

RICE STUDY

RI-SV-63-3

The late rains in the spring of 1963 resulted in some rice growers doing a minimum of soil preparation before planting their crop. Questions were raised as to whether growers needed to do as much seedbed preparation as they had been accustomed to. The Extension Service was requested to make a study of the practices followed in 1963 as compared to more normal years to determine if farmers might economically reduce the cost of seedbed preparation.

A rather lengthy questionnaire was prepared which was sent to all of the known rice growers in the State. We had a response of about 135 useful records from which we could analyze data. The questionnaires asked for information on the first and last fields which were planted in 1963, and what would be a normal operation based on previous experience. About half of the forms which were returned did not give the normal operations, but the farm advisors involved in this study indicated that in most cases what they had done in 1963 was more or less normal.

The material from these questionnaires will be included in a study of rice production which is being made by the Agricultural Research Service, but in general, we can give the following results:

Plantings in 1963 averaged about a month later than normal. On the average, there was a reduction in yield with the later plantings but the correlation between dates of planting and yield is very low.

Seedbed preparation in 1963 involved about as many operations as was reported for normal years. There was a tendency to eliminate plowing and do more disking but the number of times that the fields were gone over was approximately the same in 1963 as the growers reported for their normal operation.

The amount of fertilizer used was approximately the same for 1963 as for normal years but there was more top dressing of the crop in 1963. The growers did not put on as much fertilizer at the time of planting as they normally would but came back later with a top dressing.

Rates of seeding, weed control, type of seed used, and other management practices were about the same as normal. There was a tendency for the field not to have as good as seedbed as normal because of the wet conditions under which they were working. Many of the growers also reported problems at harvest time due to the crop not drying out sufficiently for combining. Other than this there was no great difference between the management practices followed in 1963 as compared to more normal springs.

The results of these questionnaires do not furnish any evidence that farmers can benefit from less seedbed preparation.

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	First field planted 1963	Last field planted 1963	Normal
<u>Sutter</u>			
Date planted	5/13	5/21	4/28
Yield	49 87%	46 82%	56
Seedbed operations	4.6	4.5	4.7
Nitrogen	71	66	68
<u>Sutter</u>			
Date planted	5/11	5/23	
Yield	51	48 94%	
Seedbed operations	3.7	3.8	
Nitrogen	78	72	
<u>Butte</u>			
Date planted	5/17	5/26	4/28
Yield	53 98%	40 74%	54
Seedbed operation	3.9	3.7	4.0
Nitrogen	80	77	82
<u>Butte</u>			
Date planted	5/16	5/24	
Yield	48	44 92%	
Seedbed operations	3.9	3.9	
Nitrogen	84	81	
<u>Colusa</u>			
Date planted	5/10	5/20	4/24
Yield	49	47 70%	53
Seedbed operations	3.8	3.5	3.9
Nitrogen	97	92	98
<u>Colusa</u>			
Date planted	5/11	5/20	
Yield	49	45	
Seedbed operations	4.1	4.1	
Nitrogen	91	96	