**Response to Editor and cover letter**

**Overall response**

Comments from the editor:

Q1. As pointed out by the third reviewer, the main weakness of the manuscript is lack of calibration and validation and ground-level data and dependence on simulated data only.

Response: We thank you for re-emphasizing the reviewer’s comment. The basis of our contribution in this paper is a crop growth model already published in Montes et al (2022) and Urfels et al (2022). The calibration, validation and ground truth assessments were conducted in those previous papers and we do not repeat these in the paper. The contribution in the current paper regards the risk-based assessment of the crop growth or experimental evidence. We could have used any other crop growth model reviewer 3 believes is relevant for the region to showcase this important contribution. Through out the paper, we have pointed the risk based evaluation approach as the key contribution.

Q2. Also, the manuscript lacks a discussion which requires comparison of the results with those of others' works and not merely with by authors' own works. Otherwise, there arises a question of novelty.

**Response:** We have added a discussion section which revisits the literature that look at rice sowing optimization in the area of interest as well as those papers that try to include risk-based assessments. We do not find any work that does the risk-based assessments in the area of interest. Some recent work AgSy journal recently by Wang et al 2024 uses EPIC crop model to make planting date assessments. We have included this work in the references including adding other literature with authors not associated with our work or within our networks.

The graphical abstract is incomplete; it should capture the entire paper giving objectives, results, conclusions and significance. You can see examples of good graphical abstracts under relevant section in Guide to Authors in journal website, or in the recently published papers in this journal.

Response: We have revised the graphical abstract as advised.

Any resubmission should address above issues in addition to the reviewers' comments.

Response: We thank the editor for giving us the chance to revise the paper in line with reviewers’ comments. We have comprehensively addressed all the comments and these suggestions have improved the quality of the revised paper.