

Hybrids Provided Benefits In 2010 Over Drought, Heat Stressed Varieties

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Harvest is currently in full force in the MidSouth. Until the last couple days the harvest has been moving along quite nicely compared to an average year, and so far it has definitely been a cake walk compared to last season. At this time, most reports are estimating that Arkansas is about 50 percent harvested, but certain areas appear to be closer to 70 percent done.

We saw last week that Dr. Chuck Wilson from the U of A released in the latest newsletter that yields are a bit disappointing to some. It appears that at this time the extreme heat at pollination led to a good bit of blanking across all varieties and hybrids, reducing yields on fields that appeared to be in good shape. Beyond heat related blanking, the hot and dry year led to many fields having water issues – results of slow and delayed flooding or the decreased ability for wells to keep up with the plants' needs – which

caused major blast and panicle blight issues. Thankfully, RiceTec hybrids are more tolerant of stressors and handle disease pressure much better than most varieties, so hybrid growers have realized some benefits this year they may not have seen recently, at least certainly not to the extent of this season.

Although yields are not quite as high as hoped (and needed with current rice market prices), RiceTec hybrids are still holding their yield advantages compared to popular varieties. The chart above shows a current snapshot of head-to-head replicated trial data for RiceTec Field Yield Trials harvested so far. The data for hybrids are consistent with previous years, but with that being said, we all know that hybrids and varieties definitely have their place on the farm. Hybrids certainly outperform varieties, but some fields still allow the grower to have outstanding yield performance with varieties, typically with more intense management practices than hybrids need. Generally, increased rates of nitrogen and fungicides are needed to bring varietal yields to levels that will allow them to economically compete with hybrids.

From the combine, we have had some customers with concerns on minor diseased patches and lodged areas in hybrid fields. While every case is typically different, we encourage growers to take the time and see what is going on in the fields. A rice crop will take approximately 20 pounds of potassium from the soil. If the soil is borderline for potassium, deficiency symptoms may be more obvious in a growing

season like we had this year. Be sure to soil test fields that are going into rice production next season and apply the necessary amounts of nutrients before next season's crop is planted.

We would also like to remind everyone that September is National Rice Month. This month is the 20th Anniversary since the Congress and George H.W. Bush proclaimed September as National Rice Month, which recognizes the important contributions of American rice farmers in Arkansas, California, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri and Texas.

As part of National Rice Month, we wanted to share some statistics about US grown rice:

- Americans consume an average of 25 pounds of rice per person per year.
- A single half-cup serving of rice is sodium-, cholesterol-, and gluten-free, with only 100 calories per serving.

Conventional Yield Trial Comparisons

	XL723		XP754		Hybrid Rice Blend	
Cheniere	30.4%	10	18.8%	6	34.1%	5
	100%		100%		100%	
Wells	36.9%	5	18.4%	3	40.6%	2
	100%		100%		100%	

Legend	
% Advantage	# of Comparisons
% wins	

CLEARFIELD Yield Trial Comparisons

	CLX1729		CLX1745		CLXP756		CF Hybrid Rice Blend	
CL111	25.3%	30	26.5%	29	31.0%	16	25.6%	10
	93%		100%		100%		100%	
CL151	19.7%	30	21.2%	29	20.9%	16	23.3%	10
	93%		100%		94%		100%	

• Brown rice is a 100 percent whole grain. Studies have shown that eating whole grains may reduce the risk of heart disease and other illnesses.

• The US produces more than 19 billion pounds of rice on nearly 3 million acres per year.

• Approximately 50 percent of US rice is consumed in the US, the remaining 50 percent is exported.

• The US produces less than 2 percent of the world's rice, yet it ranks among the top 5 rice exporting nations.

• Export markets for the US rice industry includes (in order):

- o Mexico, Central America, Canada, Japan, Haiti, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, European Union, South Korea, and Jordan

For more information on US-grown rice and the rice industry, visit www.usarice.com

Lastly, the USA Rice Federation is celebrating NRM by announcing their "Bowl Us Over" contest. Consumers can log on to www.usarice.com/bowlusover and submit their favorite rice bowl recipe for a chance to win prizes, which include up to \$500 in free groceries at any store for the top prize.

For this year's National Rice Month, thank and congratulate all the rice farmers you know for being outstanding stewards of our great country's natural resources and producing such a healthy and valuable crop. Δ

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