

Rice Plants Short For Their Age This Year



Eric Webster, LSU AgCenter weed scientist, at left, talks about his research work at the Acadia Parish Rice Field Day held at the South Farm of the Rice Research Station near Crowley. Photo by Bruce Schultz

CROWLEY, LA.

The short height of this year's rice crop doesn't mean it is necessarily late in development, LSU AgCenter rice experts advised at the Acadia Parish Rice Field Day on June 14.

Johnny Saichuk, LSU AgCenter rice specialist, said many rice fields are already at the green ring stage, even though they don't look tall enough to be that developed.

Rice water weevils are also showing up later than usual, he said.

Because weather prevented herbicide applications, late-season weeds are already being found, he said. Insects, including redbanded stink bugs, are showing up, and fungicides will need to be applied soon.

"This may be the year you can actually combine an insecticide and a fungicide," Saichuk said.

But, Saichuk said, experience has shown him that applying an insecticide before rice heads emerge is a waste of money.

Don Groth, LSU AgCenter plant pathologist, said most rice is more mature than it appears. He said so far he has received reports of sheath blight becoming widespread. "But, so far, we've had a light blast year," he said.

He said the next two to three weeks will be the prime time for fungicides.

The rate for Sercadis fungicide aimed at sheath blight resistant to most other fungicides has been increased to provide better protection, Groth said.

Mike Stout, LSU AgCenter entomologist, said the emergence of rice water weevils was delayed, but he said he has found substantial numbers of larvae.

Stout also said large numbers of Mexican rice borers have shown up in Jefferson Davis Parish, and he said it's only a matter of time before they are found in Acadia Parish.

"If it's not this year, then next year," he said, adding that it's not known what kind of problem the pest will be for Louisiana rice.

Steve Linscombe, LSU AgCenter rice breeder, said a medium-grain Clearfield line of rice is showing promise, and he wants to make it available to Kellogg's for testing. He said a Clearfield Jazzman variety also is being grown in Puerto Rico, and it will be planted at the Rice Research Station this year.

Ron Levy, LSU AgCenter soybean specialist, said Louisiana farmers have planted as much as 1.3 million acres in soybeans.

"We probably replanted more than I can ever remember," Levy said. "We had a lot of fields replanted three and four times."

In north Louisiana, many fields had to be replanted because seedlings could not break through a dry crust that covered the soil.

Levy recommended farmers who are still planning to plant soybeans should use Group V varieties at a high plant population.

Dustin Harrell, LSU AgCenter agronomist, is conducting a study to find the optimum time for planting soybeans in southwest Louisiana. He is also conducting a study with Jeff Davis, LSU AgCenter entomologist, on how potassium fertilizer affects insects.

Eric Webster, LSU AgCenter weed scientist, showed farmers numerous rice plots of herbicide demonstrations with more than two dozen products for grasses, broadleaf weeds and aquatic plants.

Daniel Stephenson, LSU AgCenter weed scientist, talked about his work on the benefits of using pre-emergent soybean herbicides. He said the products can result in higher soybean yields, but rice farmers have to be careful to follow restrictions on when rice can be planted after the applications of some of the products. Δ