

# Arkansas Rice

**A**rkansas ranks first among the six major rice-producing states, accounting for approximately 46 percent of U.S. rice production. Rice production is concentrated in the eastern half of the state, stretching from the Louisiana to the Missouri borders. Arkansas rice, known for its versatility, can be used in a wide variety of cuisines. It is enjoyed in the United States and throughout the world.

## Economy

Arkansas grows rice on approximately 1.3 million acres each year. Rice production and processing play important roles in the state. Rice is the state's second-highest value commodity and the top agricultural export. The annual Arkansas rice crop contributes more than \$1 billion to the state's economy and accounts for thousands of jobs, which are crucial to rural communities.

## History

Growers in the prairie lands of Arkansas were in need of a crop that could be grown dependably and profitably. Almost by accident, rice became a contender when in 1896, W.H. Fuller ventured southwest to Louisiana on a hunting trip. It was there that he first saw rice growing, which ultimately led to the development of a leading agricultural industry for the state. Fuller, his brother-in-law, John Morris, and John's wife Emma are generally credited with founding the Arkansas rice industry. By 1910, rice production, research and milling were established in the state. Today, the Museum of the Arkansas Grand Prairie in Stuttgart, AR, showcases the history of this major center for U.S. rice production.

## Conservation



In Arkansas, managed rice fields and natural wetlands provide an important wintering area for North America's mallards. During the winter months, rice farmers capture rainwater in rice fields, creating vital resting and foraging habitat for migratory and wintering waterfowl. Winter flooding of rice fields also helps to prevent erosion, controls weeds and protects soil nutrients.

## All About Rice

According to the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, grains should form the foundation of a healthy diet (six servings or six ounces per day based on a 2,000 calorie per day diet, with half of the grain consumption coming from whole grains and the other half from enriched.) Enriched rice contains thiamin, niacin and iron, making it a nutritious option for healthy meals. In addition, brown rice, a 100-percent whole grain food, has been added to the list of U.S. Food and Drug Administration-approved whole grain foods that may now carry the claim: "Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods and low in total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease and some cancers."

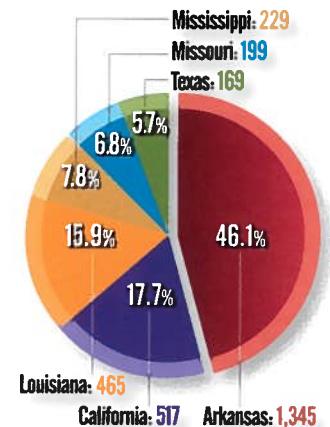
Rice offers unsurpassed versatility and is perfect for soups, salads, main dishes and desserts. It is an easily prepared, economical base for gourmet recipes and home cooking, and is a staple of the many international cuisines that are becoming increasingly popular. Best of all, rice is cholesterol- and sodium-free and has no trans or saturated fat. Rice is also gluten-free and is the least allergenic of all grains.

For more information on U.S.-grown rice and the rice industry, visit [www.usarice.com](http://www.usarice.com).



## THE U.S. RICE INDUSTRY BY THE NUMBERS

THE U.S. RICE INDUSTRY DEDICATED 2,924,000 ACRES TO PRODUCTION



STATE NUMBERS ARE IN THOUSANDS OF ACRES  
Source: USDA NASS Crop Production 2008 Estimates

## ARKANSAS RICE COUNTIES



NOTE: DARKER SHADING REPRESENTS HEAVY RICE-GROWING AREAS

Arkansas, Ashley, Chicot, Clark, Clay, Cleburne, Conway, Craighead, Crawford, Crittenden, Cross, Dallas, Desha, Drew, Faulkner, Franklin, Greene, Hempstead, Hot Spring, Independence, Jackson, Jefferson, Johnson, Lafayette, Lawrence, Lee, Lincoln, Little River, Logan, Lonoke, Miller, Mississippi, Monroe, Nevada, Perry, Phillips, Pike, Poinsett, Pope, Prairie, Pulaski, Randolph, Saline, Sevier, Sharp, St. Francis, Stone, White, Woodruff, Yell