



Pictured above are Johnny Prazak and Barbara Class under the Eagle Lake Community Center Pavilion at the Farmer's Market held on Thursday, June 14.

Rice Field Day Set For June 26

The 33rd Annual Rice Field Day at the Eagle Lake Research Station will be held Tuesday June 26 starting at 4 p.m. Farmers, researchers and other industry representatives are encouraged to come and learn the latest information in rice research from Texas A&M and USDA scientists.

Field Day activities will begin with a tour of the research plots, with water and sodas provided. The tours are on covered trailers, and generally run about 45 minutes.

The tour will begin with Dr. Garry McCauley, who will discuss Clearfield Hybrid rice evaluations. Since hybrids were first introduced the yield and grain quality has been greatly improved. The improved hybrid lines have resulted in an increase in acreage. This study is conducted each year at three locations to evaluate the performance of select Clearfield varieties and conventional varieties.

Numerous plant characteristics will be recorded for each entry including main and ratoon crop performance, yield and milling quality. This year's test includes 3 Clearfield hybrids, 2 conventional hybrids, 2 Clearfield varieties, 4 conventional long grain varieties, and 1 conventional long grain experimental line.

The hybrid advantage was considerably less in 2006. In prior years, XL-723 out yielded Cocodrie by 1301 dry pounds per acre and CL XL-730 out yielded CL-161 by 2092 dry pounds per acre.

Sam Willingham, a graduate student of Dr. Mike Chandler and Dr. Garry McCauley, will be next on the tour and will speak about new Clearfield varieties.

Previous research has indicated that first generation Clearfield varieties displayed minimal tolerance to Newpath, but that second generation hybrids displayed increased tolerance.

As new varieties are developed, research on herbicide tolerance continues to be important. This year, five varieties, CL-XL745, CL-XL730, CL-XL729, CL171-R, and CL161 are being studies for

their tolerance to increasing rates of Newpath.

Beyond herbicide is an effective tool for removal of late-emerging or previously missed red rice in Clearfield rice fields following two applications of Newpath.

Research has shown that reduction in rice yield can occur when Beyond is applied after panicle initiation. Currently, Willingham and his professors are testing new and existing varieties for tolerance to Beyond when applied at various growth stages.

Next on the tour is Dr. Anna McClung speaking about varietal improvement progress and potential releases. The USDA-ARS and Texas A&M breeding programs conduct yield trials at Beaumont, Eagle Lake, and Ganado to assess how experimental lines perform across a diversity of environments. This year over 100 selections from the breeding programs are being evaluated in the Western Area.

Although the majority of these are being developed for the conventional long grain white milled rice market, there are number of selections that are being tested for specialty markets. These include aromatics, pigmented rice, waxy rice for the ingredients industry, and superior parboiling and processing rice cultivars.

In addition, several varieties that have very high yield potential (similar to that observed for hybrids), but low milling quality, are being evaluated for use in the rice flour market. An overview of the yield and market potential of these breeding lines will be presented at the field day.

Dr. M.O. Way will be the final stop on the tour, discussing recent and future regulatory actions concerning Trebon3G, a granular formulation for treating rice water weevils. His project is conducting research this season to determine the best timing for pre-flood and post flood applications.

Way will also share information on promising Icon seed treatment replacements for the rice water weevil. In addition, he will

discuss insecticides and economic threshold issues relative to the rice stink bug.

The evening meal and program will follow the field tours and will begin around 6:30 p.m. The dinner is catered by Austin's barbecue, and funded courtesy of BU Growers, a limited partnership business specializing in seed rice production, drying & storage, and rice brokering. Based in Bay City, BU Growers has sponsored the Eagle Lake and Beaumont field days since the company's inception in 1989.

The evening program will feature State Representative Robby Cook who will discuss water issues. Said Cook, "Water will continue to be one of the most important issues that agriculture will face in the future."

As urban areas continue to grow, so will their needs and demands for water. We need to continue to protect our water resources in the rural areas of the state to protect our rural economies.

El Campo rice farmer L.G. Raun, will also give a presentation addressing the Farm Bill, and discuss where we are in the process of creating and passing a new bill thru Congress.

He will describe the process, the various titles of the Farm Bill, and the beginning challenges of funding due to the budgeting process. Raun will then describe our rice industry position and other commodity positions, the differences of the Chairmen and Ag committees in the House and Senate. He will finish by forecasting options and time lines for concluding the next Farm Bill.

CEU hours will be given to those on the field tour. Anyone interested in rice research and production is encouraged to attend. For more information contact Coleen Meitzen at 979-234-3578 or Brandy Morace at 409-752-2741 ext 2227.

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Prairie Chicken Refuge Gets Aid

The Great Outdoors has always lured people for a variety of reasons. But more and more young people are heading to places like Attwater Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge (APCNR) because it's the right thing to do.

They want to give back to the environment while exploring possible careers in conservation. Stacie Cossel, an intern with the Student Conservation Association (SCA), recently arrived as a volunteer from Tucson, Arizona to assist with conservation efforts to help save the endangered Attwater's Prairie Chicken.

As needs outpace budgets on America's public lands, the efforts of SCA volunteers have become essential. Some 45,000 young people have volunteered through SCA since 1957, and National Park Service Director Fran Minella recently stated that "we can't do without SCA." The energy and idealism of the volunteers allows federal and state land-management agencies, as well as non-profit organizations to meet the needs of the public in ways which wouldn't otherwise be possible. Cossel, 22, is serving at APCNR in order to make a meaningful contribution to its environment.

"The conservation efforts of the APCNR are key to the management and survival of endangered species, including the Attwater's Prairie Chicken," says Cossel. "I hope to help the refuge meet their objectives while gaining skills and experience to pursue a career in wildlife biology."

SCA members learn a 'conservation ethic' through their hands-on service, and it benefits both the land and the individual.

The experience leads many of them to become lifelong stewards of the land, and 60% of SCA interns go on to successful careers in many areas of conservation.

The Student Conservation Association is dedicated to encouraging a new generation of conservation leaders, advancing the land ethic, and helping to conserve our nation's natural and cultural resources.

The organization places nearly 3000 high school, college, and

graduate student members in the field each year, and they provide more than 1.5 million hours of conservation service in national parks, forests and public lands.

For more information, contact Kevin Hamilton at 603-543-1700, extension 185, or at khamilton@theSCA.org or visit the website at www.theSCA.org.

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Milk Production Down Slightly During May

Texas milk production totaled 649 million pounds during May, down slightly from last year's production of 651 million pounds.

April 2007 production totaled 645 million pounds.

The number of milk cows during May averaged 347,000 head, up 14,000 head from last year and the same as the April 2007 number.

Production per cow averaged 1,870 pounds during May, 85 pounds less than last year.

Milk production in the 23 states participating in the monthly sur-

vey totaled 14.9 billion pounds, up 1.1 percent from production in these same states in May 2006.

April revised production, at 14.5 billion pounds, was up 1.7 percent from April 2006.

Production per cow during May averaged 1,795 pounds, 13 pounds above a year ago.

The average number of milk cows in the 23 states was 8.28 million head, 26,000 head more than last year and 3,000 head more than April 2007.

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