



Texas Rice

Texas A&M University System
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Beaumont Center Endowment Honors Bill Dishman Sr.

The Texas A&M Research and Extension Center in Beaumont has been the beneficiary of many generous gifts over the course of its history. In fact, these donations, given in large part by rice producing families, have made a tremendous impact on the quality of research conducted by Texas A&M and USDA scientists in the area of rice improvement. Recently the Dishman

family announced a generous endowment award in honor of Bill Dishman Sr., that will further the Center's important research.

The Dishman family history in Southeast Texas traces back to the early 1900's when J. A. Dishman bought 100 acres of land in the small community of Amelia. To help finance the farm he had a mule team for hire, and worked pulling rigs in the local oil fields. J. A. was part of the historic event at Spindletop, which launched the oil industry in Texas. But farming was his life, and through his three sons - George, Clyde and Herbert, J.A. began a tradition that continues on today.

The family was always on the leading edge of innovation. George Sr. was the first producer on the east side to plant rice with an airplane,



Three generations of the Dishman family. From L to R: Hillary, Blain, Casey, Ford, Bill Jr. and Bill Dishman Sr.

to use a combine for harvest, and build a commercial rice dryer in the Beaumont area.

In 1960, George's youngest son, Bill Sr., formed a partnership with his first cousin Gene and they took over management of the Nome and China properties purchased by J.A.'s three sons back in the late 40's. Bill Sr., Gene and Bill Jr. still farm in partnership on 2000 acres in Jefferson County.

When asked what moved him to such an active role in the Texas rice industry, Bill Sr. credits an early friendship with Jim Stansel. Back in 1956, Bill Sr. had just finished his tour in the army and was attending college at the University of Houston. It was there he met his wife Martha, and they were married while still in school. After Bill finished his BS in Geology he

planned to go on to graduate school, but a call from home that his uncle had suffered a heart attack brought him back to help out on the family farm. They rented a small house in Beaumont, where a mutual friend introduced him to his neighbor Jim Stansel. As Bill and Jim became acquainted, they realized they had actually served together in the army, and found many other points of

common interest - namely rice. It was through Jim Stansel's encouragement that Bill became an active leader in the rice industry here in Texas.

Today, Bill Sr. serves on the board of the Texas Rice Improvement Association, the Texas Rice Research Foundation, as well as the Texas Rice Producers Board. Over the past 40 years, his leadership and support has played a valuable role in the industry's success.

It is with sincere appreciation that we extend our thanks to the Dishman family for all they have done over the years to benefit the Beaumont Center. And now as we enter a new era, the Dishman Family Endowment will further the efforts that J.A. began over a century ago. *

From the Editor...



This issue of *Texas Rice* coincides with the 57th Beaumont Field Day, which will be held on July 8 at the Beaumont Agricultural Research and Extension Center. For the field tour, we will be trying something a little bit different from what we have done in the past. Instead of having the trailers stop at six locations in the field, with one of our scientists at each location, the trailers will make three field stops with two researchers at each stop. This year's field speakers are Anna McClung and Dante Tabien (rice plant breeding), Fred Turner and Lee Tarpley (agronomy and plant physiology), and Mo Way and Joe Krausz (entomology and plant pathology). When each trailer returns from the field, it will stop and drop interested guests off at the auditorium to hear presentations by Shannon Pinson and Bob Fjellstrom (rice genetics and rice molecular biology).

The morning program will lead off with an awards ceremony honoring both Bill Dishman Sr. and Ed Hiler. Bill will be honored for his years of service to the Beaumont Center and the Texas rice industry. Bill is quite active within the Texas rice industry and has long been an unselfish supporter of the Center. Largely through Bill's efforts, the Center recently received an endowment, which will allow the Center to expand its research into badly needed areas. This issue of *Texas Rice* highlights contributions by the Dishman family to the Texas Rice industry.

The ceremony honoring Bill will be followed by an awards ceremony honoring Dr. Ed Hiler, who is the Vice-Chancellor for Agriculture, the Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, and the Director of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station. During my tenure as the Beaumont/Eagle Lake Center Director, Ed has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the Center and the Texas rice industry by providing critically needed funds for people and for the Center's Farm Services infrastructure. The tremendous expansion in the Centers ability to more rapidly deliver research results to the rice industry is evidenced by the creation of the *Texas Rice* Newsletter and the Beaumont Center web site, both made possible as a

result of Ed's support. The expansion of the Center into rice plant physiology was also a result of Ed's actions, which is allowing the Center to explore in much greater depth how both the main crop and ratoon crop respond to agronomic inputs and environmental stresses. The hiring of a state rice breeder has similarly allowed the Center to fill a critical gap in developing needed varieties for Texas. The addition of a Biological Systems Analyst position has provided the Center with tremendous capabilities in developing and delivering management decision aids through the Internet. We are already beginning to see advantages of this position through the creation of the Center's rapidly expanding web site and the delivery of management programs, such as the Rice Development Advisory Program. If you are able to attend the Beaumont Field Day, please take a few moments to visit with Dr. Hiler to thank him for helping to improve the Center's ability to serve the Texas rice industry.

The awards ceremony will be followed by presentations by Anna McClung, highlighting the 50 year anniversary of the USDA Agricultural Research Service, and Milo Hamilton, who will provide and update on the U.S. and world rice market, and an update by Jack Wendt with the Texas Rice Research Foundation. The morning program will end with a luncheon, courtesy of Joe Crane with BU growers. An afternoon tour will follow the lunch, where Garry McCauley and Mike Chandler will highlight current developments in rice weed management. Keep on sending us your suggestions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "L. T. Wilson".

L.T. (Ted) Wilson
Jack B. Wendt Endowed Chair
for Rice Research

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Farming Rice

a monthly guide for Texas growers

Providing useful and timely information to Texas rice growers, so they may increase productivity and profitability on their farms.

New Pest Management Research for Stem Borers

The Texas A&M Agricultural Research and Extension Centers at both Beaumont and Weslaco are conducting collaborative research with the Louisiana State University AgCenter to address stem borer problems in rice and sugarcane. The projects collectively have brought in over \$500,000 in national competitive funding to help solve exotic and native stem borer problems for the rice and sugarcane industries of Texas and Louisiana. Though some of the work has involved insecticides, the main research focus has been toward the development of cultural and production practices together with varietal resistance to reduce pest problems with the Mexican rice borer (*Eoreuma loftini*).

Integrated pest management (IPM) of stem borers emphasizes one or a combination of the following components: 1) protecting the crop to produce a higher yield in the presence of increasing pest pressures, and 2) developing management strategies which reduce pest populations on an area-wide basis.

Higher yielding pest resistant varieties are important to rice producers. However, when growing these varieties under production practices, which also reduce area-wide pest numbers, the pest management system becomes more permanent and dependable.

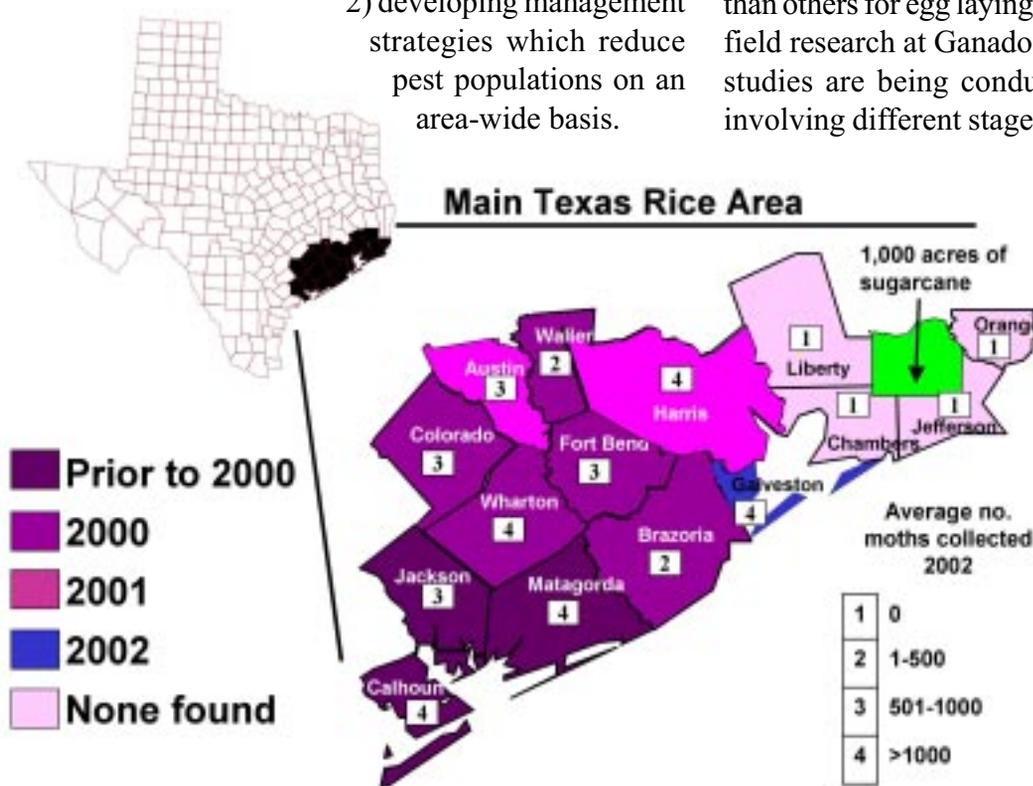
Another factor, which emphasizes the permanency of the IPM system, is the importance of balancing the use of diverse control tactics. If the significance of any single control tactic can be reduced, the selection pressure on the pest population is also reduced, enhancing the permanence of pest control. This permanency often includes the use of biological control to conserve beneficials, such as predators and parasites, which frequently maintain pest populations below damaging levels.

Host Preference

One way of developing a rice borer resistant crop variety is to select a variety which is less attractive than others for egg laying (oviposition). To supplement field research at Ganado and Eagle Lake, greenhouse studies are being conducted at the Weslaco Center involving different stages of the rice variety Cocodrie and the rice hybrid XL8, and two sugarcane varieties (LCP 85-384 and HoCP 85-845) under different water stress conditions.

Data in Table 1 indicates the relative preference for egg laying of Mexican rice borer moths in two experiments. The study also shows a potential association between abundance of dry leaves and Mexican rice borer oviposition. After

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Mexican Rice Borer continued...

Table 1. Mexican rice borer oviposition experiment conducted at the Texas A&M Agricultural Research and Extension Center at Weslaco.

Crop Species	Variety (stage)	Number of dry leaves/plant	Number of eggs/plant	Proportion of eggs to each crop stage (%)
Experiment A				
Sugarcane	LCP 85-384 stressed (5 internodes)	10.00	153.88	38.1
Sugarcane	HoCP 85-845 (5 internodes)	5.63	146.50	36.2
Rice	Cocodrie (boot)	3.25	34.50	8.5
Rice	XL8 (boot)	5.5	69.12	17.1
Experiment B				
Sugarcane	LCP 85-384 stressed (12 internodes)	9.50	294.62	46.2
Sugarcane	HoCP 85-845 (12 internodes)	7.12	175.75	27.6
Rice	Cocodrie (heading)	6.87	121.62	19.1
Rice	XL8 (heading)	5.75	44.62	7.0

the boot stage, some eggs were found on XL8, which had more dry leaves than the Cocodrie variety. Although, at the full heading stage, more eggs were found on Cocodrie, which had more dry leaves at that time.

Varieties have been tested in the field to assess differences in stem borer resistance. Cocodrie was among the more susceptible rice varieties in a test conducted in 2001 at the Ganado test site. Several hybrid varieties showed some potential in reducing yield loss. XL8 was among the most resistant. Changes in cultural practices can also induce resistance to insect pests. A field planting date study was initiated in the spring of 2004 at the Texas A&M Station in Eagle Lake, with Cocodrie and CLXL8 planted on March 26, April 19, and May 24 in treated (Karate Z) and untreated plots. Rice injury and pest populations

are being monitored on a weekly basis. Yield data will be collected at the end of the season. Modifying the planting date may help to avoid critical periods when potential yield loss due to stem borer populations is most severe.

Mexican Rice Borer Migration

The initial emphasis of recent collaborative studies on the Mexican rice borer involved assessing the pest movement through the Texas rice area. In 1980, the insect was discovered in Lower Rio Grande Valley sugarcane where it quickly became a devastating pest causing some farmers to forego the harvesting of fields. The insect gradually moved north into the southern portion of the Texas rice belt. During the 1990s, the pest potential greatly increased in rice. The seriousness of the problem in 2000 was pointed out by a greater than 50% yield loss in an insecticide experiment (treated vs. untreated) at Ganado.

In our project, pheromone traps, which attract male moths, have been used since 1999 to establish which rice counties have Mexican rice borer, and to identify the spread of this insect as it moves increasingly to the east. The map on page 3 shows the year of first discovery in the rice belt counties and comparative trap collection abundance during 2002.

With the help of county extension agents, farmers, and state

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Severe damage by natural infestations of stem borers at Ganado, TX. in 2003. Foreground left to right: plots 1, 2 and 5 where not protected from attack, while 3 and 4 were protected.



Mexican Rice Borer continued...



Female Mexican rice borer moth on a rice plant in the greenhouse at Weslaco.

department of agriculture personnel, the trapping program recorded insect movement into Waller County in 2000, Harris and Austin in 2001, and Galveston in 2002. In Waller County, near the Harris County line, traps in 1999 failed to detect moths (April-November), but collected 156 moths mid-to-late season in 2000, and 3,898 in 2003, all at the same location. In Galveston County, 2069 moths were collected in 2002, and 3,755 in 2003. Even though our trapping did not reveal any newly infested county in 2003, the increases in numbers can be interpreted as indicative of the pest continuing to spread into new areas.

The Louisiana rice and sugarcane industries are also interested in the future movement of this pest. As the Mexican rice borer continues to spread into new areas and new cropping systems, such as sugarcane and rice in Louisiana, multi-state interdisciplinary collaborative work will become more important. This stem borer respects neither commodity nor political boundaries.

Successful IPM must emphasize an area-wide approach, which we call a holistic perspective of study, to also take into consideration the impact of weed hosts which may have a major impact on rice borer biology at certain times of the year. We want to develop and implement practices that not only protect the host crops, but also reduce pest populations. *

Research conducted by T.E. Reagan, Professor of Entomology, Louisiana State University Agricultural Center, Baton Rouge, treagan@agcenter.lsu.edu; M.O. Way, Associate Professor and Specialist, Texas A&M Agricultural Research and Extension Center, Beaumont, moway@aesrg.tamu.edu; and Francis Reay-Jones, Graduate Assistant, LSU Ag Center, freayjones@agcenter.lsu.edu. Appreciation is expressed to the County Extension Agents in the Texas rice belt for their assistance in conducting this research.

Warming Climate Reduces Rice Yield

WASHINGTON - Global warming could mean bad news for one of the world's most important crops, rice.

Higher nighttime temperatures were associated with major declines in crop yield at the International Rice Research Institute Farm in the Philippines, according to a recent report in the *Proceedings* of the National Academy of Sciences.

Indeed, an average daily temperature increase of 1 degree Celsius resulted in a 10 percent drop in the rice crop, the researchers said. One degree Celsius equals about 1.8 degree Fahrenheit.

Increasing temperatures, thought to be a result of heat trapped by industrial and other chemicals in the atmosphere, have caused mounting concern.

This new study was a direct measurement of yields under field conditions using methods that good farmers would use, said lead researcher Kenneth G. Cassman of the University of Nebraska.

Mary M. Peet, a professor of horticulture at North Carolina State University, who was not part of the research group, said the report was important "in that it links yield decreases in a particular location to increases in night temperature.

"Many models have assumed that increases in [carbon dioxide] with global climate change will compensate for higher temperatures, but field data like this is valuable in pointing out that even at higher CO₂ levels, warmer temperatures still have a negative effect."

Cassman and colleagues studied 12 years of rice yields at the farm, along with weather data, to reach their conclusions.

The results are generally similar to findings reported last year following a 17-year study of U.S. crop yields. That study indicated that increases in temperature resulted in reductions in corn and soybean yields.

Cassman said researchers are working to determine the cause of the reduction, but they speculate that it is because the hotter nights make the plants work harder just to maintain themselves, diverting energy from growth. *

Excerpted from <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/06/28/tech/main626471.shtml>

Beaumont Center Website Access

What is Accessed and Who Accesses Web Information?

Last month's article on the Beaumont Center website described the site's main features. In this article, we present information on the website's use, including which features are used most often and who uses the website.

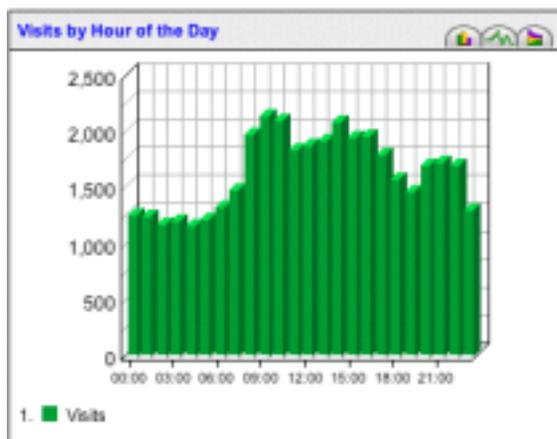
Web Statistics. The Beaumont Center website has been on line since March 10, 2003. Access to the site has increased tremendously since its release (Table 1). Six of the eight web statistics that are summarized in Table 1 show an increase in 2004 compared to 2003.

The lowest increase was with the number of "hits", which increased 11% over last year. A "hit" refers to each time a web page was accessed. A slow increase in "hits", combined with an increase in the number of visitors, implies that our website users are becoming more knowledgeable about the layout of the site, and are avoiding pages that contain information that they

do not want. This interpretation is supported by the "Hits/Visitor" statistic, which decreased 40% from 15.8 pages per visitor in 2003 to 9.8 in 2004.

The two statistics whose access increased at the greatest rates were the number of total visits and the number of unique visitors. The number of total visits increased by 79% in 2004. The number of unique visitors, which refers to the number of people who visited the web site one or more times, increased by 95%, or almost double the number from last year. Both the number of files downloaded (46%) and the bytes of downloaded data (59%) also increased over last year, even though the number of files downloaded per visitor decreased by 18%.

Probably one of the best statistics for determining Internet website access and growth is the cumulative hours of time that web users were linked to the Beaumont website. In 2003, users accessed the website over 6,700 hours. In 2004, this value reached nearly 9,400 hours, which represents a 39% increase. The amount of time people were linked to the website equals 391 days, which means that on average 1.07 individuals access the website every single second of every hour and day of the year.



What do the Web Statistics Mean? Looking at these statistics from a slightly different perspective provides a reference point for how well the web-based delivery of research and extension information compares to delivery through turn-row meetings, field days, and

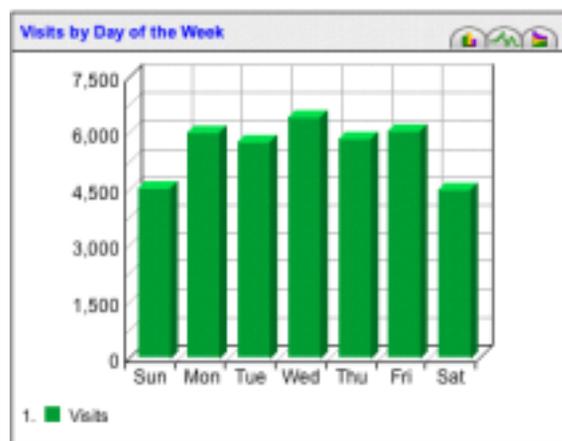
conventional mail-outs. An excellent turnout for a rice turn-row meeting is about 30 people, with a typical meeting lasting up to a couple of hours. With up to 12 rice turn-row meetings held each year, this approach provides up to 720 contact hours annually. Similarly, an excellent turnout for the combined Beaumont and Eagle Lake Field Days might total 600 people and last up to four hours, providing up to 2,400 contact hours each year. In comparison, the Beaumont

Category	2003	2004	Change from 2003 to 2004
Hits	1,098,761	1,216,872	+ 11%
Total Visits	69,332	124,124	+ 79%
Unique Visitors	47,650	92,698	+ 95%
Hits/Visitor	15.8	9.8	- 38%
Files Downloaded	61,844	90,490	+ 46%
Bytes of Downloaded Files	11.6 billion	18.4 billion	+ 59%
Files Downloaded/Visitor	0.89	0.73	- 18%
Cumulative Hours of Website Access	6,716	9,365	+ 39%

continued on page 7

Website Access continued...

Category	Number of people-Hours Reached in 2004 (prorated)
Rice Turn-row Meetings (6)	$30 \times 2 \times 12 = 720$ people hours
Field Days	$600 \times 4 = 2,400$ people hours
Beaumont Center Website	9,365 people hours



Center website is on track to have 9,400 access hours in 2004, or about 3 times the total number of people reached through turn-row meetings and Field Days in 2004. If we assume that the faculty and staff at the Beaumont/Eagle Lake Center reach at least twice this number of people through one-on-one contacts, this suggests that the Beaumont website has possibly doubled the Center's ability to address contact needs. However, even if this is the case, the majority of people who directly interact with our researchers, on average, often obtain very specific information that is currently not provided through the Internet. Although this situation is slowly changing, it will be some time before Internet websites come close to challenging the best expert opinion provided by our researchers.

Statistics on the amount of information provided via the Beaumont website suggest this is an area where the website is truly coming of age. A widely distributed rice publication, such as *Texas Rice*, is mailed to 425 people 9 months out of the year, totaling 3,825 copies per year. With each copy averaging about 14 pages, this equals just shy of 54,000 pages each year. In comparison, 1,200 copies of the *2004 Rice Produc-*

tion Guidelines are printed each year, with each copy being 57 pages in length, for a total of almost 70,000 pages per year. In contrast, the Beaumont Center website is on track to deliver 726 thousand pages of information via

downloads in 2004, which is about 6 times the total number of pages of *Texas Rice* and the *2004 Production Guidelines* mailed-out in 2004. Although the Internet will likely not replace conventional mail-outs, it is certainly giving it a run for its money and will in some cases replace it as a vehicle for delivering research and extension information.

When is the Website Used? Even though the website is available 24/7 365 days a year, I would have thought that far fewer people would access it after quitting time. This has not proven to be the case. While access drops by about 33% during "after hours", the drop-off does not occur until about 11 PM and only lasts until 8 AM. Similarly, while use drops off during Saturdays and Sundays, the drop-off is only about 20-25%.

Part of the reason for the drop-off being relatively small during after hours, is probably due to web-based computer companies sending out web-robots (bots) during these times, to search the internet for information to post on their websites or to index into their search engines. In fact, 10 of the top 20 visitors to the Beaumont website are bots, accounting for 14.2% of total visits to our site, with Google bots making up the greatest share. The next time you go to <http://www.google.com/> to search for something about rice, if your search comes up with something from the Beaumont website, you can thank one of these Internet robots for cataloguing our website and finding something that it thinks you can use.

Category	Number of pages published in 2004 (prorated)
<i>Texas Rice</i> Newsletter	$425 \times 14 \times 9 = 53,550$ pages
<i>2004 Rice Production Guidelines</i>	$1,200 \times 57 = 68,400$ pages
Beaumont Center Website	726 thousand pages

Table 4. Rank, Country of Origin, and Access to the Beaumont Center Website by Individuals from Different Countries in 2004.

Rank	Country	% of Visits	Rice Growing Country
1	United States (US)	85.32%	Yes
2	Australia (AU)	1.68%	Yes
3	Canada (CA)	1.06%	No
4	United Kingdom (UK)	0.92%	No
5	China (CN)	0.78%	Yes
6	Netherlands (NL)	0.74%	No
7	India (IN)	0.69%	Yes
8	Japan (JP)	0.61%	Yes
9	Germany (DE)	0.54%	No
10	Philippines (PH)	0.44%	Yes
11	Thailand (TH)	0.40%	Yes
12	Taiwan (TW)	0.39%	Yes
13	Brazil (BR)	0.34%	Yes
14	Spain (ES)	0.34%	Yes
15	Korea (South) (KR)	0.33%	Yes
16	France (FR)	0.32%	Yes
17	Unknown Origin	0.32%	?
18	Italy (IT)	0.27%	Yes
19	Uruguay (UY)	0.23%	Yes
20	Mexico (MX)	0.22%	Yes
	Subtotal	95.95%	
	Other	4.05%	
	Total (123 Countries)	100.00%	

Who Uses the Beaumont Center Website? Table 4 summarizes the access to the Beaumont Center website from different countries. Individuals from 123 countries have accessed the Center website so far this year. The greatest access is by users from the U.S. (85.3%), with 15 of the top 19 countries producing rice. The remaining countries in the top 20, Canada, the UK, the Netherlands, and Germany, do not produce rice; however, each serves as a home for several large multinational corporations involved in import/export of agricultural commodities.

Determining the home state of people who access the Beaumont website was not possible. Although a cursory review of email addresses of people who access the site suggests that about 80% are from Texas, the nature of the Internet made determining an exact estimate almost impossible. While your local Internet provider might have an office in your hometown, the server that services your account is quite possibly located in another state. Seventy-seven percent of all users who access the Beaumont website do so through servers located in other states, with 50% coming from California.

Which Features do Visitors Access? Our electronic library (*elibrary*), which houses *Texas Rice*, the *Rice Production Guidelines*, and numerous other publications leads the list both in terms of visits (19.4%), hits (24.8%), and amount of information downloaded (58.3%), from a single web directory. The web directories that provide information on research programs at the Center have strong access as well, but a far smaller volume of downloads. The Rice Development Advisory (RiceDevA) directory, although it has only

been on the web for less than two months, has had a high number of visits (3.4%), hits (14.6%), and downloads (7.6%).

The 2004 *Rice Production Guidelines* (10%) is by far the single most frequently downloaded item on the website. However, when all the different issues of *Texas Rice* are combined, they become the most downloaded item in terms of number of copies (62%).

Summary. The Beaumont website is continuing to grow and deliver useful information, with several ambitious goals planned for the next few years. From discussions with John Jackman, the developer of the Texas A&M University Department of Entomology website in College Station, he indicated that their website started out with a similar volume of use as our website during its first year of access, but that it has now grown to over 20 million hits per year. A safe bet would be that the Beaumont website will continue to grow as well and will deliver an increasing amount of useful information. *

Contributors to this article are Ted Wilson, Yubin Yang, and Peter Lu. For more information on the Beaumont Center website, please email Ted Wilson at lt-wilson@aesrg.tamu.edu.

Educator in the News...

Ruben Stringer at Hamshire-Fannett High School

Ruben Stringer is the Ag Education teacher at Hamshire-Fannett High School, and has spent his career educating young people about rice.

The Texas Rice Judging Contest began in 1956 when W.J. Arrington created the basic guidelines for the competition. The contest was developed to promote knowledge of the most important crop grown along the Texas gulf coast, with specific emphasis on rice production practices, and to encourage the development of good study skills for life-long learning.

The contest is fun and presents a challenge which incites student participation. Students have the opportunity to identify live and bottled specimens of insect pests of rice, common diseases and weeds of rice, and the stages of processing rice through an interactive preparatory session which includes a field tour. Management problems, such as calculating amounts of fertilizer, cost and application of a pesticide product, and other problems dealing with management, are also studied. The longevity and success of the contest is directly attributable to Ruben Stringer, Agri-Science teacher at Hamshire-Fannett High School. Ruben's school teams have won first place for many years, due to his insistence that rice is a commodity our young people need to know more about.

Ruben became involved with the Rice Judging Contest in 1958, and through his dedication and commitment to educate young people about the importance of rice, the contest continues to be a success today. The contest is now referred to as the "Youth Rice Contest". At its inception, the contest was associated with the Young Men's Business League (YMBL) of Beaumont, but in 1969, responsibility for the contest was given to the Texas Rice Festival.

Ruben was born in Jasper, Texas on January 23, 1934. He attended Jasper public schools, graduating in 1952. While in high school, Ruben enrolled in the Future Farmers of America where he was introduced to leadership, conservation and career development events. He was very interested in all phases of the program and participated in many events such as contests, showing animals and learning the basics for crop production and agricultural mechanics.



Ruben Stringer has been teaching young people about the importance of rice production in Texas for over 46 years. This picture was taken in 1961, when Ruben was teaching Ag Education at Mauriceville High School.

After graduation from high school, Ruben enrolled in Sam Houston State University to study agricultural education. He attended college for five years while working forty hours a week in a grocery store. During the summer break each year he was employed by a timber company to save money for the coming semester. After five years of study Ruben earned a master's degree in Agricultural Education.

Next came a tour of duty with the U.S. Army. Ruben served six months on active duty, which was followed by five years in the Ready Reserves. He was honorably discharged from the service in 1963.

Ruben began his teaching career in 1958 at Mauriceville High School. He then worked for three years in industry at the E.I. DuPont company in Orange, TX. After recognizing that teaching was his first love, he returned to teaching in Louisiana for a year, and is currently teaching Agri-Science at Hamshire-Fannett High. In addition to his teaching duties, Ruben is also employed by the Lower Sabine Neches Soil and Water Conservation District as a technical advisor. He works forty hours a month and has held this position since 1986. Conservation education is the main objective of this program. All schools in the district are introduced to and participate

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Stringer continued...

in poster contests, essay contests, and forestry, land, and grass contests. A large number of excellent students and teachers are invited to participate each year and the results have been very positive. Ruben believes that training students at an early age in conservation practices will develop good productive citizens at a later date. As proof of his efforts, Ruben was honored as employee of the year by the Soil Conservation Service in 2003.

Have all his efforts paid off? According to Ruben there is no question that they have. "Over the years, I have had the pleasure of working with many outstanding school age students, and young and mature adults. Many students have been successful in the judging contests, as well as in the show ring with poultry and livestock projects." As a testament to this, one of his students, Autum Wright, a 10th grader at Hamshire-Fannett High School, won the rice essay contest this year sponsored by the US Rice Producers Association. Her essay placed first among all 10th grade entries from the six U.S. rice producing states.

Ruben places a high priority on conservation and leadership programs. He has been active in community and church activities during the past 47 years.

When showered with this worthy praise, Ruben said, "If I am considered successful there are many, many people that deserve credit also because of the contributions they have made to help build that success." *

Article by Jay Cockrell and Cynthia Tribble.



Ruben's students at Hamshire-Fannett High School won first place in the 2003 Rice Judging Contest. From L to R: Greg Viator, Dylan Summers, Marcie Broussard and Jud Lagrone.

Rice Producers Lead Fight to Protect U.S. Export Credit Guarantee Program

HOUSTON - The US Rice Producers Association won a fight in Congress this week to defeat a proposal that would have placed new, prohibitive requirements on the use of the GSM export credit guarantee program for sales of U.S. farm commodities to Iraq. The GSM program is administered by the USDA Commodity Credit Corporation to insure financing for sales of U.S. agricultural exports. This program allows foreign buyers to purchase U.S. agricultural commodities from private U.S. exporters, with U.S. banks providing financing to the importers' banks on commercial terms.

The proposal, offered by Representative Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio) during the House Appropriations Committee's consideration of the Fiscal Year 2005 Agriculture Appropriations bill, would have limited the ability of the Secretary of Agriculture to make available U.S. agricultural credit guarantees to Iraq, unless the United States determined the new government in Iraq is sufficiently stable from a security standpoint, and that the credit guarantees were part of a clear reconstruction plan approved by Congress.

The Kaptur proposal would have set a very dangerous precedent by imposing currently illegal foreign policy requirements on the use of the GSM export credit guarantee program. USRPA Washington Counsel Fred Clark organized opposition among the farm and commodity community in Washington, and urged Committee Members to oppose the amendment.

During the Committee markup, Jo Ann Emerson led the opposition to the Kaptur amendment. Representatives George Nethercutt (R-Washington), Marion Berry (D-Arkansas), and Jim Kolbe (R-Arizona) led the vigorous opposition. The hard work paid off when the amendment was soundly defeated by the Committee. If this proposal were adopted, the end result would likely be that United States agriculture would see no exports to Iraq under the GSM program for the foreseeable future, if ever.

The Agriculture Appropriations bill was approved by the Committee, and is expected to be considered by the full House of Representatives shortly after Congress returns from its 4th of July recess. *

For complete story go to <http://www.usriceproducers.com/>

State, National and International News...

National Rice Month Scholarship Contest

High school juniors and seniors whose families are directly associated with the rice industry in the states of Arkansas, California, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri and Texas are eligible to participate in the USA Rice Federation National Rice Month Scholarship Contest.

Students must run a promotion during the month of September celebrating National Rice Month in their community where rice is the central theme – and write an essay describing the event.

A National Rice Month promotion planning kit is available to help students get ideas on what to do. Entries will be judged on the basis of creativity, impact, promotion of rice and National Rice Month and demonstration of the importance of the rice industry to the local area.

The USA Rice Federation will be awarding a total of 12 prizes in the following scholarship amounts: one national grand prize winner will receive \$2,000.00, five first place state winners will receive \$1,000.00 each, and six second place state winners will receive \$500.00 each.

The National Grand Prize winner will be presented with the scholarship award at the USA Rice Outlook Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana on December 5 - 7, 2004. All trip expenses for the National Grand Prize winner and a chaperone will be paid by the USA Rice Federation.

Entries must be received by Oc-

tober 22, 2004. For more information about entering the contest contact Molly Johnson of the USA Rice Federation, phone: (800) 888-7423, email: mjohnson@usarice.com.

World Rice Demand To Outpace Supply Again

MARSEILLE, France (Reuters) - Global rice demand is expected to outpace supply for the fifth year in a row with a further drawdown in world stocks making up the shortfall, a senior commodities specialist at the U.N. FAO said at a recent conference.

Speaking at the Agra Europe Rice Trade Outlook 2004 conference, Concepcion Calpe said world paddy output was forecast to hit a new record at 613 million tonnes, up four percent on 2003.

But with the major northern hemisphere producing countries having just planted their crops, much would depend on the weather in the months ahead, particularly the monsoon rains in India, she said.

In milled-equivalent terms, output would reach 410 million tonnes, just short of expected consumption of 414 million, leading to a further reduction in world stocks at a time when market tightness has been helping to drive prices higher.

"We had excessive stocks in the 1999-2000 period, but since 2000 some balance has been brought back into the market with no tightness felt until last year," she said.

Africa has been behind much of the steady growth in demand in the last decade with imports into the

continent doubling to over eight million tonnes, milled equivalent, during the period.

Imports in Asia, the region where rice is the staple for 60 percent of the world's population, are predicted to dip to 12 million tonnes from almost 14 million last year. Calpe said the volume of global rice trade was expected to fall eight percent to 25.7 million tonnes in 2004.

Article by David Evans, Reuters

Jet Stream To Blame For Texas' Rains, Says Climatologist

If you're looking for something to blame for all of the recent record-breaking rains, point your finger at the jet stream, says the state's chief weatherman.

John Nielsen-Gammon, professor of atmospheric sciences at Texas A&M University and Texas State Climatologist, says the jet stream - a river of air that flows above the Earth - has taken a southern dip the past few weeks, combining with tropical moisture filtering into the state to trigger heavy showers.

"Houston had 18.33 inches of rain in the month of June, and that's 38 percent of the city's yearly rainfall," Nielsen-Gammon reports. "Dallas had 10.49 inches, which is about 30 percent of its yearly rainfall. Texas has just had a lot of rain the last 30 days."

Rice farmers are seeing a greater amount of disease pressure due to all the wet weather.

For the full story, go to <http://rev.tamu.edu/stories/04/070104-6.html>

2004 R.I.C.E. Yield and Quality Challenge

Sponsored by Syngenta and Rice Farming Magazine

The contest is open to all rice farmers in three geographic regions - Missouri, Arkansas and Mississippi; Texas; and Louisiana.

Entries must be 40 acres or more of one single long-grain variety or hybrid. Only first crop totals are accepted, no ratoon crops. Once the crop is harvested, weighed and processed, a Harvest Report is filed, which is verified by the farmers Harvest Supervisor, such as a county extension agent or FFA instructor.

Entry forms and official rules for the contest may be found at <http://ricefarming.com> or call Angie Skochdopole at 812-299-5132.

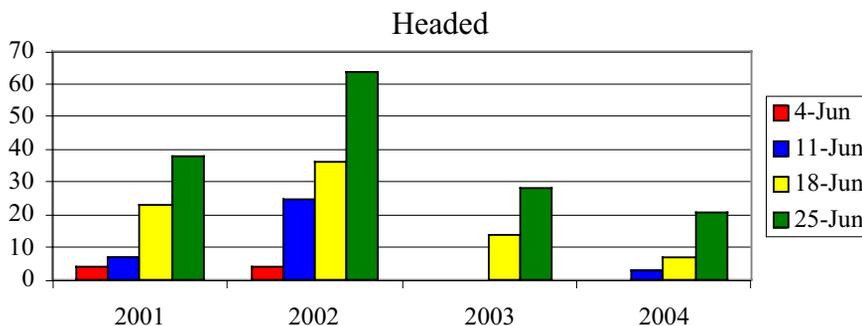
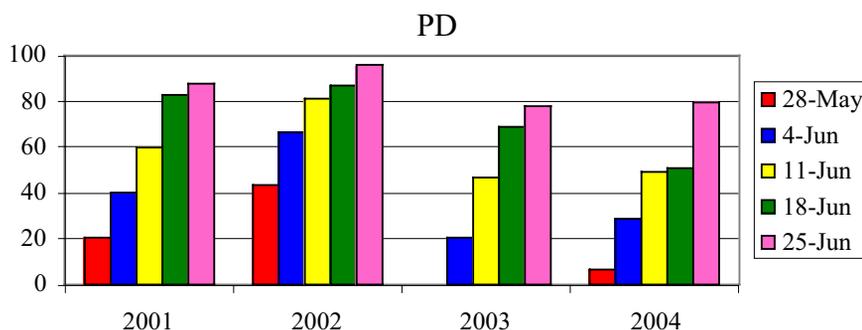
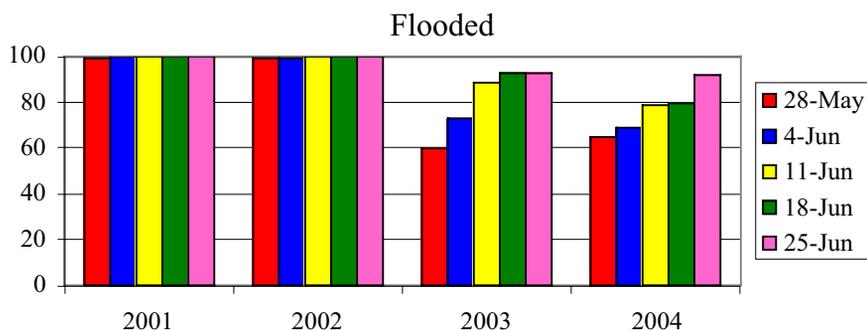
The deadline for entry has been extended to July 31, 2004. First prize is a Cabela's gift certificate for \$1,000.

Professor and Center Director: L.T. (Ted) Wilson
lt-wilson@aesrg.tamu.edu
 Ag Communications Specialist: Jay Cockrell
j-cockrell@aesrg.tamu.edu
 Texas A&M University System Agricultural Research and Extension Center
 1509 Aggie Drive, Beaumont, TX 77713
 (409)752-2741
 Access back issues of *Texas Rice* at <http://beaumont.tamu.edu>

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Rice Crop Update

As of June 25th, 92% of the Texas rice crop is in permanent flood, closely comparing to 93% on this date in 2003. Acreage at PD jumped from 51% on June 18th to 80% by June 25th. Rice headed was at 21% June 25th, compared to 28% at this time last year.



Texas A&M University System
 Agricultural Research and Extension Center
 1509 Aggie Dr.
 Beaumont, TX 77713

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