



USA Rice Daily

Up-to-the-Minute News on Issues and Activities

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

Thursday, March 11, 2010

Rice Industry Testifies in Support of Open U.S.-Cuba Agricultural Trade and Travel

WASHINGTON -- The USA Rice Federation and the U.S. Rice Producers Association today presented joint testimony before the House Agriculture Committee in support of H.R. 4645, the *Travel Restriction Reform and Export Enhancement Act*. The measure, introduced recently by House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin Peterson (D-MN), would remove obstacles to U.S. agricultural sales to Cuba and permit open travel by all Americans to the island nation.



Mississippi Rice Council President Mike Wagner, who testified for the rice industry, urged Congress to pass HR 4645 to correct the U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Asset Control's reinterpretation of "cash in advance" to mean before title or control of the product is transferred, allow for direct transfers from Cuba to U.S. financial institutions, and permit free travel by Americans to Cuba.

Louisiana Rice Producers Group Chairman Jackie Loewer, who attended the hearing, said U.S. agricultural producers stand to benefit a great deal should the HR 4645 become law.

"Rice producers could see exports increase substantially to Cuba if this legislation is passed," Loewer said. "That gain is a benefit not just for American rice farmers but for the entire U.S. economy."

Cuba has the potential to become a top export market for U.S. rice, representing a 400,000 to 600,000 metric ton export market under normal commercial trade and travel relations.

USA Rice has been a longtime supporter of open agricultural trade and travel with Cuba and is working hard to gain co-sponsors for Peterson's bill.

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Photo: Louisiana Rice Producers Group Chairman Jackie Loewer

Arkansas Member Meetings Held This Week



More than 20 area rice farmers took time to attend a lunch on Tuesday in Walnut Ridge, AR, to meet with USA Rice Federation President and CEO Betsy Ward and Arkansas Rice Federation Executive Director Ben Noble.

"Nothing takes the place of an opportunity to meet with rice farmers face-to-face. I want to thank everyone who came on Tuesday and I look forward to more meetings like this," Ward said.

In addition to member meetings in Northeast Arkansas this week, Ward presented the USA Rice Council's annual report to the Arkansas Rice Research and Promotion Board on



Upcoming Events

[11th RMA Convention](#)
(June 20-24, 2010)

[July Annual Business Meetings](#)
(July 10-13, 2010)

[Events Calendar](#)

Recent Issues

[March 10](#)

[March 9](#)

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Mission Statement

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Monday.

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Top Photo (Credit: The Times Dispatch, Walnut Ridge, AR): Hunter Burris, left, of Walnut Ridge, an Arkansas Rice Council board member for District 10, and Ben Noble at Tuesday's grower lunch.

Middle Photo: More than 20 area farmers met with USA Rice Federation President and CEO Betsy Ward.



Left Photo: Arkansas meetings included discussion with Merchant members in Jonesboro. From left, Chuck Wilson and Betsy Ward, USA Rice Federation; Merchants' Chairman Brian King; Immediate Past Chairman Randy McNeil; Board member Ryan Carwell, Poinsett Rice and Grain; and Tony Whittingham, Ritter Grain Services.

Weekly Rice Sales, Exports Increase

Net rice sales of 133,500 metric tons (MT) increased noticeably from the previous week and were 79 percent more than the prior four-week average, according to today's U.S. Department of Agriculture [Export Sales Highlights Report](#). Increases were reported for Turkey (36,100 MT), Venezuela (30,000 MT), Iraq (29,000 MT), Mexico (13,600 MT), and Haiti (13,200 MT). Decreases were reported for Italy (600 MT) and Lebanon (500 MT).

Exports of 65,400 MT were 17 percent more than the previous week, but 26 percent less than the prior four-week average. The primary destinations were Mexico (22,000 MT), South Korea (17,100 MT), Haiti (7,000 MT), Canada (6,900 MT), and Taiwan (2,500 MT).

This summary is based on reports from exporters for the period Feb. 26-March 4.

CME Group/CBOT Rice Futures Closing

CME Group (Preliminary): [Closing Rough Rice Futures for March 11](#)

Month	Price	Net Change
March 2010	\$12.175	- \$0.27
May 2010	\$12.40	- \$0.28
July 2010	\$12.705	- \$0.265
Sept. 2010	\$12.66	- \$0.14
Nov. 2010	\$12.81	- \$0.145
Jan. 2011	\$13.10	- \$0.15
March 2011	\$13.375	- \$0.175

In the News

[James Beard Event Brings Together Chefs and Farmers to Celebrate Louisiana Cookery](#)
 Chef Informer -- (USA Rice Federation mentioned)

[Chicken-Rice Bowl a Hit at WIC Nutrition Program](#)

Lawrence Journal-World, KS -- (USA Rice Federation mentioned)

[Farm to Table: How the Eat-Local Movement is Energizing Restaurants and Farms](#)

The Hippo, NH

[Water Weevil, Stink Bug in Rice](#)

Delta Farm Press

[Dermacor Rice Seed Treatment Granted Federal Registration](#)

Delta Farm Press

[U.S. Nears a Crossroads on Trade](#)

The New York Times -- (Rice not mentioned)

[GM Grain Still 'Long Distance Away'](#)

China Daily

[US Rice Export Surge 17% during Feb. 26-March 04: USDA](#)

IRIS, India

[Thai Rice Output May Drop on Drought as El Nino Parches Region](#)

Bloomberg

[Soldiers Help Harvest Rice](#)

Vietnam Net

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