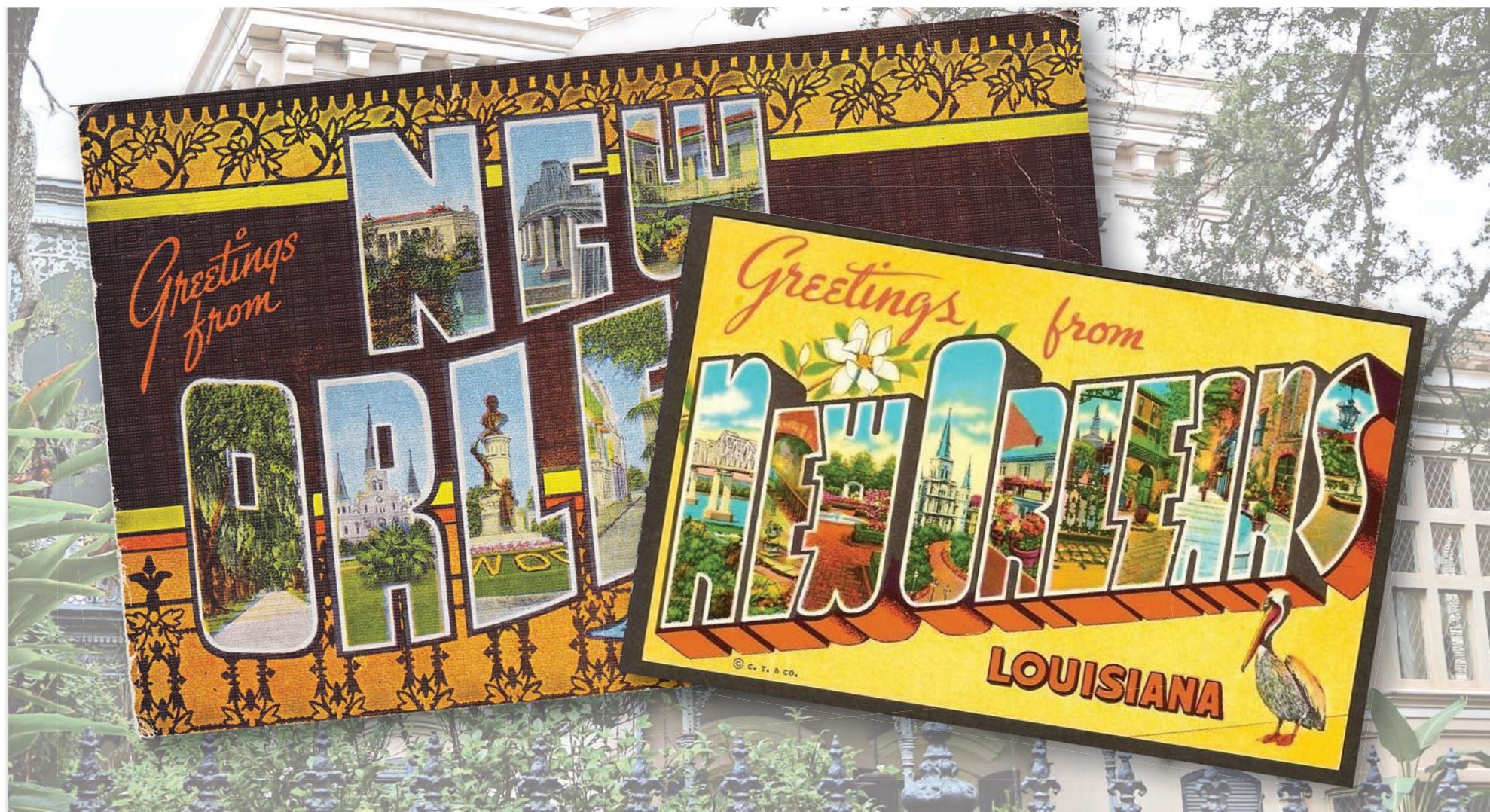


WHOLE GRAIN



2015 USA RICE OUTLOOK CONFERENCE: WISH YOU WERE HERE!



**2015 USA RICE
OUTLOOK CONFERENCE**
DECEMBER 9-11
SHERATON NEW ORLEANS
NEW ORLEANS, LA

CONFERENCE BROCHURE SPECIAL SECTION



REP. RALPH ABRAHAM (R-LA) PAGE 8

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TPP – Why Should Rice Care?
PAGE 6

**INTERNATIONAL
PROMOTION:**
Fortified Rice Good for
Food Aid
PAGE 22

USA Rice Financial Report
PAGE 28

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CIRCULATION: 25,000



USA Rice is the global advocate for all segments of the U.S. rice industry with a mission to promote and protect the interests of producers, millers, merchants, and allied businesses.

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FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S FARM: December is a Time to Meet and Help

BY DOW BRANTLEY

IT'S DECEMBER WHICH MEANS IT'S TIME FOR THE USA RICE OUTLOOK CONFERENCE — an exciting and valuable annual gathering of the rice industry. We come together, this year in New Orleans, to hear interesting speakers talk not just about the outlook for rice in our states and around the world, but to exchange ideas, concepts, and information, and to help each other achieve our common goal: being a part of a profitable and sustainable rice industry.

Speaking of helping people, I've just returned from a trip to Havana, Cuba, where USA Rice participated in the Havana Trade Show, and if there was ever a group of people that need our help, it's the Cuban people.

I know there are people right here at home that need our help too, and I personally do what I can, and I know you do too. But as we drove around Havana, visiting public grocery stores, and stores where Cubans can go claim their monthly rations, I was struck by the plight of these good people.

We saw rice on shelves that was well past any kind of use by date where the oil had leached out of the rice and through the bag; I held rice from Viet Nam that literally crumbled in my hand.

The good news on our trip was that when we met with the leaders at Alimport, the government agency responsible for importing everything Cuba needs, they made it clear to us that they want our rice.

They know it's good quality and they know we can get it to them quickly and in quantities that make sense for them. The problem of course remains the payment terms. Currently U.S. companies cannot extend credit to Cuba for agriculture commodities. It's understandable. But it isn't sustainable, and after visiting Cuba, I don't think it's right.

Our government needs to help us help the people of Cuba by either guaranteeing the credit businesses would like to extend to Cuba, or allowing for, and helping us develop other creative ways to get our products into this market.

I look forward to hearing the Cuban Ambassador to the United States — the first in 54 years — when he addresses the Outlook Conference on Friday. His Excellency José Ramón Cabañas Rodríguez will share his perspective on where our two countries can go from here and what he thinks needs to happen to move our relationship forward.

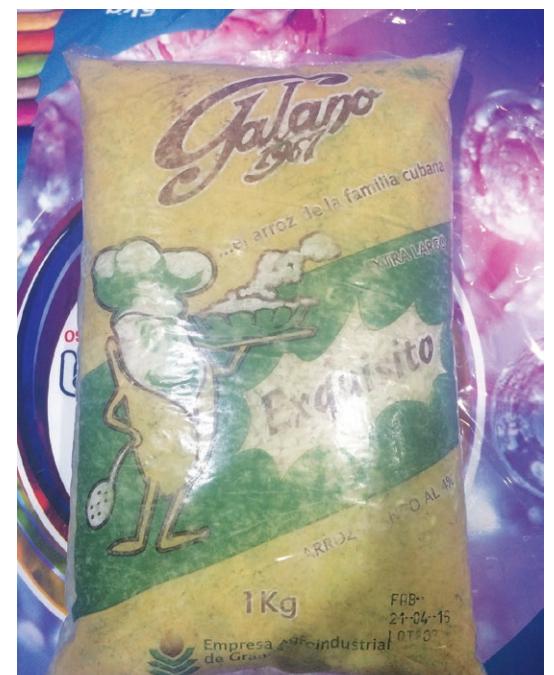
To me, it's U.S. dollars, innovation, and entrepreneurship that are needed in Cuba. The U.S. rice industry can, should, and will be a major



"To me, it's U.S. dollars, innovation, and entrepreneurship that are needed in Cuba. The U.S. rice industry can, should, and will be a major player here, as we once were."

player here, as we once were. And I look forward to the day I can return to Cuba and see these great and proud people enjoying access to the high quality U.S. rice they so richly deserve. 

BELOW LEFT: Typical store where Cubans pick up their monthly rations.
BELOW RIGHT: Expired rice still on the shelves.



President & CEO Outlook

BY BETSY WARD

THE FOCUS OF THIS ISSUE of our award-winning *Whole Grain* is fairly evenly split between international issues and the 2015 USA Rice Outlook Conference going on in New Orleans from December 9-11. You can read about what the Trans Pacific Partnership deal really means for rice (page 6), about some of our exciting international promotion programs (page 26), and how the federal government is putting even more money against our efforts in 2016 (page 24). And you can read about our chairman's recent trip to Cuba (facing page) and the ever maddening and chaotic situation in Iraq (page 6).

But I'd also like you to spend some time looking at the special section on our Outlook conference. I recognize that most of you reading this will not be attending the conference. Our circulation is around 25,000 and even though we are closing in on 1,000 attendees this year, that still means about 96 percent of our readers aren't joining us in New Orleans.

That's too bad, because we've put together a great program with wonderful speakers, and not only will you miss that - we'll miss your valuable input.

The USA Rice Outlook Conference is an educational service we offer our members and the U.S. rice industry - that's why attendees hear a rice outlook and research report for each rice producing state. It's why we have economists sharing insight into global trends, and lots of political analysis - especially as a presidential election year approaches.

We're thrilled to have programmed a casual discussion with Congressman Ralph Abraham (R-LA) (see the interview on page 8), and to have our invitation to the first Cuban Ambassador to the United States in more than half a century accepted. And of course, we're delighted to present our keynote speakers, James Carville and Mary Matalin, in an intimate discussion about politics, campaigns, governing, and life in general.

El Niño, our political action committee, the future of food and rice, the annual Rice Awards Luncheon, the selection of the Rice Leadership Development program class of 2016/18, and a robust rice-specific trade show round out a program that is bursting at the seams.

Believe it or not, there's even some downtime that we encourage people to spend in the trade show hall with our 59 exhibitors, or networking with other attendees. I know our members get some of the most value out of these moments, learning from peers the challenges and innovations going on in the same industry but in a different part of the country. Everyone takes something away from the Outlook conference.

So if you are one of our generous sponsors, or an attendee here in New Orleans: thank you! If you have attended in the past but didn't come this year, I'd love to hear your thoughts about why you didn't come, so please reach out to me. And if you've never been to a USA Rice Outlook Conference, I'd like you to read through what's on tap this year and then mark your calendar to join us next year in Memphis for the 2016 USA Rice Outlook Conference from December 7-9. We're going to try to top this year, and as you can see, that will be no easy feat. [w.c.](#)



"... if you are one of our generous sponsors, or an attendee here in New Orleans: thank you! If you have attended in the past but didn't come this year, I'd love to hear your thoughts about why you didn't come, so please reach out to me."

SCENES FROM THE 2014 USA RICE OUTLOOK CONFERENCE



LOUISIANA'S YELLOW RAILS AND RICE FESTIVAL A Festival Like No Other

BY DONNA DITTMANN

Baton Rouge, LA – Each year in late October birders from all over the world flock to the heart of Louisiana's southwest prairie region to attend the Yellow Rails and Rice Festival hoping to add a special entry to their Life List.

Since the mid-80s, Steve Cardiff and I, both collections managers at the Louisiana State University Museum of Natural Science in Baton Rouge and birders ourselves, would often look for Yellow Rails by watching combines harvest rice fields. A chance meeting one fall day with rice farmer Kevin Berken became a new friendship between Steve and me and Kevin and his wife, Shirley – and the idea of a festival to bring visitors to Louisiana to see Yellow Rails began to take shape.

Cardiff explains, “Yellow Rails are fairly widespread, nesting in southern Canada and the northern U.S., wintering along southern Atlantic and Gulf Coasts, including Louisiana, where they stay hidden in marshes, wet grassy fields, and rice fields. What is unique is that the Yellow Rail's fall arrival in southern Louisiana overlaps with the late fall harvest of second crop rice, known as the ratoon crop.”

The Berkens, a local rice farming family, were keenly aware of the potential promotional and agritourism benefits to the rice industry the little birds' migration pattern could offer. Kevin Berken, a second generation rice farmer and chairman of the Louisiana Rice Promotion Board, proudly says, “Not only does this festival provide a great way to promote Louisiana-grown rice, but it allows rice farmers to showcase the cultivation of an essential food crop, and while doing so, show birders that we provide critical habitat for birds. National and state conservation groups also participate at the festival - so that many invested parties from the conservation community, the rice industry, and tourism industry get a chance to interact.”

For many rice farmers, creation of wildlife habitats happens simply as a normal part of routine rice cultivation. Bird-friendly management of associated areas like fallow fields, drainage ditches, and field edges offers additional opportunities to enhance the landscape to provide for a broader suite of bird species, such as Le Conte's Sparrows, Henslow's Sparrows, and Sprague's Pipits, as well as other wildlife.

Shirley Berken adds, “Our festival has something for everyone: birds, of course, but also information booths and workshops, rice mill tours, even a sunset supper in a rice field with a local band providing mood music. The 145 visitors we hosted this year will leave Louisiana with memories not only of their Yellow Rail sighting, but of a broader Louisiana experience, visiting local museums, feasting on regional delicacies, and even being serenaded by a Cajun band.” 

Donna Dittmann is a Genetic Resources Collections Manager at the LSU Museum of Natural Science in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and Louisiana Ornithological Society Vice President and Secretary of the Louisiana Bird Records Committee. She is an avid birder and in addition to Yellow Rail, has seen over 400 species on her Louisiana State List.



TOP: After being netted during the bird banding workshop, a Yellow Rail is fitted with a radio transmitter to study local movements after rice is harvested.

BOTTOM: Bird enthusiasts flock to Louisiana rice fields, cameras and binoculars at the ready, to view the elusive Yellow Rails as they are flushed out by combines during harvest.

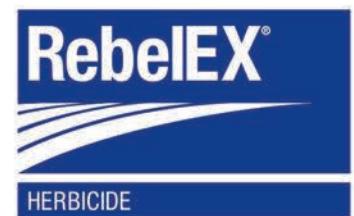
“Not only does this festival provide a great way to promote Louisiana-grown rice, but it allows rice farmers to showcase the cultivation of an essential food crop, and while doing so, show birders that we provide critical habitat for birds.”

– Kevin Berken, a second generation rice farmer and chairman of the Louisiana Rice Promotion Board



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IRAQ UPDATE: CHAOS STILL REIGNS

BY JIM GUINN

BAGHDAD, IRAQ – Amid reports of corruption centered around rice tenders conducted by the Iraqi Minister of Trade, USA Rice has learned a court order was issued to arrest the Iraqi Trade Minister and his brother to be investigated for corruption. This put on indefinite hold a planned U.S. visit to rice country by Iraqi government officials that USA Rice had arranged and secured with help from the U.S. government.

The new Trade Minister is Mr. Mohamad Shayaa Al Soudani, formerly the Minister for the Human Rights, who currently serves as the Minister for Labor in addition to his duties as Trade Minister.

Because of the changes at the head of the Trade Ministry as well as the forced retirement of a number of members of the Grain Board there are lots of new managers and directors in important decision making positions. USA Rice, with the help of our consultant on the ground in Baghdad, has already begun to build new relationships to ensure that the new Iraqis have accurate information about USA Rice, the U.S. rice exporting companies, and about the quality of the product that Iraq gets from the U.S. as opposed to that from other origins.

A new tender was announced on October 22 with a due date for offers of November 15. The tender listed eligible suppliers as the USA, Argentina, Uruguay, and India. Due to the chaos it is unclear if this tender will be postponed but at press time, information indicates that Iraq needs to buy rice very soon in order to have ample supplies for the citizenry under the government rationing program.

“At this point, USA Rice will await further guidance from our consultant and the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad before proceeding with plans for a visit to the U.S. by members of the Ministry of Trade or the Grain Board,” said USA Rice President & CEO Betsy Ward. “We are pressing very hard to ensure that U.S. rice will be regularly purchased by Iraq.” 

Jim Guinn is USA Rice vice president for international promotion.



ABOVE: During a visit to the Mississippi Delta in May 2014, then members of the Iraqi Grain Board visited Dow Brantley's farm in England, AR. **RIGHT:** The comprehensive tour included a trip to a mill in Mississippi.



WHAT'S THE TRANS PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP & WHY SHOULD RICE CARE?

BY BOB CUMMINGS



ARLINGTON, VA – The United States government announced with great fanfare on October 5 the completion of the Trans Pacific Partnership – or TPP for short. There was much self-congratulating for completing a complex and comprehensive trade agreement among twelve nations that ring the Pacific

Ocean, ranging from economic power houses like the United States and Japan to advanced developing countries like Viet Nam.

The agreement is huge and significant. The twelve countries combined represent nearly 40 percent of global gross domestic product and just under one quarter of world trade. The agreement reinforces a U.S. strategic and economic orientation to Asia and the Pacific Rim and it's the latest cudgel in the political debate here about the pros and cons of globalization. Beyond headlines, what does this agreement mean for our farmers and millers, and do we have an interest?

The easy answer is yes, we have a huge interest in TPP. Almost one-half of U.S. rice production is exported and around 15 percent of domestic rice consumption comes from imports, so we have both “offensive” and “defensive” interests. That's trade speak for we want trade agreements that open up new markets for U.S. rice as well as protect against unfair import competition. TPP countries are both rice importers and exporters, so assessing the agreement means dealing with pros and cons.

Let's start with what did the U.S. rice industry get, which means what additional access is provided in Japan? When the TPP enters into force, which is likely three or more years out, Japan will establish what's called a country specific quota (CSQ) for 50,000 metric tons of U.S. rice which will grow to 70,000 metric tons by the end of year 13. The Japanese government will have a heavy hand in running the CSQ, and will add a “mark-up” to the price of imports equivalent to about \$180 per metric ton. Japan also “expects” that the United States will be successful in getting a large majority of a new



U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman, the top U.S. trade negotiator

import allocation designated as medium grain for processing, but there is no specific tonnage commitment. Finally, Japan agreed to phase out or reduce import tariffs on rice-containing products, some of which are of interest to U.S. exporters. The U.S. currently exports about

Continued on page 20



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SITTING DOWN WITH REPRESENTATIVE RALPH ABRAHAM (R-LA)

RALPH ABRAHAM HAS WORKED as a practicing physician, veterinarian, business owner, farmer, and pilot. In December 2014 he was elected to represent the 5th District of Louisiana in Congress. A fierce supporter of the agricultural community, Dr. Abraham is committed to protecting the interests of his district, the largest row crop district in the nation.

His position on the House Committee on Agriculture, including the General Farm Commodities & Risk Management and the Nutrition Subcommittees, allows him to advocate for Louisiana's farmers and ensure they are well represented on a federal level.

Dr. Abraham is scheduled to attend the 2015 USA Rice Outlook Conference where he will participate in a sit down conversation with his friend and neighbor, Louisiana rice farmer John Owen. In advance of that, last month *Whole Grain* visited with Dr. Abraham in his Washington, DC office. Following are highlights of that conversation.

Whole Grain: *You have never held an elective office before being elected to Congress. What made you decide to run?*

Congressman Ralph Abraham: "My grandchildren made me decide to run for Congress. This nation has gotten to the point that Diane, my wife, and I thought that it needed a new direction. So that's why we got in the race and we were fortunate enough to win and hopefully we can make a difference that will affect the direction that we are going."

WG: *As the Member of Congress representing the largest row crop district in the nation, being named to the Agriculture Committee is obviously very important to your constituents – what do you hope to bring to the Committee?*

RA: "I was very fortunate to be put on the Agriculture Committee. I actually asked for that Committee out of the gate...what I can bring is that I've not only lived [in the district] my whole life, but I've actively farmed for a large portion of my life. I know what it takes to grow a crop. I know what it takes to invest in a crop and I know how risky it is on a daily basis to get out there and make sure everything is working properly...we hope we can bring a lot to the Committee."

WG: *You mentioned risk in farming; something you and our readers are quite familiar with. But perhaps not most Americans, or even all of your colleagues. What can be done about this disconnect?*

RA: "Certainly, the general population as a whole doesn't understand or know at all the risk of farming on a daily basis. A bad day can make or break you. If you have hail damage, if you have straight wind damage, which we have a lot of times in our 5th District and all over Louisiana, all over the South, and it can lay a crop down and you can't get it back up. One bad year can wipe out five good years in a heartbeat, literally. It's a very precarious occupation."

"Our farm men and women are truly the unsung heroes of the nation because they are responsible for our nation's food security. And let me tell you, it is a national security issue with food safety. So every day we need to tell a farmer that we appreciate what they do and let them know that we understand that what they do is very important."

"And as a farming community, whether it be in Louisiana or any other state in the nation, we can still educate the non-farmers and those that probably never get off the pavement, so to speak. And it is our

responsibility to tell them what it takes to grow a crop, make a crop, produce a crop, harvest a crop, and the inherent risk involved. And if we continue to send that message to them over and over then, in time, it will sink in and they'll get it."

WG: *It's not too early to be thinking about the next Farm Bill. What priorities have you identified so far that you would like to see addressed?*

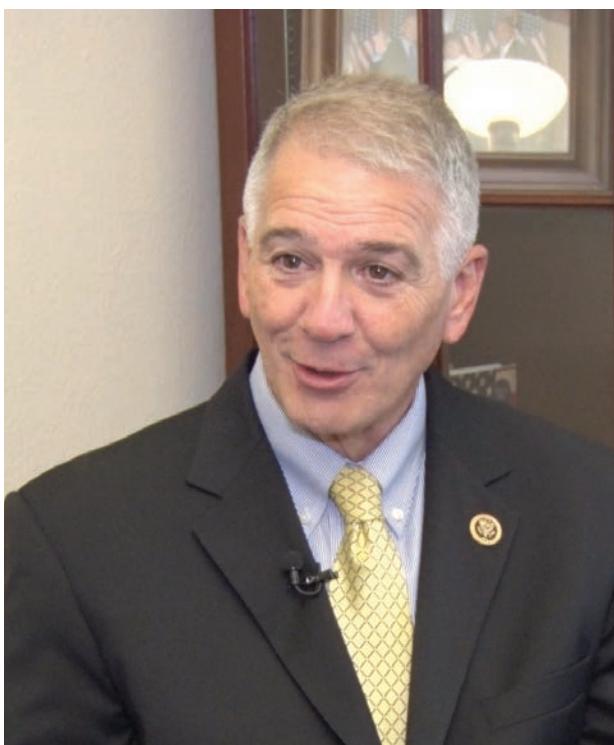
RA: "In the new Farm Bill, we have to reallocate certain acreages so that our farmers – however they allocate their land, to say, their renters or to themselves – can grow the crops they want to grow and that our nation needs to grow. We need to make sure the crop insurance industry at least has enough of an incentive to write insurance for our farmers. As farmers we know that crop insurance is not going to put money in our pockets, but what it will do for our farmers that are having a tough year will hopefully make them bankable for their bankers for the next year. And that's all it does. And once again, people that don't farm think crop insurance is a panacea for anything bad. No, it's not. It's a very small part of the farmer's accountability, but he's got to be able to put the crop in the ground next year."

WG: *Rice is an important part of our country's international food aid programs, but we've recently seen in-kind contributions come under attack. What are your thoughts on the programs using in-kind contributions, such as U.S.-grown rice, as opposed to just sending money overseas to buy local commodities?*

RA: "We want U.S. rice. We want that stamp that says 'U.S. Aid' on that sack of rice. Not only is it a wonderfully good product, a very nutritious product, more so than some of these other countries that grow their own rice, but when you see that U.S. symbol on there – that serves as an ambassadorship, so to speak, for the United States. It promotes good will throughout the world and that's important now for all the troubles that we have in the hot spots of the world. So if we can, as farmers, as a country, show that we are trying to do the right thing, help their people, and the people that are actually eating this rice see this – that bodes well for America. And we need to continue that."

WG: *What do you think the next President of the United States is going to have to do to get elected?*

RA: "The next President, he or she – and it could be a she from either party – is going to have to entrust themselves



to the public and again I think that's something we are lacking as a nation – trusting elected officials, and certainly trusting the President. So whatever party wins, the trust issue is the most important. Now how do you do that? Well, you tell the truth. And what you say is what you do and I think it is that simple. People are not looking for somebody to part the waters like Moses and lead them out of the land of Egypt, but what they are looking for is a leader that they can follow; that if he or she says something, they know it is going to be true. Now it does not mean that the next President can't have bad news from time to time. American people are mature enough to handle the bad news with the good news. But again, all they want is somebody to tell them what's the right thing and what's the truth."

WG: *You're well into your first term in Congress. What are the priorities you have established for yourself that you want to achieve while you are in Washington?*

RA: "The first part is we need to take care of our veterans. We are not doing as good a job as we should. These men and women have literally laid time, treasure, and sometimes life on the line for us and you still see some debacles in the Veterans Administration system. We need to fix that, we need to get the veterans taken care of. On the farming side, we need, as we have talked about, to promote farming, educate the general population as to what farmers do for us as a country as far as national security.

"So if I have any legacy, I would be happy to leave [Washington] if I could strike those two; I think it would be a good day. [w](#)"

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2015 USA RICE
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GUIDE

Special Section



DECEMBER 9-11
SHERATON NEW ORLEANS
New Orleans, LA





USA RICE OUTLOOK CONFERENCE REFLECTIONS

An Outlook Conference Veteran Shares Some Thoughts

By Don Molino

"I'm proud to be associated with American agriculture and the rice industry and all you do for this world. Thanks!"

WELCOME TO NEW ORLEANS! The Big Easy! The city that refused to die after that devastating hurricane not so long ago.

I've been coming to the USA Rice Outlook Conference for a lot of years and each has been different. There are some things that never change, of course... Trish Alderson giving me last minute changes to the program but making sure I have them in time so I don't make a complete fool of myself, the always friendly and efficient USA Rice staff making things easier for everyone. But on the other hand, the trade show without fail each year brings new and exciting products and services, the speakers always challenging us to perhaps change the way we do things and giving us a lot of valuable information.

And it never ceases to amaze me just how many people are affected by the

U.S. rice industry either directly or indirectly. It also never ceases to amaze me just how many people outside the industry take this industry and all of agriculture for granted.

I've seen what kind of work it takes to bring that little grain from an idea at the LSU Rice Research Station to the consumer. Folks, you know it ain't easy.

Every year, though, at this conference, we all get a chance to see up close and personal how our lives can perhaps be made a little easier and yes, even a little more profitable.

I'm proud to be associated with American agriculture and the rice industry and all you do for this world. Thanks!

And now, as the Cajuns say: "Laissez les bons temps rouler!"

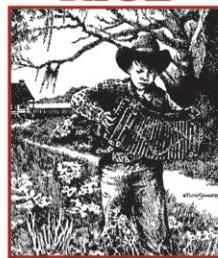


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USA RICE OUTLOOK CONFERENCE SPEAKER NOTES

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10



Keynote Address: A Look at the Political Landscape with Mary Matalin and James Carville

Join husband and wife political strategists and best-selling authors **Mary Matalin** and **James Carville** for an exciting political conversation.



Political Action Committees: A Critical Tool for Any Trade Association **Michael E. Dunn**, Chairman & CEO, Dunn Associates

Mike Dunn is well known for his expertise in helping major trade and professional associations with PACs and grassroots advocacy. Dunn will address the importance of political involvement and how it can directly impact your future success.



Farm Management Learning Session: Strategies for Professional Family Business Governance and Transition

R. L. "Dick" Wittman, Wittman Consulting Services

Dick Wittman will help participants identify best management practices in family business management and governance that need discussion, resolution and documentation to build cohesive teamwork and long-term sustainability on the farm.



U.S. and Global Rice Supply and Demand and New Technologies to Assess Rice Production

Andrew Aaronson, Chairperson, Interagency Commodity Estimates Committee for Rice, World Agricultural Outlook Board, Office of the Chief Economist, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Andrew Aaronson will give a current assessment of the 2015/16 rice marketing year for the United States as well as global supply and demand, including USDA price forecasts, and forecasts of production, exports, imports, consumption, and stocks.

Aaronson also will focus on several applications of assessing rice production using satellite-derived data. This is your opportunity to hear about some of the new tools USDA uses to help assess crop production around the world.



Putting the Chill on "Godzilla" El Niño for 2016

Joel Widenor, Co-Founder, Chief Administrative Officer, Commodity Weather Group LLC

Joel Widenor will provide analysis of the most severe global impacts from El Niño on rice output, and scenarios for when El Niño weakens and possibly flips quickly to its cooler relative La Niña in the Pacific Ocean.

He will provide projections on the likely winners and losers globally in the 2016 growing season, based on patterns driven by both the waning El Niño and other weather factors.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11



A Conversation with Congressman Ralph Abraham, M.D. (LA 05)

Dr. Abraham represents Louisiana's 5th Congressional District - the largest row crop district in the nation. He'll discuss his journey from practicing physician, veterinarian, business owner, farmer, pilot, and veteran to Member of the important House Agriculture Committee.



Economic Outlook: Straight Talk, Straight Actions

Dr. David Kohl, Professor Emeritus, Department of Agricultural & Applied Economics, Virginia Tech

Expect straight talk on the global economic trends that will impact your bottom line and decision-making from Dr. Kohl. What are the factors impacting the economic reset? Does China matter? How long will it last? What will its impact be on profit and asset values and overall rural economic health?

Kohl will provide insight and answers to the most common questions asked by producers, owners, and managers.



Distinguished Guest Speaker (Invited)

Ambassador José Ramón Cabañas Rodríguez, República de Cuba

His Excellency José Ramón Cabañas Rodríguez is Cuba's first ambassador to the United States in 54 years. Ambassador Cabañas will offer his perspective on U.S.-Cuba relations and the potential for renewed U.S. rice exports to Cuba.



Washington Outlook

Jim Wiesemeyer, Senior Vice President, Informa Economics, Washington Bureau

Always a conference highlight - Jim Wiesemeyer is back with a timely outlook on policy and politics, and how both will affect agriculture and rice.



The Future of Food and What It Means for Rice **A Panel Discussion with Food and Rice Experts**

How will we buy food in 2065? How will consumers, food brands, and manufacturers, interact in the future? Join futurist **Mike Lee**, founder and CEO of Studio Industries, and a panel of industry experts to answer these and other burning questions.

Panelists:

Paul Galvani, Riviana Foods

Todd Kluger, Lundberg Family Farms

Robin Fisher, PF. Chang's China Bistro, Inc





USA RICE OUTLOOK CONFERENCE PROGRAM

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8

Noon to 5:30 p.m. REGISTRATION OPEN
Grand Ballroom Foyer, 5th Floor

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. REGISTRATION OPEN
Grand Ballroom Foyer, 5th Floor

6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. GRAND OPENING RECEPTION AND EXHIBIT HALL
Grand Ballroom ABC, 5th Floor
With music from The Back Door Band

7:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. USA RICE PAC DINNER AND AUCTION (Ticketed Event)
Armstrong Ballroom, 8th Floor
With music from the Pine Leaf Boys

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10

7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. REGISTRATION OPEN
Grand Ballroom Foyer, 5th Floor

7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST, COFFEE AND BEVERAGE SERVICE IN EXHIBIT HALL
Grand Ballroom ABC, 5th Floor

7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. NEW PRODUCTS AND TECHNOLOGY BREAKFAST SHOWCASE
CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST, COFFEE AND BEVERAGE SERVICE
Grand Ballroom D, 5th Floor



Session Host: Farm Press

Presenters:

BASF Corporation, John Schultz	Intellifarms, Keith Kinne
John Deere Company, Kevin Ripple	Creed Rice Co./Rice Online.com, Michael Creed
RiceTec, Kelly Downing	Modern Processing Equipment, John Eiting
CASEIH, Adam Wright	AP Innovations, Katie Smith
Valent USA Corporation, Frank Carey	Firstgrain, Milo Hamilton
The Rice Trader, Jeremy Zwinger	Food Protection Services, Perry Nettles
Horizon Ag, Sunny Bottoms	USDA/NRCS, Kevin Norton
Delta Plastics, Sean Whiteley	ProvisionGard Technology, Jim Bagwell

8:45 a.m. Guest Event: FRENCH QUARTER TOUR AND COOKING SCHOOL (Ticketed Event)
Meet in the hotel lobby

9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. VISIT THE EXHIBIT HALL
Grand Ballroom ABC, 5th Floor
Enter to win two free registrations to the 2016 USA Rice Outlook Conference in Memphis, TN. You can only enter between 9 and 10 a.m. Thursday in the Exhibit Hall. The winner will be announced during Friday morning's General Session.



10:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. GENERAL SESSION
Napoleon Ballroom AB, 3rd Floor

10:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks
Dow Brantley, Chairman, USA Rice
Host State Welcome
Dr. Mike Strain, Commissioner, Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry

10:15 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. Keynote Address: A Look at the Political Landscape with MARY MATALIN and JAMES CARVILLE
Moderator: Brian King

11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Political Action Committees: A Critical Tool for Any Trade Association
Michael E. Dunn, Chairman & CEO, Dunn Associates

Noon to 1:00 p.m. LUNCH AVAILABLE
Exhibit Hall, Grand Ballroom ABC, 5th Floor
A light lunch will be available in the Exhibit Hall until 1 p.m. Take advantage of this opportunity to visit the trade show booths and connect with other conference attendees.

1:00 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. AFTERNOON PROGRAM
Important Program Notes:
• The afternoon program includes concurrent sessions in the Grand Ballroom, 5th floor. Please check presentation times and locations.
• Presentations by Andrew Aaronson and Joel Widenor are offered twice.

1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Farm Management Learning Session: Strategies for Professional Family Business Governance and Transition
Grand Ballroom D, 5th Floor
R. L. "Dick" Wittman, Wittman Consulting Services

1:00 p.m. to 1:55 p.m. U.S. and Global Rice Supply and Demand and New Technologies to Assess Rice Production
Grand Ballroom E, 5th Floor
Andrew Aaronson, Chairperson, Interagency Commodity Estimates Committee for Rice, World Agricultural Outlook Board, Office of the Chief Economist, U.S. Department of Agriculture
This presentation will be repeated at 3:30 p.m.

2:00 p.m. to 2:45 p.m. Putting the Chill on "Godzilla" El Niño for 2016
Grand Ballroom E, 5th Floor
Joel Widenor, Co-Founder, Chief Administrative Officer, Commodity Weather Group LLC
This presentation will be repeated at 4:30 p.m.

2:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. BREAK: Coffee and Beverage Service in the Exhibit Hall
Grand Ballroom ABC, 5th Floor

2:30 p.m. Offsite Learning Session: THE RUSSELL MARINE GROUP AND EUROFINIS (Ticketed Event)
Meet in the hotel lobby

3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. RICE OUTLOOK AND RESEARCH REPORTS
Grand Ballroom D, 5th Floor

3:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. LOUISIANA
Outlook Report: Michael E. Salassi, Department Head & Professor, Dept. of Agricultural Economics & Agribusiness, Louisiana State University AgCenter
Research Report: Steve Linscombe, Director & Senior Rice Breeder, Louisiana State University AgCenter Rice Research Station

3:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. MISSISSIPPI
Outlook Report: Larry Falconer, Extension Professor, Mississippi State University, Delta Research and Extension Center
Research Report: Bobby R. Golden, Extension/Research Rice Agronomist, Mississippi State University, Delta Research and Extension Center

- 4:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. **TEXAS**
Outlook Report: Joe Outlaw, Professor and Extension Economist, Texas A&M University
Research Report: Lloyd T. "Ted" Wilson, Professor and Center Director, Texas A&M University AgriLife Research Center
- 3:30 p.m. to 4:25 p.m. **U.S. and Global Rice Supply and Demand and New Technologies to Assess Rice Production**
 Grand Ballroom E, 5th Floor
Andrew Aaronson (Repeat of 1:00 p.m. presentation.)
- 4:30 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. **Putting the Chill on "Godzilla" El Niño for 2016**
 Grand Ballroom E, 5th Floor
Joel Widenor (Repeat of 2:00 p.m. presentation.)
- 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. **ANNUAL USA RICE OUTLOOK CONFERENCE RECEPTION**
 Grand Ballroom ABC, 5th Floor

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11

- 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. **REGISTRATION OPEN**
 Grand Ballroom Foyer, 5th Floor
- 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST, COFFEE AND BEVERAGE SERVICE IN EXHIBIT HALL**
 Grand Ballroom ABC, 5th Floor
- 7:30 a.m. to 9:10 a.m. **RICE OUTLOOK AND RESEARCH REPORTS**
 Grand Ballroom DE, 5th Floor
-  7:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. **CALIFORNIA**
Outlook Report: Randall "Cass" Mutters, County Director/Farm Advisor, University of California Cooperative Extension
Research Report: Kent S. McKenzie, Director, Rice Experiment Station, California Cooperative Rice Research Foundation
- 8:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. **MISSOURI**
Outlook Report: Sam Atwell, Agronomy Specialist/Rice, University of Missouri Extension
Research Report: Matthew Rhine, Research Associate - Cropping Systems, University of Missouri, Fisher Delta Research Center
- 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. **ARKANSAS**
Outlook Report: Robert Coats, Professor - Economics, University of Arkansas System, Division of Agriculture
Research Report: Charles E. "Chuck" Wilson Jr., Director, Rice Research and Extension Center, University of Arkansas
- 9:00 a.m. to 9:10 a.m. **An Update from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service**
Jack K. Okamoto, USDA-ARS, National Program Leader, Plant Biology, Crop Production and Protection
 This presentation will report on collaborative efforts between USDA's Agricultural Research Service and the U.S. rice industry.
- 9:10 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. **VISIT THE EXHIBIT HALL – COFFEE AND BEVERAGE SERVICE**
 Grand Ballroom ABC, 5th Floor

- 9:30 a.m. to 11:55 a.m. **GENERAL SESSION**
 Grand Ballroom DE, 5th Floor
- 9:35 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. **A Conversation with Congressman Ralph Abraham, M.D. (LA 05)**
Moderator: John Owen
- 10:05 a.m. to 11:05 a.m. **Economic Outlook: Straight Talk, Straight Actions**
Dr. David Kohl, Professor Emeritus, Department of Agricultural & Applied Economics, Virginia Tech
- 11:10 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. **Prize Announcement**
 Winner of Two Registrations to the 2016 USA Rice Outlook Conference
- 11:15 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. **Break**
- 11:30 a.m. to 11:55 a.m. **Distinguished Guest Speaker (Invited)**
Ambassador José Ramón Cabañas Rodríguez, República de Cuba
- Noon to 1:30 p.m. **ANNUAL RICE AWARDS LUNCHEON**
 Napoleon Ballroom AB, 3rd Floor
2015 Rice Awards:
 Farmer of the Year
 Rice Industry
 Lifetime Achievement
 The 2015 Rice Awards are sponsored by Horizon Ag, *Rice Farming* magazine, and USA Rice. *Rice Farming* editor Vicky Boyd will make the presentations.
The 2015 Rice Awards Luncheon also will feature the:
 USA Rice Distinguished Conservation Achievement Award Presentation, National Rice Month Scholarship Grand Prize Presentation, Rice Leadership Development Program's New Class Announcement
- 1:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. **LAST CALL IN THE EXHIBIT HALL**
 Take advantage of this final opportunity to visit with this morning's spotlight presenters and all the exhibitors at their booths.
- 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. **GENERAL SESSION**
 Grand Ballroom DE, 5th Floor
- 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. **Washington Outlook**
Jim Wiesemeyer, Senior Vice President, Informa Economics, Washington Bureau
- 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. **The Future of Food and What It Means for Rice**
A Panel Discussion with Food and Rice Experts
 How will we buy food in 2065? How will consumers, food brands, and manufacturers, interact in the future? Join futurist **Mike Lee**, founder and CEO of Studio Industries, and a panel of industry experts to answer these and other burning questions.
Panelists:
Paul Galvani, Riviana Foods
Todd Kluger, Lundberg Family Farms
Robin Fisher, PF Chang's China Bistro, Inc
- 4:00 p.m. **2015 USA RICE OUTLOOK CONFERENCE ADJOURNS**



NEW ORLEANS RESTAURANTS PROUDLY SERVE U.S. RICE

New Orleans is world famous for distinctive cuisine and unparalleled dining ambiance. The restaurants listed here are among the finest — and they are proud to serve U.S.-grown rice. Consider visiting them during your stay, look for the U.S. grown rice seal, and be sure to thank them for their support of our industry.

1 ROUX BISTRO \$\$

In hotel • 504-525-2500

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Serving breakfast and lunch daily, you can savor contemporary cuisine with a Creole flair and have a memorable meal without having to leave the Sheraton hotel.

2 JIMMY J'S CAFÉ \$

115 Chartres Street • 504-309-9360

Cajun & Creole
Since opening our doors in 2011, Jimmy J's Cafe has become a destination restaurant in New Orleans serving locals and tourists alike.

3 PALACE CAFÉ \$\$\$

605 Canal Street • 504-523-1661

Seafood
This classic New Orleans restaurant, located at the foot of the French Quarter, serves contemporary Creole food in an upbeat and lively grand café.

4 COMMERCE RESTAURANT \$\$

300 Camp Street • 504-561-9239

Cajun & Creole
Enduring, old-school neighborhood breakfast & lunch destination serving Southern comfort food.

5 CANAL STREET GRILLE \$\$\$\$

614 Canal Street • 504-586-7211

American
Casual bar/eatery at JW Marriott New Orleans preparing Southern-inspired eats in elevated surrounds.

6 HOUSE OF BLUES RESTAURANT \$\$\$

225 Decatur Street • 504-310-4961

American
Rock- & blues-themed chain with Southern dishes such as po' boys & jambalaya, plus live music.

7 BON TON CAFÉ \$\$

401 Magazine Street • 504-524-3386

American
Housed in the historical 1840's Natchez building, within earshot of boat whistles on the Mississippi, its checkered red and white tablecloths, wrought-iron chandeliers and soft-brick walls create an atmosphere to enjoy Cajun food prepared stylishly from original family recipes.

8 THE GRILL ROOM \$\$\$\$

300 Gravier Street • 504-523-6000

American
Locally sourced ingredients. Innovation grounded firmly in a tradition of gracious hospitality. A sure touch—in the kitchen and at the table—that makes the pleasure of dining a perfect marriage of comfort and adventure.

9 MR. B'S BISTRO \$\$\$

201 Royal Street • 504-523-2078

Seafood
Mr. B's Bistro, a New Orleans restaurant famous for its Creole cuisine with a focus on fresh regional products, is located in the heart of the French Quarter at the intersection of Royal Street and Iberville.

10 FELIPE'S MEXICAN TAQUERIA \$

301 N. Peters Street • 504-267-4406

Mexican
Felipe's is a fast-casual Mexican concept with a craft cocktail bar. All food is prepared from scratch every day using fresh ingredients and authentic recipes.

11 ACME OYSTER HOUSE \$\$

724 Iberville Street • 504-522-5973

Oyster Bar
Lively New Orleans-based chain offering oysters, po' boys, gumbo & other Cajun-Creole classics.

12 BUBBA GUMP SHRIMP CO. \$\$

429 Decatur Street • 504-522-5800

Seafood
Family-friendly chain for seafood & American fare served in a fishing-boat-themed setting.

13 K PAUL'S \$\$\$

416 Chartres Street • 504-596-2530

Cajun & Creole
Chef Paul Prudhomme's legendary down-home spot with upscale Cajun fare, open kitchens & a courtyard.

14 LE BAYOU RESTAURANT \$\$

208 Bourbon Street • 504-525-4755

Seafood
Le Bayou is located in the heart of New Orleans' French Quarter, and is a popular oyster bar, featuring local seafood and classic Cajun & Creole cuisine.

15 ANTOINE'S \$\$\$

713 St. Louis Street • 504-581-4422

French
The world-renowned French-Creole cuisine, impeccable service & unique atmosphere have combined to create an unmatched dining experience in New Orleans since 1840.

16 PAT O'BRIEN'S COURTYARD RESTAURANT \$\$

624 Bourbon Street • 504-525-4823

Cajun & Creole
The menu has something for everyone, including several local favorites for those with a sense of adventure. There is even a special menu for guests under 12 which includes our special kid's drink, the "Eye of the Hurricane." Pat O's unique daily specials vary, depending on what is fresh and in season.

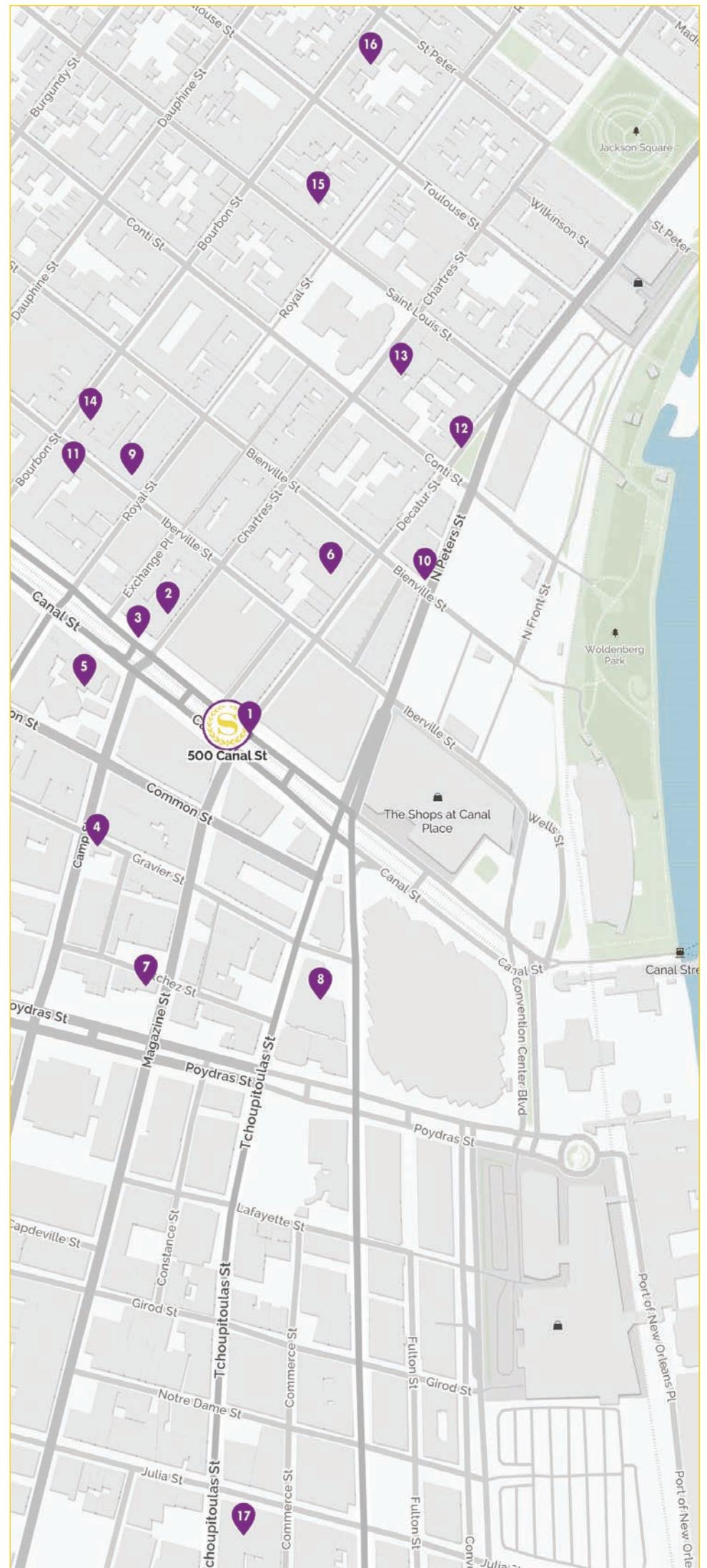
17 EMERIL'S \$\$\$\$

800 Tchoupitoulas Street • 504-528-9393

Cajun & Creole
Since opening in 1990, Emeril's has been a definitive force in contemporary New Orleans cuisine and has earned rave reviews and accolades for nearly 25 years, including Esquire magazine's "Restaurant of the Year" and Wine Spectator's "Grand Award" for 14 consecutive years.

AVERAGE COST PER PERSON:

\$	under 10 dollars
\$\$	10-25 dollars
\$\$\$	25-45 dollars
\$\$\$\$	45 dollars and up



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SPECIAL THANKS

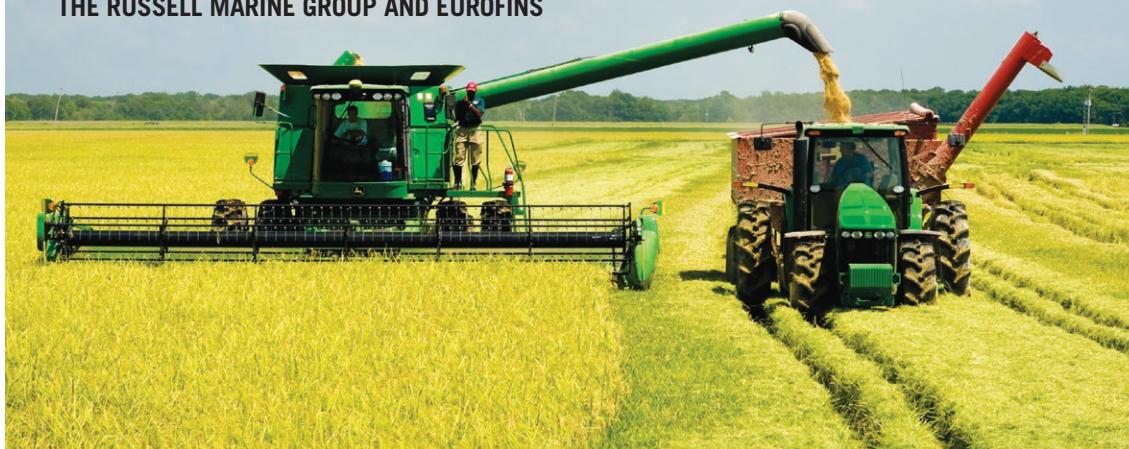
Thank you to the Louisiana rice industry, USA Rice Communications Committee, and the following for their assistance and support of the 2015 USA Rice Outlook Conference:

CONFERENCE MODERATORS:
FORREST LAWS
Director of Content, Farm Press

DON MOLINO
Senior Farm Broadcaster, Louisiana Farm Bureau Agri-News Radio Network (LFBARN)

ALLISON "A.J." SABINE
Broadcast Specialist, Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation

OFFSITE LEARNING SESSION HOSTS:
THE RUSSELL MARINE GROUP AND EUROFINS



SAVE THE DATE

MEMPHIS,
TN

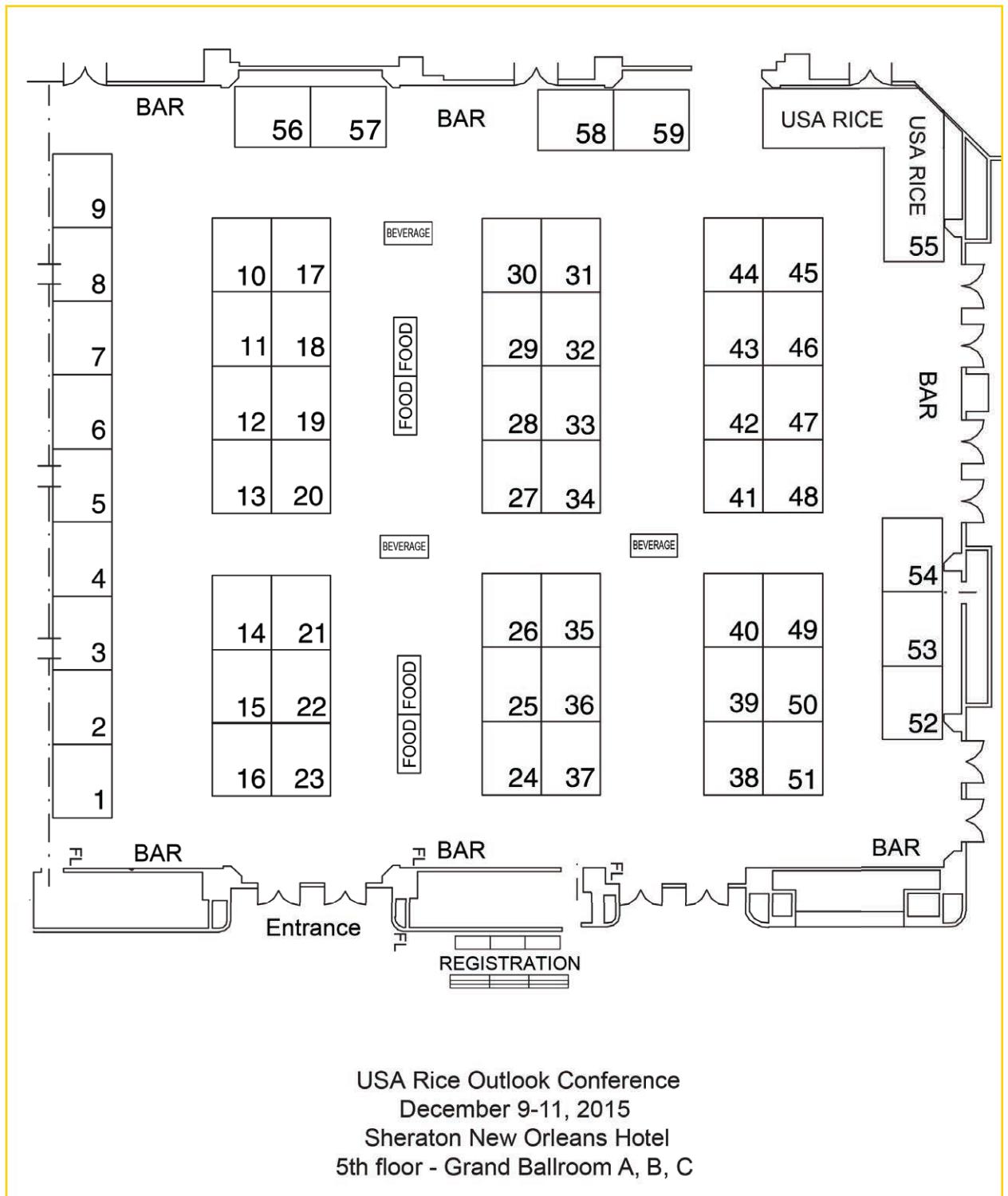
DEC. 7-9,
2016

USA
RICE
OUTLOOK
CONFERENCE



USA RICE OUTLOOK CONFERENCE EXHIBITORS

COMPANY	EXHIBIT #
AGRISPHERE	52
AGRO-CULTURE LIQUID FERTILIZERS	51
AP INNOVATIONS	4
ARKION LIFE SCIENCES	13
BASF CORPORATION	24
BUNGE	43
CASEIH	21
CENTRAL LIFE SCIENCES	36
CLAAS OF AMERICA	17
CREED RICE CO./RICEONLINE.COM	38
CUSTOM MARKETING COMPANY	31
DEL STAR	1/2
DELTA PLASTICS	46/47
DOUGLAS PRODUCTS	12
DOW AGROSCIENCES	57
DUCKS UNLIMITED	19
DUPONT CROP PROTECTION	11
ENERGY ELECTRIC CONVERSION PROGRAM	18
EUROFINS	33
FARM PRESS	23
FARMERS BUSINESS NETWORK	9
FIRSTGRAIN	50
FMC CORPORATION	40
FOOD PROTECTION SERVICES	54
GOWAN USA	39
HORIZON AG	3
INTELLIFARMS	44
INTERTEK AGRI SYSTEMS	41
JOHN DEERE COMPANY	35
KELLOGG COMPANY	53
KOCH AGRONOMIC SERVICES	48
LA DEPARTMENT OF AG AND FORESTRY	6
LSU AGCENTER	7
MODERN PROCESSING EQUIPMENT	34
NICHINO AMERICA	14
POINSETT GRAIN & RICE	27-28
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PREMIER GRAIN CLEANER CO.	10
PROVISIONGARD TECHNOLOGY	16
QED DRYER SALES & MFG., INC.	49
RELEVANT SOLUTIONS	58
RICE BELT WAREHOUSE	56
RICECO	5
RICETEC	25/26
RUSSELL MARINE GROUP	32
SIOUX STEEL COMPANY	29
SOUCY TRACK	22
SUKUP MANUFACTURING CO.	42
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UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS	8
USA RICE FEDERATION	55
USDA/NASS	30
USDA/NRCS	15
VALENT U.S.A. CORPORATION	45
VALLEY VIEW AGRI	20





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DIETITIANS 'THINK RICE' AT FNCE 2015

BY COLLEEN KLEMCZEWSKI

NASHVILLE, TN – More than 10,000 dietitians, nutrition science researchers, policy makers, healthcare providers, and food industry leaders from around North America attended the Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo (FNCE) here in early October.

Building on the *Think Rice* message, USA Rice developed three handouts for the conference, offered in both English and Spanish, with a focus on rice recipes along with information about nutritional benefits, whole grains, and diabetes management. Summaries of nutritional research studies funded by the rice industry were also available at the USA Rice booth.

“FNCE is one of the most important trade shows USA Rice attends. We are able to address nutrition questions and food safety concerns, as well as gain reliable feedback about consumer interests and needs,” said Katie Maher, USA Rice director of domestic promotion. “Attendees recognize USA Rice and enjoy partnering with us to recommend rice to consumers.”

Retail dietitians from H-E-B, Kroger, Hyvee, Weiss, and other stores stopped by the USA Rice booth to relay their National Rice Month success stories made possible by the toolkits USA Rice provided them this summer. Dietitians from each store explained how important the materials USA Rice developed are to communicating effectively with consumers and are thrilled to have the new handouts available in Spanish to reach an even wider audience. 

Colleen Klemczewski is USA Rice social media coordinator and has been shocked to learn that a can of “pop” is not a daily nutritional requirement.



Spin the *Think Rice* Wheel, learn fun facts about U.S.-grown rice, and win a prize!

TPP from page 6

300,000 metric tons of rice to Japan annually.

Japan is the only TPP partner that will not eliminate import duties on U.S. rice imports. All other partners either already provide duty-free access, will eliminate duties when the agreement comes into force, or over 11 years or less.

Now let's look at the other side, and focus on Viet Nam. The commercial rice exporters in TPP are Australia, the United States, and Viet Nam, and Viet Nam holds the number one spot by a huge margin. The United States agreed to eliminate import duties on rice from Viet Nam and all other TPP partners, except from Japan and Malaysia, on the first day that the agreement enters into force.

U.S. rice import duties are relatively small, and the bigger concern is Mexico's decision to remove its import duties on rice from all TPP countries immediately, except for duties on milled rice which will be reduced from the current 20 percent to zero over 10 years. Mexico is the number one U.S. rice export market and Viet Nam is a competitor south of the border for milled rice. We can expect Viet Nam's competitiveness to increase as Mexico's milled rice duty

RICE SCHOLARSHIP WINNER Promotes Health, Budget Benefits of Rice

BY MEGHAN MAHONEY

CHICAGO, IL – Haven McElhanon of Forrest City, Arkansas, has been awarded the 2015 USA Rice Federation National Rice Month Scholarship, sponsored by Dow AgroSciences. As the grand-prize winner, she received a \$4,000 scholarship and a trip to the awards ceremony at the 2015 USA Rice Outlook Conference.

McElhanon's initiative, “Rice – a Health Happy Hand,” touted the health benefits of budget-friendly rice, which she promoted through classroom visits and community events, spreading rice information, and recipes. She also enlisted support from a local judge who signed a proclamation to make September Arkansas Rice Month.

McElhanon is part of a fifth-generation farming family in Arkansas. While rice production has always been part of her community, she learned more about its importance while conducting rice promotions and serving as Miss St. Francis County Rice 2015.

“In spreading the news about rice and its nutritional value, I became interested in pursuing a degree in nutrition upon attending college in the fall of 2016,” says McElhanon. “I will continue to share the *Think Rice* educational program with elementary schools, civic clubs, senior citizen groups, and other organizations through the spring of 2016.”

To apply for the scholarship, students were required to develop a promotional program in their local community that highlights U.S.-grown rice as part of National Rice Month in September. The second- and third-place winners are Mary Katherine Swindoll and Clay Parker, respectively.

“During the past seven years of Dow AgroSciences sponsoring the National Rice Month Scholarship, we have been impressed with the students' passion and effort they put into promoting rice in their communities,” says Darla Huff, rice product manager, Dow AgroSciences. “These applicants are our next generation of producers, teachers, and agriculture advocates.” 

Meghan Mahoney is a senior PR counselor at Bader Rutter, an independent business marketing agency. She is based in Chicago.

U.S. rice is NRM Grand Prize Winner Haven McElhanon's favorite subject.



goes to zero. (The United States already has duty-free access in Mexico because of NAFTA.)

So, how does this agreement stack up? “We got new access in Japan, but it's very limited, and a good portion of what our government says we're going to get is based on a promise from Japan,” said USA Rice Chairman Dow Brantley. “Combine this very limited gain in Japan with what looks to be a negative development in Mexico, and TPP fails to meet our minimal expectations and is deficient. We have time before Congress votes up or down on TPP to get the administration to lock in what we've been promised, and we remain engaged to improve our hand.”

Last month, President Obama notified Congress of his intention to sign the TPP agreement. This starts a clock for an up or down vote by Congress. The earliest this can occur is Spring 2016, however, many believe that this could be postponed until after the November 2016 elections. 

Bob Cummings is USA Rice COO and has been involved with TPP negotiations since 2010.

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FORTIFIED RICE IS GOOD FOR FOOD AID, BUT MUST BE DEFENDED AGAIN

BY REBECCA BRATTER

WASHINGTON, DC – Last year, fortified rice became the first new commodity to be added to the U.S. government’s food aid “master list” in many years. The product is a coated or extruded kernel containing a micronutrient premix with eight essential vitamins and minerals including vitamin A, iron, and zinc. The kernel is then blended back in with regular milled rice. Both the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) are encouraging use of fortified rice in all future global feeding and nutritional programs based on its potential to eliminate debilitating effects of long-term nutritional deficiencies.

USDA is encouraging private voluntary organizations (PVOs) and other humanitarian groups to program fortified rice in future McGovern-Dole school feeding programs and has already received several requests for 2016. Additionally, several groups have amended their current programs to include fortified rice.

Like USDA, USAID also intends to encourage wide-scale use of fortified rice in Food for Peace programs, going so far as to proscribe fortified rice in place of milled rice in future programs.

“We hope to have a greater sense of this demand in 2016 but believe that with continued collaboration with USDA, USAID, and the PVO community, we can make more people aware of the great potential of fortified rice,” said Jamie Warshaw, USA Rice Food Aid Subcommittee chairman.

As fortified rice begins to enter the food assistance supply chain, end users have expressed a need for information about its nutritional properties, use, and availability. USA Rice has worked in partnership with both USAID and USDA to respond accordingly.

In October, USA Rice hosted a workshop here for humanitarian organizations interested in using fortified rice. The workshop provided both technical and logistical details that will help these groups include the product in their upcoming feeding programs and proposals. Speakers included health, nutrition, and procurement specialists from USDA and USAID, as well as leadership from USA Rice, including Warshaw. A follow-up webinar focusing on nutrition is scheduled for early next year.

Despite the great potential for fortified rice, the fight to keep commodity-based food aid programs intact is heating up again with renewed efforts from Congress and the Obama Administration to move away from an in-kind system and towards a cash-based system.

A cash-based approach sends money or vouchers to food aid recipients as opposed to providing them with healthy and safe U.S. commodities. Supporters of cash-based systems say it is more cost efficient and they enjoy the flexibility cash and vouchers offer. But that flexibility is exactly the problem.

“When you send cash to someone, there’s no guarantee it’s being used for what you intended,” explained Warshaw. “We may hope it will go to food for those in need, but hope isn’t a strategy, and that money could easily be diverted.”

Warshaw added that sending an actual bag of food, grown by U.S. farmers and donated by the people of the United States, also goes a long way to bolstering our country’s image and fostering good will.

“An envelope of money could go anywhere and come from anyone,” he said. “A bag of rice with an American flag on it that says, ‘from the American people,’ sends a pretty clear message.”

Turning away from in-kind contributions also overlooks the efforts and resources already invested by the U.S. government in the creation of new micronutrient fortified foods, like rice, to address global hunger.

“USA Rice will continue our efforts to maintain rice in our

government’s food aid programs as well as increasing the usage and distribution of our commodity to hungry people around the world,” said USA Rice President & CEO Betsy Ward. “It’s a win-win situation and it’s the right thing to do.” 

Rebecca Bratter is a food security consultant to the U.S. rice industry with 20 years of experience in global ag markets. She is currently working to ensure maximum rice tonnage in USDA, USAID, and WFP programming.

TOP L TO R: John Miller and Dr. Yi Wu of the Wright Company, and Jamie Warshaw attend the fortified rice workshop in Washington, DC, last October.

BOTTOM: In-kind in action.





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USA RICE AT THE MIAMI TRADE SHOW

BY DEBORAH WILLENBORG

MIAMI, FLORIDA – Last month USA Rice exhibited here at the 19th Americas Food and Beverage Show and Conference, the largest Americas-focused food and beverage trade show in the Western Hemisphere. More than 500 exhibitors hailed from the U.S. and Latin America, as well as Korea, Thailand, Turkey, and the show's country of honor, Algeria.

The USA Rice booth, in the USA pavilion, provided brochures and samples of rice cooked by USA Rice's Chef Javier of Guatemala and the four winners of the Colombian chef competitions conducted earlier this year.

"This was our first time attending and exhibiting at this show and we gathered more than a dozen quality trade leads," said Sarah Moran, USA Rice director of international promotion. "Large, well-known grocery chains, existing importers, as well as new importers to the region, expressed interest in U.S. rice. We'll work with our members to follow up on all of them."

The trade show also hosted seminars, including a discussion on "Top Food and Restaurant Trends across the U.S." Presenters there stressed the need for brands to tell their "people story" to consumers. This is something USA Rice has already taken to heart, with the "Meet Our Farmers" section of the consumer website that is promoted via several social media channels.

"There was a high caliber of attendees at this year's show and I think this was a great venue to showcase USA Rice," said Ernesto Baron, USA Rice's representative for Central America/Andean. "This region is growing very rapidly, and rice is popular and even intrinsic in a lot of cultures. People requested samples of U.S. rice as well as general trade information and I think they were pleased with our booth and the information we had for them. This was definitely worthwhile." 

Deborah Willenborg believes restaurant trends come and go but a bowl of U.S.-grown rice never goes out of style.



FAS INCREASES USA RICE FUNDING TO SUPPORT SUCCESSFUL INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

BY MICHAEL KLEIN

WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS), the agency responsible for promoting and supporting overseas markets for U.S. agricultural commodities, has informed USA Rice that for Fiscal Year 2016 the organization will receive \$2,485,000 under the Market Access Program (MAP), a 1.2 percent increase, and \$1,877,000 under the Foreign Market Development (FMD) programs, a 6.1 percent increase.

"We believe this increased budget shows the quality and effectiveness of the International Promotion programs that are implemented by USA Rice to maintain and/or increase exports of U.S. rice," stated John Valpey, chairman of the USA Rice International Promotion Committee.

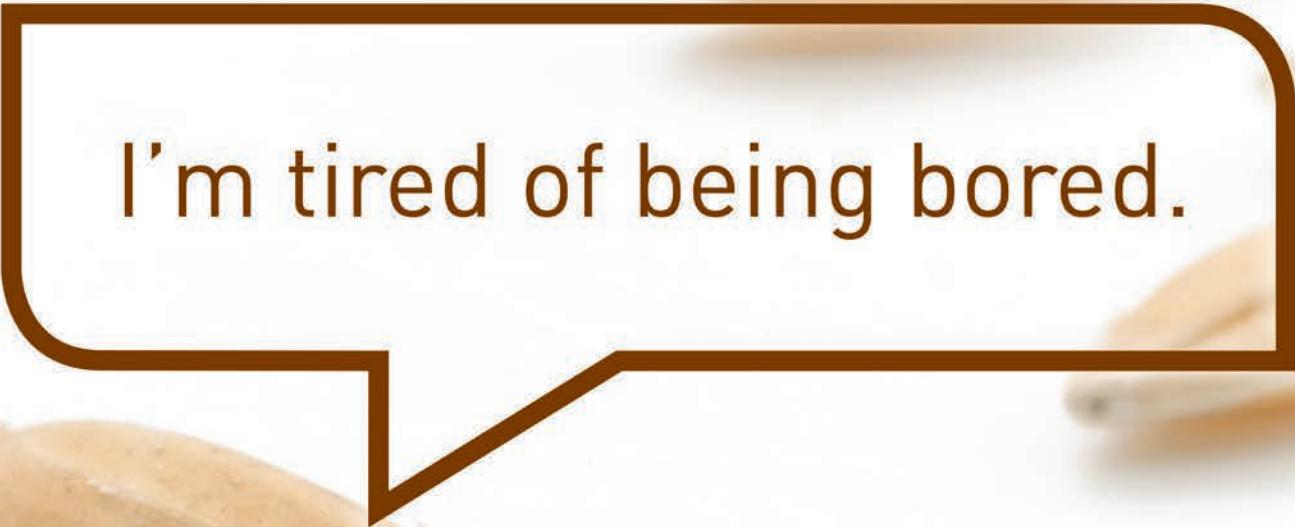
"With an export dependent industry like rice, these added funds could not have come at a better time to support our promotion efforts worldwide," said USA Rice President & CEO Betsy Ward.

Ward said in any given year almost half the U.S. rice crop is exported to more than 110 countries around the world. USA Rice conducts promotion activities in about 30 international markets, ranging from consumer advertising in Saudi Arabia and Ghana, to exhibiting at trade fairs in China, the European Union, and the Middle East; and from developing curriculum for cooking schools in Canada and Mexico, to holding recipe contests in Japan, Colombia, and Turkey. 

Michael Klein recently represented USA Rice at Anuga, the largest food and beverage trade show in Europe.



Maximizing FAS funding to promote U.S. rice. Clockwise from top: Billboard campaign in Ghana, professional chefs' workshops in Mexico and Turkey.



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CHEF COMPETITIONS INCREASE USAGE OF RICE

BY SARAH MORAN

ARLINGTON, VA – Exports are critical to the U.S. rice industry, with nearly 50 percent of production destined for overseas markets. USA Rice’s international promotion programs are varied, but the activities are ultimately aimed at creating a lasting preference for U.S. rice. In markets or market segments that are more developed, one of our promotion tactics is chef seminars and competitions. These activities are conducted both with working professional chefs, and student chefs who will one day become decision makers in restaurants. The goal is to familiarize the participants with U.S. rice, its health benefits, and applicability as a versatile and affordable cooking ingredient so that they will regularly offer it on their menus. Here’s a quick look at some of the most successful programs.

MEXICO

USA Rice has worked with more than 80 culinary schools for the past decade providing information on rice for the foodservice sector and encouraging schools to include a rice curriculum. The seminars and competitions provide student chefs with a sense of familiarity with U.S.-grown rice that has led to its greater use in the market.

Chef Angel Donovan participated in the Rice Chef of the Year competition in 2005; he is currently an executive chef at the Chilanguita restaurant chain where he has introduced two new U.S. rice dishes, including a rice ceviche that he reports is one of their more popular menu items.

Chef Israel Godinez (pictured) participated in several USA Rice chef seminars and won the title of Rice Chef of the Year in 2008. He is now director of the Culinary School Dijon and continues implementing rice courses for his students.

CANADA

USA Rice has taken the chef competition idea and introduced it to high school students enrolled in culinary programs. Working with the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), USA Rice has expanded the program to 37 schools and is reaching 113 culinary classes and more than 1,700 students.

This fall, three teams of four students created a U.S. brown rice recipe in front of a seven-member judging panel that included media influencers, two of Canada’s top chefs, and key members from the Toronto District School Board. The winning team created a unique two-toned Fiesta Tomato, Corn, and Rice Soup (pictured). USA Rice plans to expand this competition next year.

“This year’s ‘Wrap Up with Rice Competition’ reached students in all pathways to further explore the world of culinary arts and to raise our students’ awareness about child hunger and healthy eating practices,” said Maria Carvalho, program coordinator, TDSB. “The students worked collaboratively in the preparation of their recipes prior to, and on the day of, the competition with guidance from their



ABOVE: In Chef Israel Godinez’s (in red coat) classroom, rice is the right answer.

Hospitality and Tourism teachers who work tirelessly to bring differentiated learning opportunities to their students so that every student is successful. The TDSB values this partnership and is thankful for this opportunity for our students.”

JAPAN

Some people would think, “You teach Japanese chefs how to cook rice dishes? They eat rice every day!” While that is true, many of the chefs are unfamiliar with the unique attributes of U.S. short and medium grain rice; therefore, each year, USA Rice conducts chef competitions here for both professional and student chefs. Last year, more than 500 recipes were submitted with eight finalists chosen for the various competitions. These competitions are dynamic and generate interest not only by the participants but also by the judges.

“I am excited to find more potential uses of Calrose once again through this contest,” said Chef Wachi, a judge of the contest.

USA Rice also participates in an annual northeast region-wide chef competition contest, the United Tastes of America, which includes chefs from Japan, Hong Kong, China, and Taiwan. Chefs are challenged to utilize an assortment of fresh and high quality U.S. food ingredients to win the grand prize of a professional training program organized by the Culinary Institute of America, and U.S. rice is always a required ingredient.

OVERVIEW

Chef competitions are one of USA Rice’s many tactics to increase usage of U.S. rice abroad. In some cases, the results of these activities are not seen for several years, as will be the case for our Toronto high school activities, but the investment in the future promises to pay dividends. USA Rice’s international promotions programs are diverse by nature, with some activities such as in-store promotions having immediate benefits, with others providing long-term results. Both are useful and necessary when trying to develop a lasting preference for and purchase of U.S. rice. [WGA](#)

Sarah Moran is USA Rice director of international promotion and after writing this article, is cultivating her culinary prowess with etrog, soursoy, and, of course, rice!

BELOW: Canadian high school chefs ace the culinary test with their award-winning rice dish.



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STATE RICE CHECKOFF PROGRAMS (40%) AND USDA GRANTS (38%) FUND MOST USA RICE ACTIVITIES

BY LINDA SIEH

ARLINGTON, VA – The primary sources of funding for USA Rice activities for its fiscal year that ended July 31, 2015, were \$4.2 million from rice check-off programs in member states Arkansas, California, Louisiana, and Mississippi, and a \$4 million U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) international commodity marketing grant. Adding to these funds are dues from mill, producer, merchant, rough rice, and friends member categories totaling about \$1 million, and another \$1.3 million from other sources providing USA Rice with about \$10.5 million in total funding. While each state’s check-off program uses slightly different collection and disbursement procedures, in general, all of these funds could be used to promote the sale and consumption of rice and other activities to enhance the U.S. rice industry’s ability to operate at a profit. In contrast, USDA funds were used solely for preapproved activities to open and expand overseas markets for U.S. rice.

USA Rice conducts traditional trade association programs for its members, including rice product promotions in domestic and international markets, international trade policy negotiations, communications with Federal and state legislators and regulatory agencies, and member meetings and education. USA Rice’s board of directors approved the FY 2015/2016 program budgets in July 2015 before the fiscal year began in August, then specific program goals were established by member committees, such as the International Promotion Committee which oversees use of USDA funding. USA Rice member boards and committees assure that program results are of value to the U.S. rice industry and are in line with program costs.

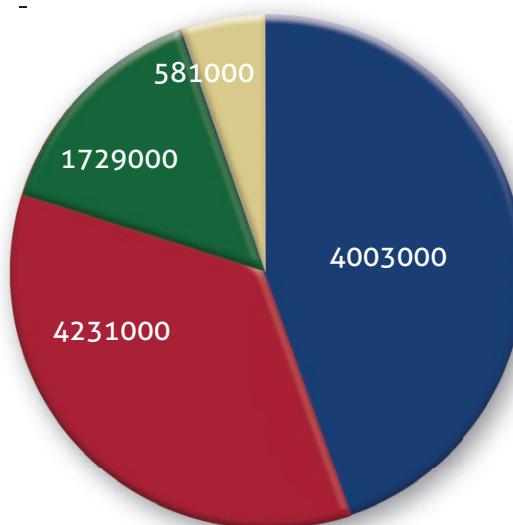
USA Rice’s annual financial audit has been successfully completed with no findings. The auditors reported, “In our opinion, the financial statements [...] present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Federation as of July 31, 2015 and 2014, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended.” This is a standard audit report statement that essentially means the organization received a clean bill of financial health. In addition to standard audit tests, as a recipient of Federal grant dollars USA Rice is also audited for compliance with requirements for Federal grant participants. Sources and uses of revenue contained in the audit reports appear in the pie charts to the right.

Separate from the annual financial audit, USDA conducts periodic compliance reviews of all international promotion program expenditures. During the most recent compliance review conducted in December, 2014, USDA compliance staff reported no findings after reviewing \$4.3 million of program expenditures and about \$23.7 million of industry contributions. [WS](#)

Linda Sieh is USA Rice CFO. She is revered for her clean audits and quick wit.

FY 2015 INCOME – \$10,544,000

- USDA international promotion funds ●
- State checkoff forwarded by USA Rice Council ●
- Mill, merchant, producer, and other rice industry dues ●
- Other income ●



FY 2015 EXPENSE – \$10,544,000

- International promotion - USDA funded ●
- Rice state activities, membership and meetings ●
- Domestic initiatives and communications ●
- International promotion - rice industry funded ●
- Management and general ●
- Government affairs ●

