

Rice, March 25, 2003

RICE WEED CONTROL TOP 10

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Rice growers are fortunate to have gained three new rice products in the last year. Along with those products come lists of do's and don'ts that can be hard to keep up with. Below is something akin to a "Top 10" list of things to remember. The number isn't 10, but hopefully they are the key points. It's all important, but the bold stuff is **extra** important. We encourage growers to try all of these products and systems. **They all have some very nice attributes, but none of them are stand-alone "Roundup Ready Soybean" programs.**

Clincher kills big grass postflood, but not pre-flood. **Clincher sprayed early postemergence, to dry soil is weaker and must be targeted to small, actively growing grass. There, its activity is very similar to Ricestar.** Clincher only controls grass weeds, so you must do something else for broadleaf weeds. A tank mixture with a broadleaf herbicide is likely to be antagonistic, so broadleaf weeds need to be controlled in a sequential program. A Facet-Clincher tank mix is an exception where there have not been antagonism problems. Many growers will successfully use other broadleaf tank mixes, but you never know when antagonism will derail things.

Regiment controls large barnyardgrass and several troublesome broadleaf weeds in pre or postflood applications. However, Regiment is weak on sprangletop, fall panicum, broadleaf signalgrass and crabgrass. **For effective weed control, Regiment must be used in a program where those secondary grasses are controlled with other herbicides.** As with all herbicides, Regiment requires good growing conditions and may fail if conditions are dry or stressed.

The Clearfield/Newpath rice system is expensive, has some yield drag, requires optimal management, requires rotation to soybeans. Horizon and BASF have been very up front that the Clearfield 141 and 161 lines yield roughly 30 bushels less in an optimal weed free environment and that the systems costs somewhere in the neighborhood of \$10 to \$30 more per acre in seed and herbicide. However, they are right on when they say that red rice reverses the economics and makes Clearfield the clear winner. The Clearfield system has average reliability and requires above-average management. **Water management is key- frequent flushing is required to maintain optimum soil moisture.** The Missouri system of pulling levees at the time of permanent flood needs to be replaced with the Arkansas system of pulling levees and starting the pump as soon as the drill has left.

We've had our share of failures with Clearfield as we have had with every rice herbicide. But we really cannot afford to have failures as that opens the door for outcrossing. Don't plant every last acre to Clearfield. Everything must be done exactly on time including, spraying, flushing, flooding, etc. Be prepared to rouge any escaped red rice plants. **Clearfield Red Rice has the potential to spread every bit as fast as regular red rice if we give the system mediocre management.**

Whether perfect control or failure, it is absolutely essential to rotate out to soybeans. Newpath is likely to carry over and injure conventional rice varieties the second year. But more importantly, this rotation is needed for outcrossing management. If there is an escape and outcrossing event, the soybean rotation will keep it in check. And, remember the big positive: A Clearfield Rice-Soybean rotation is outstanding red rice control system..