

# U.S.★GROWN RICE

## Appealing | Familiar | Nutritious

Rice is a universally consumed and well loved kitchen staple that provides benefits for every life stage and budget. Whether served alone, as a first food, a comfort food, a way to explore new cuisines and flavors or as part of a gourmet dish, there's no denying that rice is versatile and an important component of everyday eating.

### FAST FACTS ABOUT RICE

- 1** U.S.-grown rice is naturally **sodium, cholesterol, gluten, and GMO-free.**
- 2** The bran of whole grain rice contains **γ-oryzanol** which may improve blood lipids, blood sugar, and immunity.<sup>1</sup>

- 3** **White and brown rice come from the same kernel.** All rice starts as whole grain rice and then can be further milled to become white rice, which is typically enriched with beneficial vitamins and minerals.

- 4** **U.S.-grown rice has the lowest levels of arsenic in the world,** and it has never not met the international standards. In an examination by the World Health Organization, U.S.-grown rice had the lowest levels of inorganic arsenic compared to rice from the other countries.<sup>2</sup>

- 5** Research shows that white rice is familiar and appealing for its **aroma, appearance, and texture.**<sup>3</sup>

- 6** **Rice is affordable.** In a study of budget-friendly eating, rice was named as an essential food and was the most commonly mentioned food item for budget-friendly eating.<sup>4</sup>

# ENRICHMENT: THE ACT OF ADDING BACK NATURALLY OCCURRING NUTRIENTS

Most domestic white rice is enriched with nutrients that are already present in whole grain rice but were lost during milling including thiamin, niacin, iron, and folic acid.

## ENRICHED RICE IS CRITICAL TO FOLATE AND IRON INTAKE

Due to the widespread consumption of enriched grains, they are an important contributor to folic acid intake and they account for half of American's dietary iron intake.<sup>5,6</sup>



**1 CUP OF  
COOKED ENRICHED  
WHITE RICE SUPPLIES...**

104 mcg folic acid,  
about 25% of  
the daily value

2.77 mg iron,  
about 15% of  
the daily value.<sup>7,8</sup>

**Mandatory folic acid fortification began in 1998, and since this time, the rate of neural tube defects has dropped by 28%.<sup>9</sup>**

Adequate folate/folic acid is important during days 21 to 28 after conception when many women may not be aware they are pregnant.<sup>5</sup>

Infants, young children, women of reproductive age, and pregnant women are at risk of not getting enough iron.<sup>6</sup>

**In a literature review and Bayesian meta-analysis of women across 17 countries, enriched rice is shown to increase hemoglobin levels and may also reduce anemia in women of childbearing age.**

Based on these observed effects, it is estimated that 27 million women aged 15–49 years would no longer have anemia if they consumed enriched rice.<sup>10</sup>

# RICE CONSUMPTION IS LINKED TO BETTER OVERALL DIET QUALITY

Studies show that rice consumers have higher diet quality and include more fiber, grains, vegetables and meat/poultry/fish. They are less likely to be overweight/obese or have metabolic syndrome. Large cohort studies with health professionals showed that those consuming brown rice were more likely to have higher intakes of fruit, vegetables, and whole grains and lower intakes of red meat, to be more physically active and leaner, and less likely to smoke.<sup>11</sup>



**RICE IS A NUTRIENT-DENSE, COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATE THAT THE BODY SLOWLY DIGESTS TO STAY ENERGIZED THROUGHOUT THE DAY.**

Rice is virtually fat-free, containing no trans or saturated fat which can raise LDL cholesterol.

**RESEARCH SHOWS THAT BOTH WHITE AND BROWN RICE ARE SOURCES OF HEALTHY RESISTANT STARCH...**

especially when allowed to cool before eating. Resistant starch helps promote the feeling of fullness.<sup>36</sup>

**RESEARCH SUGGESTS THAT WHITE RICE MAY OFFER NATURAL PROTECTIVE BENEFITS AGAINST CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE (CVD).**

Data from more than 16,000 older adults was used to explore the association between staple foods and CVD risk. When compared to white rice, consuming certain other staple grains was linked to a 40.8% higher risk of CVD.<sup>24</sup>

# RICE DRIVES CONSUMPTION OF OTHER HEALTHY FOODS



**RICE IS OFTEN CONSUMED WITH OTHER FOODS WHICH CAN TEMPER THE IMPACT OF THE COMPLETE MEAL ON GLYCEMIC LOAD AND INSULIN RESPONSE.**

*This is beneficial as higher post-meal glycemic load or insulin response is implicated in the development of metabolic diseases.<sup>13,14</sup>*



**THE TOP FOODS SERVED WITH WHITE RICE INCLUDE MEAT, VEGETABLES, SALADS, AND LEGUMES.<sup>14</sup>**



**PLANT-BASED PROTEINS PAIR EASILY WITH RICE AS RICE IS A RICH SOURCE OF AMINO ACIDS**

*Especially due to its content of lysine, methionine, and cysteine.<sup>15</sup>*




## ENRICHED RICE IS PART OF A SUSTAINABLE DIET

White rice is affordable, prominent in many cultural eating patterns, appealing to consumers, accessible, shelf-stable, and is commonly served with other healthy foods making it an important part of a sustainable dietary pattern.

A 2024 prospective study examined more than 22,000 U.S. adults <65 years of age using data from NHANES 2007-2018. The study found that a sustainable diet index encompassing nutrition, environmental, sociocultural, and economic aspects of diets was linked to lower risk of all-cause mortality when compared to a less sustainable dietary pattern.<sup>16</sup>

# THE FACTS ABOUT ARSENIC

Heavy metals such as arsenic, cadmium, lead, and mercury are found naturally in rocks, soil, and water. Due to that, heavy metals can be found in most foods grown in soil. Levels of heavy metals vary dramatically across the globe depending on a variety of factors, so it is important to know where your food comes from.<sup>17</sup>

A close-up photograph of a hand watering a young rice plant. The hand is on the right, with water dripping from the fingers onto the dark soil. The rice seedling is in the center, with its thin stem and emerging golden-brown panicles. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

**“ARSENIC HAS ALWAYS BEEN PRESENT IN MANY OF THE FOODS WE EAT, INCLUDING FRUITS, VEGETABLES AND RICE. THERE ARE NO DOCUMENTED CASES OF RICE CAUSING ADVERSE HEALTH EFFECTS. IN FACT THE OPPOSITE IS TRUE, MANY POPULATIONS THAT CONSUME UP TO FIVE TIMES MORE RICE THAN AMERICANS HAVE LOWER DISEASE RATES AND HEALTHY DIETS OVERALL. THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF RICE SHOULD NOT BE OVERLOOKED. IT PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN MAINTAINING A HEALTHY, NUTRITIOUS, AND WHOLESOME DIET.”**

- Dr. Keith Ayoob, Associate Professor Emeritus, Department of Pediatrics (Developmental Medicine), Albert Einstein College of Medicine

**“THE ANTIOXIDANT VITAMINS A, C, AND E AND FOLIC ACID ARE ALSO KNOWN TO HELP REDUCE THE IMPACTS OF HEAVY METALS.”**

- Julie Miller Jones, PhD,  
CNS, Distinguished Scholar  
and Professor Emerita,  
Foods and Nutrition,  
St. Catherine University

*In people with folate deficiency, fortification of foods with folic acid, such as enriched rice, or supplementation with folic acid may have the added benefit of facilitating arsenic methylation and excretion to decrease arsenic toxicity.<sup>18,19,20</sup>*

# BENEFITS OF RICE FOR ADULTS

Whether you want to improve your nutrition, lose weight, boost your energy, or simply nourish your body, rice can help you achieve your goals. This tiny, but mighty, grain packs a serious nutritional punch.

In fact, decades of research demonstrate that frequent rice consumers have diets consistent with the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans and have reduced risk for obesity, high blood pressure, and metabolic syndrome.<sup>38,39,40</sup>

**41.9%**  
Obesity  
Prevalence

ACCORDING TO THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION, OBESITY PREVALENCE FOR ADULTS AGED 20 AND OLDER IN THE UNITED STATES IS ESTIMATED AT 41.9%.<sup>22</sup>

Study of  
**11,500**  
Men &  
Women

ROBUST RESEARCH SHOWS THAT RICE CONSUMERS HAVE HEALTHIER OVERALL DIETS AND A REDUCED RISK FOR OBESITY.<sup>23</sup>

A 2024 cohort study found that a diet consisting mainly of white rice and beans was strongly associated with lower all-cause mortality. Among the males, rice itself was linked to lower all-cause mortality.<sup>21</sup>



# BENEFITS OF RICE FOR INFANTS AND CHILDREN



**ABOUT 1 IN 5, OR 18% OF INFANT IN THE U.S. DO NOT CONSUME ADEQUATE IRON. IRON IS NEEDED AT THIS STAGE TO SUPPORT BRAIN DEVELOPMENT, GROWTH, AND IMMUNE FUNCTION.**

Iron helps in the production of muscle cells, and red blood cells which transport oxygen throughout the body.<sup>25</sup> It's important to educate caregivers that iron-fortified foods, including infant cereals, are crucial to supply adequate iron for infants.<sup>26</sup>

## THE FACTS ABOUT DECLINE IN USE OF IRON-FORTIFIED INFANT CEREAL CAN LEAD TO INADEQUATE IRON INTAKES

Using data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), this study demonstrated consumption of rice baby cereal in the 0-24-month population was linked to better nutrient intake which leads to better overall health and lower risk of disease.

**The study reviewed the reported intake of rice baby cereal, non-rice baby cereal, and non-baby cereal consumers.**

- The data suggests that infants who consumed baby cereal had greater consumption of nutrients from 0 to 23 months of age.
- The study also found that baby cereal consumers, both rice and non-rice, had better intake for nutrients such as iron and calcium.
- In addition, baby cereal consumers, again both rice and non-rice, had lower intakes of cheese, pizza, sandwiches, cured meats/poultry, desserts, fats, and oils.<sup>37</sup>

# INFANTS FED RICE SOLID FOOD WITHIN SIX MONTHS HAD A 27% LOWER RISK OF DEVELOPING ADHD

**ADHD is a common behavioral disorder in children with global incidence ranging from 2.2% to 7.2%.<sup>27,28</sup>**  
A Taiwan Birth cohort Study examined 19,000 children focusing on infant feeding, medical history, ADHD occurrence, and sociodemographic characteristics. The study showed that children who received rice-based solid foods through complementary feeding had a 27% lower risk of developing ADHD.<sup>29</sup>

**NUTRITION PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN  
PROPER INFANT NEURODEVELOPMENT.<sup>30</sup>**



Essential nutrients such as vitamins, protein, and fat are provided by breast milk during infancy, however, minerals are available in relatively low amounts in human milk. Complementary feeding is recommended for infants to supply much needed minerals including iron and zinc.<sup>31,32</sup>

# ABOUT USA RICE

USA Rice is the global advocate and trade association for all segments of the U.S. rice industry working to ensure the health and vitality of a unified U.S. rice industry. With more than 20 billion pounds of sustainably grown rice produced each year on family farms, U.S.-grown rice accounts for 80% of all the rice consumed domestically.

For recipes and resources,  
visit us at [www.thinkrice.com](http://www.thinkrice.com)

Three overlapping circles on the left side of the page. The top circle is red, the middle is blue, and the bottom is green. Each contains a statistic about rice production and consumption.

20 billion  
pounds of sustainably  
grown rice per year  
on family farms

80% of all  
rice consumed  
domestically

The average  
American consumes  
more than 27 pounds  
of rice per year

