

Harvest Moisture & Milling



Best Practices to Maximize the Value of Your Crop

Rice harvest is beginning in the Mid-South and many fields are currently being drained. It is important to remember that decisions made now can significantly affect milling results, and therefore the value of your crop. Please take these recommendations into consideration when managing RiceTec hybrids.

Draining Rice

- Drain fields based on planned harvest date, not just crop maturity.
- Avoid draining all fields at once if harvest capacity is limited.
- Overly dry fields can lead to increased lodging and reduced milling yields.
- Maintain adequate soil moisture to keep plants healthy until harvest.
- Flat clay fields: drain when about 50% of the panicle is straw-colored.
- Lighter soils or sloped fields: drain when 66-75% of the panicle is straw-colored.
- Consider delaying drainage until 10 days before harvest.

Furrow Irrigated Rice (FIR)

- Use the same drainage principles as flooded rice.
- After draining lower portions, consider 1-2 additional irrigations to maintain moisture.
- Maintain plant health and prevent excessive drying prior to harvest.

Harvest Moisture & Milling Yield

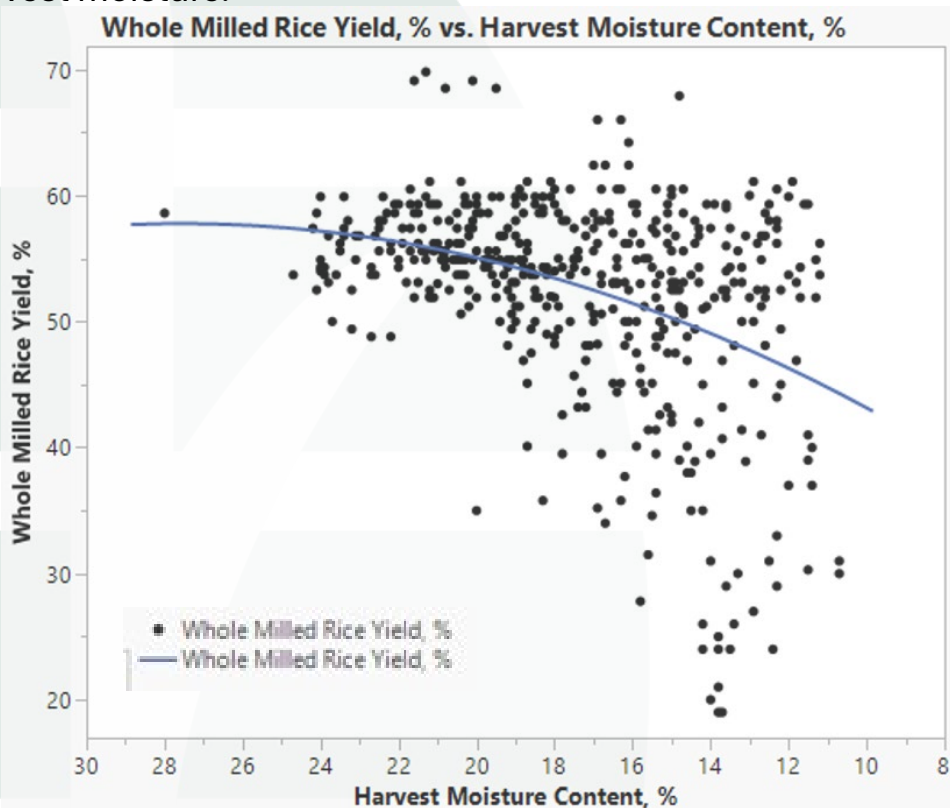
- Target harvest moisture of 18-20% for optimal milling quality and drying efficiency.
- Moisture below 15% increases risk of kernel fissuring and lower milling yields.
- Harvesting above 24% can reduce head rice yield due to immature kernels.
- 21% moisture generally produces better milling quality than 17%.

Harvest Aids - If Used

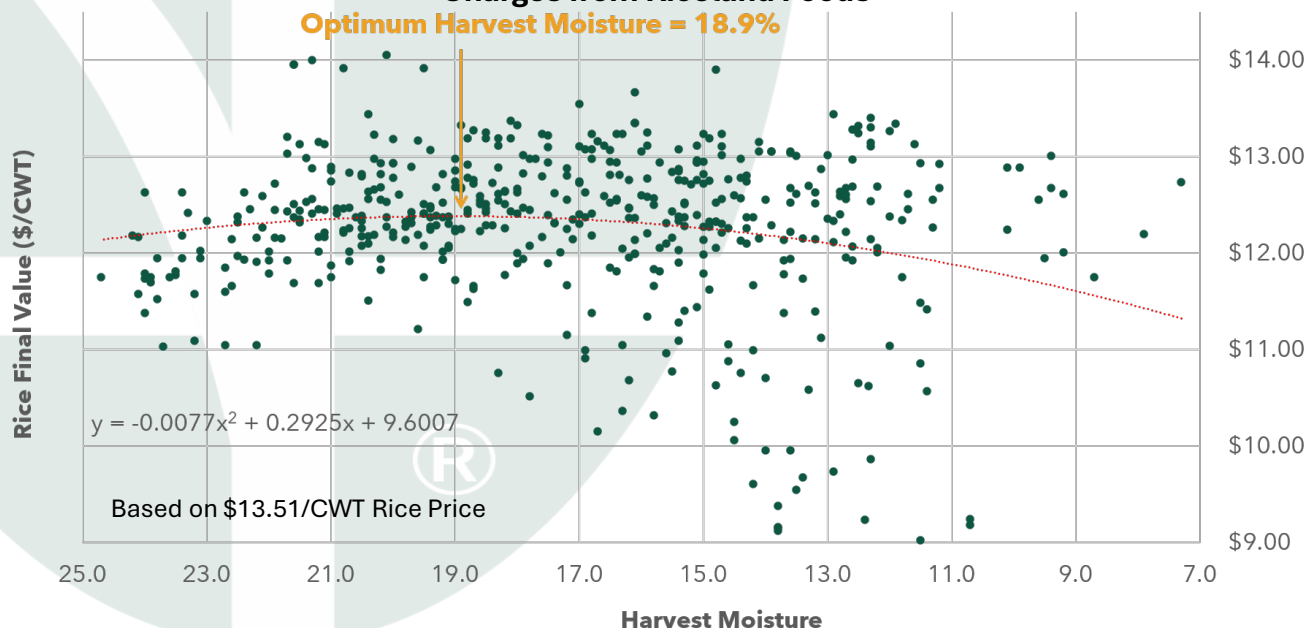
- Apply defoliants at 23% grain moisture or less.
- Harvest within 3-5 days after application.
- Delayed harvest or grain rewetting after application can significantly reduce grain quality.

- **Key Takeaway:** Drain for your harvest schedule, maintain plant health, and target 18-20% harvest moisture to maximize milling yields and crop value.

The charts below show multi-year milling data by harvest moisture content. As we see in the top chart, harvesting low moisture rice dramatically increases the chance of low milling yields. The bottom chart incorporates drying charges and milling discounts from Riceland to determine peak value, which occurs at 18.9% harvest moisture.



Final Value of Rice Based on Harvest Moisture Content, Milling Yield, and Drying Charges from Riceland Foods



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