

The most common call I have had in the past several days has regarded the purplish discoloration of grains in rice nearing maturity. Anthocyanin pigments are the pigments in plants responsible for most of the red or red related colors like the purplish grains folks are asking about. These pigments often show up whenever a plant is under stress or maturing and dying such as the leaves of trees in the fall. In rice we see these purplish tinted grains every year, sometimes with greater frequency than others. Worry about something else because this is relatively normal usually reflecting wind damage or rain or just stress on that panicle for some reason. If the color was more of a chocolate brown and the panicle branches were still green then that is probably panicle blight and something to worry about.

The second most common call has been in reference to draining. This was especially true last week when lots of farmers were getting nervous about hurricane Dennis. Regardless of the urge to drain early we have found in our verification studies the longer we can keep rice alive the better it will yield and the better it will mill. Nothing official and no replicated small plot studies have been done to verify this, but just observation in verification fields. If the soil type is light textured (silt loam for example) and the field drains well we locate an area of the field we think is representative of the whole field, then look at selected panicles in this area. When each panicle is straw colored from the tip back about $\frac{2}{3}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of its length we recommend draining. If the field drains poorly or the soil texture is heavy (clay or clay loam) then we do the same thing except we recommend draining when about $\frac{1}{2}$ of the panicle is straw colored. In some cases we tell the farmer just to stop adding any water so we use as much as possible without losing some in the drain.



Last week I mentioned water of guttation, but did not have a photograph of it. This morning I shot the above photograph. The droplet has already begun to slide down the margin of the plant so is not at the leaf tip, but it is water of guttation.

Tuesday, Dr. Boris Castro accompanied us to three verification fields. One of them was the one that had blister beetles in it last week. They were still in the field. According to Dr. Castro the beetles were feeding on the anthers that were hanging out of the already closed spikelets. We speculated that if the pollen is already shed and pollination had already taken place they could do not harm, but if they fed in large numbers on anthers that had not yet shed their pollen it could be a problem. We did not recommend spraying and will keep an eye on them.

I have also received phone calls regarding tip burn. Usually the caller reports he only has it in one variety, but I have heard about it in all varieties. It is possible the reason it may be restricted to one field or one area is because it is likely an environmentally related phenomenon only affecting fields at certain stages of development.

One of the following photographs shows a blister beetle in rice and the other tip burn in XP 723. Interestingly, the leaves with tip burn were the uppermost leaves last week, however the newest leaves this week are clean. That again signals environmental effects. If Dr. Groth recovers anything from the leaves we brought to him last week we will let you know.



We expected stinkbug numbers to go up from last week to this week, but were surprised to find lower numbers in every verification field. We don't know why, however we and the farmers are thankful for one less expense.

Several folks have called to ask if they should apply fungicides to fields in which they cannot find disease just as a "yield or milling enhancer." Dr. Groth has repeatedly demonstrated fungicides are **NOT** yield enhancers. Fungicides are of benefit only when disease is present. We have proven this in our verification fields over the past several years. If we don't find disease we don't spray. This is why scouting is so important in disease management.