

The Hits Keep Coming

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This year has been one of the most insane on record. Ever heard that before? Each year presents significant challenges that rice farmers are forced to deal with. The year 2013 will go down in the record books for sure. I can't ever remember a

time when I've heard growers yearning for a drought.

Without confirming with the data, it seems like it's rained in the Delta every Thursday since April. Just about the time growers can get back in the fields, the area gets hit with another deluge. Reports of water-seeding and herbicide application delays are commonplace, leaving many folks looking for that silver lining. Excelsior (shameless movie reference to Silver Linings Playbook)!

Take heed; brighter days are ahead. First of all, urea prices are continuing their downward track, which makes spoon-feeding nitrogen in the water a little more bearable. Granted, it's certainly not the most efficient way to apply nitrogen, but in many cases it may be the only option.

Secondly, we do have some very good post-

flood herbicide options out there for both Clearfield and conventional rice. Make haste in getting these applications out as soon as possible after the flood to take care of the weeds as early as possible. In these cases, get the pilots to put the herbicides in as much water as possible to guarantee coverage. Don't skimp on rates as a second postflood application will likely be too late. Also, consider including a pyrethroid insecticide with this application in the event you did not opt for an insecticidal seed treatment. Watch out for antagonism. In many of these cases, folks are looking to mix graminicides with broadleaf products and these are sometimes incompatible. Make sure you are putting the right combinations together to maximize control.

Finally, all these reports of delays and problems in the rice fields are having a bullish effect on the markets. We know of several farmers cutting way back on intended rice acres and taking preventive planting and living to fight another day. We won't know the full effect of these circumstances on final long grain acres, but hopefully by the time this hits the newsstands we'll be looking at CBOT futures well into the \$16.00 range.

Excelsior!

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