averaged over 2007 and 2008, rice planted after May 20th yielded 15 to 30% less. Looking at last year specifically, rice yields declined by 2.8 bu a day from May 21st planting date to a June 4th planting date.

With no consideration to replanting, I would estimate that 20% of the acres are still to be put in the ground. Replanted acres are still up in the air, but it could reach 10% or better. As a whole I would rate the crop 20% Excellent, 30% Good, 20% Fair, 10% Poor, 20% in the Bag.

A late emerging issue is glyphosate drift. I went on a call this morning where glyphosate drift appears to be the culprit and have receiving several calls since then. Do not know the extent on this problem, but be on the lookout. Got any questions, call and I will try to help the best I can.