



# TAKEOUT AND DELIVERY GUIDE



THE FAMILIARITY AND VERSATILITY OF U.S.-GROWN RICE DISHES CAN HELP OPERATORS ADAPT AND THRIVE IN THIS CHANGING FOOD LANDSCAPE.

HERE'S HOW!



U.S.-grown rice has long been a smart menu choice and continues to be a stellar option for operations looking to bolster their revenue in today's new reality. USA Rice is committed to helping you weather the storm and improve your restaurant's profitability.

Throughout the coming months, the *Rice to the Rescue* program will provide valuable resources, like this guide, to help your operation succeed in the new foodservice landscape. You don't have to go it alone. We're here to help set you on the path to recovery.

## MAXIMIZING YOUR MENU FOR TAKEOUT AND DELIVERY

Adjust your offerings to ensure your dishes reach your guests just as you intended. Take a look at your menu and think about what travels well and what doesn't.

### TRAVELS WELL<sup>1</sup>

- ✓ Pizza
- ✓ Burgers
- ✓ Sandwiches
- ✓ Dessert
- ✓ Sides

### DOES NOT TRAVEL WELL<sup>1</sup>

- ✗ Fries
- ✗ Fish/seafood
- ✗ Specialty beverages
- ✗ Vegan food
- ✗ Soups/chilis/stews

After evaluating your menu, some items might need to be removed from your delivery menu or adapted to travel better. For instance, we know fried foods tend to not hold up as well during delivery, so consider swapping out fries for a better performing side—like U.S.-grown rice!

Another good idea is to deconstruct some standard menu items like sandwiches or tacos so they aren't too soggy when the customer receives them. It takes a little extra work to pack all the toppings separately, but it definitely makes a difference.



# BOWL-A-TIZE YOUR MENU



Bowls are a trendy option that perform well in delivery. And almost any flavor or type of cuisine can translate to a bowl format—even barbecue.

## TRENDING BOWL FLAVORS AND INGREDIENTS

- Asian and Mexican cuisine are the two foods that consumers are the least tired of eating following shelter-in-place orders.<sup>2</sup>
- Simple, natural, plant-based foods have become even more popular during the pandemic.



## BUILDING A DELICIOUS BOWL: THE BASICS

Almost any menu item can be deconstructed and turned into a bowl in 5 easy steps.

1

START WITH A HEARTY BASE  
LIKE U.S.-GROWN RICE



2

CHOOSE YOUR MEAT  
OR PLANT-BASED PROTEIN



3

OFFER A VARIETY  
OF VEGGIES



4

PAIR WITH A  
SAUCE



5

GARNISH FOR  
TEXTURE



# PACKAGING FOR DELIVERY PERFECTION

The packaging in which meals are delivered matters in two key areas:

## SANITATION

Consumers are concerned about food safety, and restaurants need to show they are listening and promote the added measures they're taking. How food is packaged plays a key role here. The two most crucial takeout and delivery packaging elements that consumers are looking for are:<sup>3</sup>

- Tamper-proof seals on containers and bags
- Sealed utensils

The three **SAFEST** packaging types according to consumers are:<sup>4</sup>

- Sealed, factory-packed sauces and dressings
- Wrapped, sealed utensils
- Wrapped straws

The three **LEAST SAFE** packaging types according to consumers are:<sup>5</sup>

- Unwrapped utensils
- Unwrapped straws
- Sauces and dressings packaged in the restaurant



## FUNCTION

It's important to choose the right type of to-go packaging to help ensure your food holds up as well as possible during delivery. But like everything, there are pros and cons to each style. Consider your menu and prioritize accordingly:

**STYROFOAM** does well keeping hot foods hot and cold foods cold; however, it's not very durable and is bad for the environment. Some states and major cities have even banned it as a result.

**PLASTIC PACKAGING**, while not as effective at maintaining a proper temperature, is sturdy and fairly leak resistant. However, plastic is also not an environmentally friendly option.

**CARDBOARD** packaging is biodegradable, but slightly less durable and lacks the insulation to keep foods at a consistent temperature.



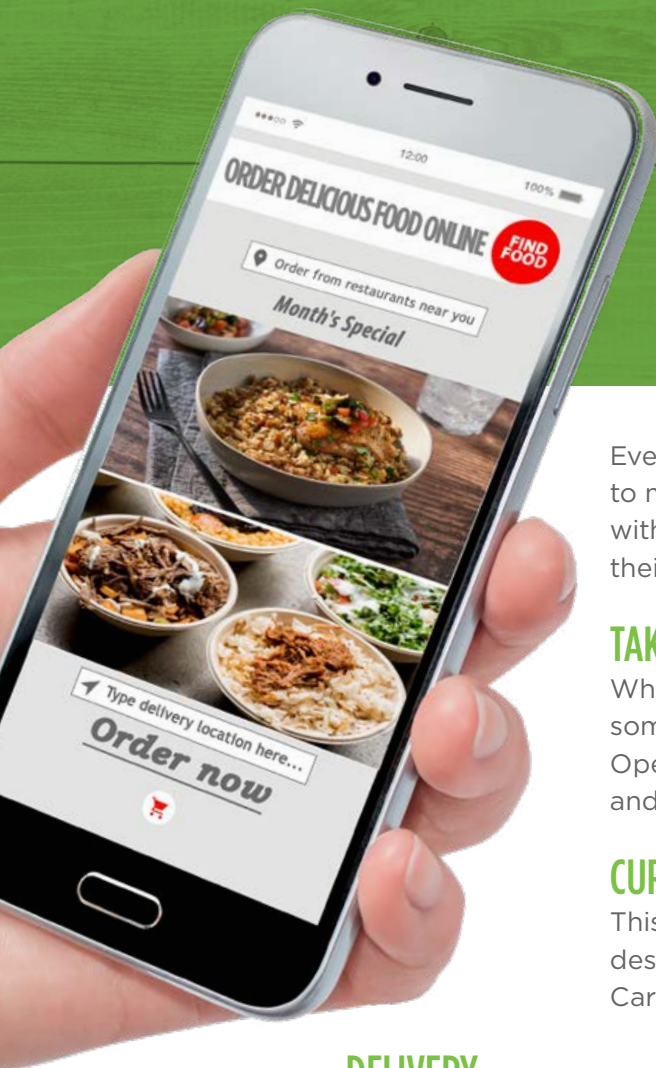
### BE SURE TO MIND THE TEMPERATURE OF ITEMS.



You may need to package and bag items separately, and even then, remember heat rises. Placing your hottest foods at the bottom of the bag can help keep the items above them warm.



# TO-GO METHODS AND PAYMENTS



Every operation has been forced to pivot to takeout and delivery to maintain a percentage of sales. Restaurants, especially those without drive-thrus, must consider the best way to provide food to their customers.

## TAKEOUT

While this is perhaps the easiest option operationally, it's seen as somewhat risky since guests must physically enter the restaurant. Operators can ease some of these concerns by promoting order-and-pay-ahead options.

## CURBSIDE PICKUP

This is perceived to be the safest option. Restaurants should designate a space outside of their restaurant for curbside pickup. Careful to keep social distancing in mind.

## DELIVERY

Delivery directly from a restaurant is perceived as the safest delivery option. However, it requires restaurants to develop an infrastructure for delivery that may require a heavy initial investment. Third-party delivery takes some of the burden away from operators, but they often charge high fees and it's seen as the least safe to-go option.<sup>6</sup>



How payments are received has also become an important consideration. In-store payment will be less desirable as people try to limit contact. Online or over the phone pay-ahead options will

be most preferred. For independents who don't have any online infrastructure to support a pay-ahead option, some co-op style apps have sprung up recently, like [Slice for pizza joints](#).



# U.S.-GROWN RICE HELPS WIN TAKEOUT AND DELIVERY

There are so many reasons why such a simple yet infinitely versatile grain can help your to-go menu stand out.



## LOW COST + HIGH MARGIN

Rice is a low cost ingredient that serves as a foundational component to some higher-priced menu items. And since consumers have indicated they'll likely be more focused on value during uncertain economic times, rice allows your guests to enjoy more bang for their buck.



## LOW WASTE

A recent study found that food waste accounts for approximately **\$2 billion** in lost profits for restaurants.<sup>7</sup> You can combat this by utilizing more rice on your menus. Properly stored rice has an indefinite shelf life, and leftover cooked rice can be stored and reused the next day—meaning more cash in your drawer and less waste out the door.



## TRAVELS WELL

Rice maintains its flavor and texture during delivery so you can ensure a quality customer experience regardless of delivery time—helping improve your ratings on review sites like Yelp.



## KEEPS FOOD WARM

Rice naturally retains heat. So, not only does rice stay warm throughout delivery, but by placing hot rice at the bottom of the delivery bag, it will radiate heat and keep other foods warm as well.



## ABSORBS FLAVOR

While other foods may become soggy, stale, and lose flavor, rice absorbs flavor, so it may taste even better after spending some time in a delivery container mixed with other foods. It also absorbs moisture so water and juices don't pool at the bottom of the container.



## GROWN IN THE U.S. OF A.

Homegrown foods are even more important to consumers during pandemic times. In fact, "Made in the USA" is the most important claim to consumers, and "locally sourced" ranks highly as well.<sup>8</sup> It's likely these claims serve as quality and safety cues.





# U.S.-GROWN RICE TO-GO CONCEPTS

**CHOPHOUSE BOWL** A bed of classic thyme-scented U.S.-grown rice pilaf is layered with sliced hanger steak, seared mushrooms, sautéed spinach, and a drizzle of rich hollandaise sauce. Finished with fried onion strings.

**AL PASTOR BOWL** Fluffy U.S.-grown medium grain rice scented with coriander and garlic is layered with juicy strips of adobo marinated pork loin that has been flame seared then topped with diced pineapple, onion, and cilantro. Finished with a wedge of lime.

**MOJO BOWL** Citrus and garlic marinated butternut squash charred over an open fire is layered with grilled onion, diced avocado, and fresh chopped cilantro. Served over a bed of tender U.S.-grown brown rice folded with black beans and fried garlic.

**CHURRASCO BOWL** A bed of U.S.-grown long grain white rice studded with onion and roasted garlic is topped with slices of tender seared skirt steak, smoked sausage, charred tomatoes, and black beans. Finished with a generous drizzle of chimichurri.

**KARAAGE BOWL** Juicy pieces of white meat chicken are piled with pickled purple cabbage, toasted sesame seeds, nori, and a drizzle of chili mayo. Served over a bowl of U.S.-grown short grain rice folded with sweet and savory furikake.

**TOM KHA BOWL** Fragrant U.S.-grown basmati rice is simmered in coconut milk with lime and a hint of savory fish sauce before getting topped with slices of button mushrooms, minced Thai chili, diced tomato, sliced scallion, and tender lemongrass poached shrimp. Served with a wedge of lime.

**COCONUT MANGO RICE DESSERT BOWL** U.S.-grown short grain rice simmered in a sweet mixture of coconut and condensed milk is topped with fresh mango, sliced plum, pomegranate seeds, fruit flavored boba pearls, and fresh chopped mint.

**CAJUN DIRTY RICE DOG** A charred andouille sausage in a blackened butter toasted hot dog bun is loaded with classic U.S.-grown Cajun dirty rice, green tomato chow chow, fried garlic, and sliced scallion.

**MOLE BURRITO** U.S.-grown long grain rice cooked with achiote and lime juice is layered with rich mole braised portobello mushrooms, charred bell peppers, black beans, fresh cilantro, and melty queso Oaxaca in a warm tender flour tortilla.

**BIBIMBAP WRAP** U.S.-grown short grain rice seasoned with soy and mirin is seared until crispy and wrapped in a warm flour tortilla with marinated mushrooms, bean sprouts, kimchi, sautéed spinach, and shaved red onion. Finished with a drizzle of fermented chili sauce and toasted sesame seeds.





# RICE TO THE RESCUE

Get even more resources on how to win takeout  
and delivery from USA Rice at  
[ThinkRice.com/Rescue](http://ThinkRice.com/Rescue)



<sup>1</sup>Datassential Consumer One Table G9.1 and G9.2  
<sup>2</sup>Datassential Consumer One Table K1  
<sup>3</sup>Datassential Consumer One Table L2  
<sup>4</sup>Datassential Consumer One Table L3.1  
<sup>5</sup>Datassential Consumer One Table L3.2  
<sup>6</sup>Datassential Consumer One Table H4.1 – H4.6  
<sup>7</sup>Food Waste Alliance, Food Waste Report 2016  
<sup>8</sup>Datassential Consumer Survey, Question M10

