Amount, Quality of Water Is Important to Crawfish

‘Quick’ Flooding of Ponds Urged by Landry

By CLAIRE PUNEKY

THIBODAUX, La. — In crawfish pond production one of the most important practices needed to be carried out has to do with water, according to Dalton P. Landry, county agent in Lafourche Parish, who cited the time, amount and quality of the water as of prime concern.

Landry recommended crawfish ponds in the parish be flooded by Oct. 1.

"Many producers were pleased with their crawfish production last year, while others were much less than pleased," Landry reported. He said in a discussion of success and failure with producers water "seemed to be the main cause receiving credit or blame for the crop."

Landry has recommended producers get their pumps in top running shape and their wa-

ter supply ready now, and when the producer decides to flood the pond to flood it as fast as he can.

His recommendation is to start pumping in late afternoon, continuing through the night and "until the pond is completely filled with this first flooding." Pumping in this manner will get "enough water in the pond before the sun goes hot the next day," he said.

The producer could lose some of the young crop if he does not pump the water in the pond deep enough before the sun heats up the pond, Landry stated.

Another hazard, he said, is "predators will get many of the crawfish if the water is not deep enough." He advised keeping fish out of the pond "by straining the water being pumped into the pond."

Recommending a fairly stable water level, with a corresponding need to restore water lost by evaporation, Landry said it is important good water quality be maintained in the pond.

He warned low oxygen or "Blackwater" conditions may develop in the season, and this would necessitate flushing out the pond with fresh-water.

Landry said when crawfish are found on the grass or on banks, are seen getting out of the water, this is usually an indication of "a lack of oxygen in the pond."

The water source needs to be observed when a pumping operation is under way, and, he said, "Pumping should be stopped immediately when fish kills are observed, when fish are apparently in distress, or when there is any unusual odor or color in the water."