



Clearfield® Rice Variety Advancements Set Stage for Enhanced Production in 2018 and Beyond

Continuing advancements in Clearfield® rice breeding are benefiting farmers as they prepare to plant the 2018 crop and will do so for seasons to come, according to Dr. Steve Linscombe, director of The Rice Foundation, speaking at the 21st Annual National Conservation Systems Cotton and Rice Conference.

Dr. Linscombe, who recently retired as senior rice breeder from the Louisiana State University AgCenter, told attendees at the conference that recent varietal improvements address a range of grower needs, from higher yields to grain quality to enhanced agronomic characteristics.

In addition, farmers will have a chance to try the first Provisia™ rice variety in 2018 and the Provisia Rice System, which will complement the Clearfield Production System for rice. Farmers also will have an opportunity to monitor the development of a Clearfield jasmine rice variety advancing in tests at LSU.

“The breeding improvements that have been made are continuing to represent significant advancements for farmers and the rice industry,” said Dr. Linscombe. “For instance, Horizon Ag’s CL172 is an extremely high-quality variety, probably as good or better than the old Cypress variety, which was the quality standard for many, many years. Actually, it looks like CL172 is slowly getting us back in the Nicaraguan market, which we pretty much lost because of quality issues over the last several years.”

Another popular Clearfield variety, CL163, is taking the place of some older high-amylose-content varieties. Some of these high-amylose-content varieties are grown under contract for Mars and other companies because of their excellent cooking qualities, said Dr. Linscombe. And while Horizon Ag variety CL151 has been a mainstay on Southern rice acres for several years due to its strong yield potential, CL153 is a newer line developed to address some of the shortcomings of CL151.

“We released CL153 to address issues with CL151 like blast susceptibility and lodging,” said Dr. Linscombe. “CL153 has much better blast resistance, much better grain quality, a very nice, clear grain,

and will stand up better than CL151. The yield numbers are close, within a barrel or two in south Louisiana, so it's very competitive.”



Southern rice farmers who want to plant a medium-grain variety can go with CL272 from Horizon Ag, which Dr. Linscombe described as having very good yield potential, milling quality and appearance. He noted that medium-grain rice varieties in the South “live and die by Kellogg’s approval, and we’ve been working with Kellogg’s for a number of years to get this variety approved.” CL272 recently received a very favorable result in tests at the company. “Next, Kellogg’s will run it through one of its puffing plants for about a month, and then we’ll know if they give it final approval. We’re hopeful that’s going to happen and, if it does, it is going to be very good to have a Kellogg’s-approved Clearfield medium-grain variety available to our farmers.”

Breeding work in Louisiana also is progressing with the advancement of a Clearfield jasmine-type rice variety, which Dr. Linscombe described as having good whole-grain milling yields, outstanding grain appearance, low chalk and good grain length. “We have been trying to develop a Clearfield jasmine for a long time, and we think this is going to be a very good addition to the Clearfield lineup, as well as a great addition to the specialty varieties available,” he said. “It’s got very good yield potential, approaching some of our non-specialty varieties and much better than the most widely-grown jasmine-type variety. We have let several of the mills that work with jasmine types evaluate it and everything has come back extremely positive.”

In addition to the Clearfield variety lineup, Dr. Linscombe also said farmers who have lost productive fields due to weedy rice will welcome the launch of Provisia rice and variety PVL01 from Horizon Ag. He said it has the characteristics to be a good introductory variety for the Provisia Rice System.

“One thing it does have going for it is extremely good grain quality,” he said. “As far as grain length, it is the longest long grain we have out there—about 7.2 millimeters. We have some markets that are pretty demanding on specific grain length. For instance, Iraq typically prefers a grain length above 7.0 millimeters, so we think this is a plus for this line.” There also are several promising Provisia variety candidates being looked at closely by breeders that will likely offer higher yield potential and good grain quality in the near future, he said.

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