

New Rice Varieties, Seed Treatments Will Get Scrutiny In 2009

STUTT GART, ARK.

Farmers are paying more attention to variety selection in 2009 to try to maximize profits. The varieties getting the most attention are Clearfield and hybrids.

Farmers are especially interested in Clearfield because of its high yield potential, according to Ralph Mazzanti, extension verification coordinator for the Rice Research and Verification Program of the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture.

Farmers can compare the yields and disease resistance characteristics of popular varieties grown at various locations across Arkansas by getting the latest "Arkansas Rice Performance Trials" publication produced by the Cooperative Extension Service, he said.

Contact your county extension agent for a copy.

"It includes several promising new varieties, including two conventional varieties and two Clearfield varieties developed by breeders at the U of A Rice Research and Extension Center at

Stuttgart," Mazzanti said. "Their yields look really good, especially on the conventional varieties, Templeton and Taggart."

Dr. Rick Cartwright, extension professor and interim Pathology Department head with the Division of Agriculture, said Templeton and Taggart will be available to seed growers this year, but the new UA Clearfield varieties won't be available to seed producers until next year.

Meanwhile, the extension service has selected 20 growers in 19 counties in east Arkansas to participate in the university's rice verification program. The participants agree to grow rice and follow university recommendations from variety selection to harvest.

"Participants normally harvest 15 more bushels per acre than the statewide average," Mazzanti said. "In 2008, our farmers harvested more than 20 bushels an acre better than the statewide average."

Stewart Runsick is verification coordinator north of Interstate 40, and Mazzanti's territory is south of I-40. Δ



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