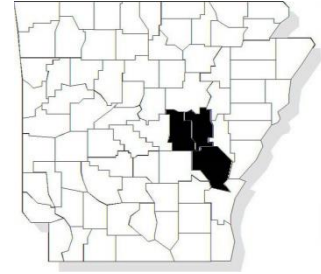


# GRAND PRAIRIE

## Rice Production Ecological Zone

The Grand Prairie region lies in parts of Arkansas, Prairie, Lonoke and Monroe counties and historically has been one of the most important rice production areas due to shallow but productive silt loam topsoil with a thick clay layer beneath. In 2017, ~250,000 acres of rice were harvested in this region, with a higher than statewide average yield of over 7,800 lbs per acre. Rotation crops include primarily soybean, corn, and grain sorghum.



Rice production on the Grand Prairie is very intense, with heavy use of pesticides, seed and fertilizer. Some growers practice atypical production, with a small number growing continuous, zero-grade production; and others trying furrow-irrigated or intermittent flooding to minimize water use as aquifers become more depleted.

Current and future rice production challenges for the Grand Prairie include but are not limited to the following:

- Irrigation water availability and quality
- Irrigation efficiency
- Fertility and sustainability of topsoil
- Soil problems including high pH and salt accumulation
- Appropriate fertilization practices
- Pest management – weed, disease and insect control
- Consistent rice quality
- Higher yielding, more efficient cultivars
- Grower education – (this area has the highest pesticide use per acre)