

Helping rice farmers predict crop development

By Jay Cockrell, Agricultural Communications Specialist, Texas A&M Agricultural Research and Extension Center

Current low commodity prices and high input costs mean rice farmers must simultaneously cut production costs and maximize yield potential. And, since the average Texas rice farm is 500 acres, producers often face the cost of hiring additional help. Fortunately for these farmers, technology

can transform a farmer's toolbox to include a cutting-edge forecasting machine.

Using any standard home computer with Internet connection, rice farmers can now access a web-based program called the Rice Development Advisory (RiceDeVA), which is designed to as-

sist them in tracking crop growth and development.

Created at the Texas A&M University System Research & Extension Center in Beaumont, the program is user-friendly with advanced options for creating, running and displaying field growth forecasts for different rice varieties in the Texas Rice Belt.

According to Dr. Ted Wilson, director at the Beaumont center, the program is a useful tool for rice farmers, even those with very little computer experience.

"The pop-up menus and fill-in-the-blank windows walk you through in a step-by-step fashion to input all the necessary information," Wilson said.

"Once the raw data is loaded, the farmer can log in as often as they want to check on the progress of their fields."

Based on the variety, location, planting date and weather data, RiceDeVA can tell farmers when the rice is likely to reach certain stages, such as tillering, panicle development or full heading. Since the timing of fertilizer applications for rice production is so critical, the RiceDeVA can be like another pair of eyes in the field, alerting farmers to apply nitrogen for maximum effectiveness.

For added flexibility, RiceDeVA allows farmers to choose weather station data or add in their own data from personal weather stations on their farms.

Scientists at the Beaumont center have gone a step further and are work-

ing to help farmers predict crop yields. The team is currently developing a Web-based version of the Rice Cultivar Selection Program (RiceCSP), which has been proven to accurately predict rice crop growth stages and crop yields.

It accounts for changes in crop development due to temperatures, rainfall, solar radiation, soil type, fertilizer application, water management, plant-

ing density, row spacing and other factors. RiceCSP, which is scheduled for release in spring 2006, will give more options to users to manage and predict their rice crops.

According to Wilson, the team is just gearing up.

"As we continue to increase our knowledge and understanding of the rice cropping system through our research, we are also realizing the in-

creasing importance of extracting and integrating knowledge in agronomy, physiology, ecology, entomology and economics into a system that is user-friendly and easily accessible," Wilson said.

"Such an integrated system would greatly help rice producers and consultants in managing their crop production" For more information, go to beaumont.tamu.edu/RiceDeVA.

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Rice CISD Dress Code

The District's dress code is established to value grooming and hygiene as a means to ensure personal safety and to prevent academic disruption or interruption. Students should learn to dress appropriately for the school/work environment. Given that school is the students' workplace, they are expected to dress in a way appropriate to that environment. Parents are asked to assist administrators and faculty in keeping with dress code policy to minimize disciplinary actions against such violations.

All students should be well groomed with daily personal hygiene habits.

CLOTHING

• Should be appropriate in size to cover undergarments, midriff, chest, back, and upper-thighs.

• Clothing and accessories with suggestive symbols, writing, or subliminal messages are considered a personal safety hazard and disruptive to the learning environment and therefore not permitted.

HAIR

• Abnormal hair color or hairdo is prohibited.

• Hair may not cover the eyes.

BOYS

• All pants and shorts must be worn above the top of the buttocks.

• Pants legs may not drag on the floor.

• Shirts may be worn untucked but must not extend below the bottom of the buttocks.

• No tank tops, basketball jerseys (unless worn over a T-shirt), or muscle shirts.

• No earrings.

• Facial hair must be shaved at all times.

• Sideburns are allowed but cannot extend below the bottom of the earlobe.

• Hair must not be bound in a ponytail. Rubber bands and ties on braids must match hair color.

GIRLS

• Pant legs may not drag on the floor.

• No slits in skirts allowed if higher than the longest finger when standing erect.

• Midriffs and crop tops which allow for exposure of skin at any time in the mid section are not allowed.

• Sleeveless shirts are allowed but must be evenly cut from the arm pit around the top of the shoulder.

• Hair rollers are not permitted.

• Earrings allowed in ears only.

• Shirts may be worn untucked but must not extend below the bottom of the buttocks.

MISCELLANEOUS PROHIBITED ITEMS

• Torn or see-through clothing.

• Clothing with suggestive writing, pictures, emblems, or symbols.

• Dark glasses or sunglasses.

• Caps, hats, or bandanas.

• House shoes, sleep wear, or beach sandals.

• Any clothing that the administration determines is inappropriate.

• Cutoffs, spandex and pajamas.

• Bare feet.

• Rakes, picks, or grooming combs may not be worn in hair.

The campus principal shall have the final say so in all matters relating to the dress code.

The District Dress Code may be found in the Rice CISD District Student Handbook. The Rice CISD District Student Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct may be viewed on the Rice CISD website at www.riceisd.org.

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July 22, 2004 Report

Animals on hand: cattle, 1885; seven goats. Sellers: 333.

Packer cows: higher dressing utility & cutter cows, 58-66 per lbs.; lower dressing utility & cutter cows, 50-57 per lbs.; thin cows, 42-49.

Packer bulls: heavyweight bulls 76-82; utility cutter bulls, 66-74. Head tested: 256.

Stocker/Feeder Calves/Yearlings: Steers #1: 200-300 lbs., \$1.65-1.85; 300-400 lbs., \$1.40-1.65; 400-500 lbs., \$1.25-1.39; 500-600 lbs., \$1.15-1.25; 600-700 lbs., \$1.08-\$1.18; 700-800 lbs., 99¢-1.07.

Steers #2: 200-300 lbs., \$1.45-1.63; 300-400 lbs., \$1.28-1.40; 400-500 lbs., \$1.12-1.24; 500-600 lbs., \$1.06-1.16; 600-700 lbs., \$98-\$1.07; 700-800 lbs., 89-98¢.

Heifers #1: 200-300 lbs., \$1.50-1.75; 300-400 lbs., \$1.28-1.40; 400-500 lbs., \$1.18-1.28; 500-600 lbs., \$1.10-1.20; 600-700 lbs., \$1.00-1.10; 700-800 lbs., 90¢-1.00.

Heifers #2: 200-300 lbs., \$1.30-1.45; 300-400 lbs., \$1.18-1.27; 400-500 lbs., \$1.08-1.17; 500-600 lbs., \$1.00-1.09; 600-700 lbs., 92-99¢; 700-800 lbs., 80-89¢.

Good stocker cow/calf pairs, \$850-1000 by the head; medium cow/calf pairs, \$755-845; common cow/calf pairs, \$675-770; good stocker cows & heifers, \$750-875; medium stocker cows & heifers, \$625-725.