

# Dry Run Ends For Ark. Farmers Facing New Rounds Of Heavy Rain

**LITTLE ROCK, ARK.**

**S**low moving storms were expected to dump from 1-3 inches of rain in some areas of Arkansas that were just beginning to see floodwaters recede.

Severe thunderstorm and flash flood warnings were posted for parts of northwestern, north-central and central Arkansas by 12:30 p.m. Friday.

At 1 p.m., it was still dry in Randolph County, where floodwaters covered the eastern half the city of Pocahontas.

"We have a lot of row crop farmers in the field trying to replant parts of some fields where water didn't get the whole field, working ground and planting in fields that are dry enough," Mike Andrews, county staff chair for the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture said Friday. "Most are trying to get rice in before the rain gets here and then will more than likely switch over to beans if we get enough rain to keep them out of the field for very long.

"We still have lots of ground that is not farmable and will have to have considerable reshaping before anything can be planted," he said.

In Prairie County, where the White River hit hard, growers got busy on whatever dry land they could find, said Staff Chair Brent Griffin.

"We have made a lot of progress on the high ground in a very short time," he said. "We'll be finishing up rice this week and laying the majority of the corn by with nitrogen."

Griffin said most of the acres destined for rice this season had been planted, but some corn and sorghum acres would go to soybeans. "We're just running out of time."

Watching the skies darken overhead Friday afternoon, Griffin said: "at least it's expected to be a warm rain. We've been so cool for this time of year and waterlogged that nothing's grown - like

the crops are in neutral."

Friday's forecast for the White River at Batesville had the river rising slightly from 10.4 feet on Saturday to 10.8 feet on Monday, but declining to below flood stage by Wednesday. However, the forecasts for Augusta, Georgetown, Des Arc and Clarendon, show the river continuing to remain above flood stage at least through Wednesday.

Griffin said area residents were warned in the last weeks that it might take 30-40 days for the river levels to return to normal.

"That's how it's playing out," he said. "East of the White River, around Biscoe and DeValls Bluff, we have a lot of acres under water.

"The Cache River is deep, the White River is holding up the Cache and water is still coming down from the north," Griffin said.

Parts of northern and eastern Arkansas received between 2-4 inches during a long-lived rain May 11-12.

Jackson County is one of the saturated areas expecting more rain.

"We're a mixed bag," said Jackson County Staff Chairman Randy Chlapecka. "Where the water has been off for several days or more, and in areas that didn't flood, farmers have made a lot of progress and a lot of planting has taken place this week.

"A lot of these fields are actually needing a rain to help with seed germination and activation of herbicides," he said. "On the other side of the coin, there is still significant acreage flooded and some of that may not be planted in anything this year so the last thing those guys need is more rain."

National Weather Service river forecasts can be found at: <http://forecast.weather.gov/product.php?site=LZK&issuedby=LZK&product=RVS>.

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