

RiceTec Hybrids Need Final N Soon

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The last couple weeks of hot weather have really changed the look of rice fields in the MidSouth. It appears that many fields are growing so quickly that they have surpassed the DD50 estimates for maturity by 5-10 days.

With that in mind, RiceTec hybrid rice customers need to start thinking about the final nitrogen application. Like most years, our field reps have been receiving calls about the midseason nitrogen application. For most cases, we recommend to delay the midseason application until late boot. However, there are occasions on a field by field basis where we would recommend applying the second application at the green ring to joint movement stage. Most of those cases occur when the flood has been lost and the pre-flood nitrogen is not fully utilized. If midseason nitrogen was applied at the early reproductive phases, a later application typically does not provide additional benefit to the grower. For other cases where the growers chose to hold off on the midseason application, our recommendation is to apply 30 units of nitrogen (65 pounds of Urea) at approximately boot split, erring to the early side if necessary.

The hot weather and lack of rain has also put a ton of pressure on growers who are trying to keep fields flooded. Unless the weather breaks soon, this pattern could lead to heavy blast pressure. While our hybrids are rated resistant to current common strains of blast seen in a commercial production environment so far, we still encourage weekly scouting – especially on fields where there are water issues. The silver lining is that so far the weather hasn't been too conducive to sheath blight outbreaks, but be sure to keep an eye out for that as well.

Field days have begun for the season, and we all know what that means – harvest is just around the corner. It won't be long until we begin getting questions on preparing hybrids for harvest. It seems that majority of the rice was planted in about a two week window this year, which means that most of it will be mature and ready for harvest in the same two week window. Everyone needs to begin preparing for harvest now! Make sure your combines, grain carts, trucks and storage is ready for a fast and furious harvest. Be prepared for long lines at the elevator. Some of our products have been known to have grain retention issues if left in the field extended periods of time or if tough storms come through at maturity. Keep in mind that it's a good idea to harvest your hybrids first to help manage any potential grain loss.

The application of sodium chlorate is usually on everyone's mind when trying to speed up harvest. Hybrids are to be managed just like varieties when applying salt. Grain moisture needs to be below 25 percent before salt applications. Due to the way most of our hybrids exert panicles above the canopy, however, most of the time a salt application doesn't speed harvest up as much as with varieties. The main thing to keep in mind with any salt application is to BE SURE the field can be harvested within 3-5 days of application. Dragging harvest out past that short window can worsen grain retention issues as well as cause potential grain quality issues if allowed to set unharvested for extended periods of time.

Lastly, our field day for the northeast Arkansas area will be held on August 12th, at our Arkansas Business Center in Harrisburg, AR. Be sure to put this date on your calendars. We plan to discuss our product pipeline, irrigation practices including rice grown under a sprinkler system, and other management practices. Δ

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