

70 Percent Of U.S. Rice Imports Are From Thailand



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The only supply side revision this month to the 2012/13 U.S. rice balance sheet (on a rough-equivalent basis) was a 0.5-million cwt increase in imports to 21.5 million cwt, up 11 percent from a year earlier and the second highest imported amount on record.

Thailand remains the largest supplier, accounting for around 70 percent of U.S. rice imports. India and Pakistan typically account for the bulk of the remaining U.S. rice imports. Specialty rices, mostly aromatics, account for nearly all of shipments to the United States from these three major Asian exporters. This year, Vietnam shipped almost 37,000 tons of brokens to the U.S. in September.

Long-grain accounted for all of the upward revision in U.S. rice imports this month. At 19.0 million cwt, U.S. long-grain imports are up 0.5 million cwt from last month's forecast and 12 percent larger than a year earlier. These are the highest U.S. long-grain imports on record.

The U.S. crop remains estimated at 199.5 million cwt, 8 percent larger than a year earlier, a result of both expanded area and a record yield. Harvested area remains estimated at 2.68 million acres, up 2 percent from a year earlier, but still the second smallest since 1987/88. The 2012/13 average yield remains estimated at 7,449 pounds per acre, 382 pounds above last year.

The 2012/13 all rice carryin remains estimated at 41.1 million cwt, 15 percent below a year earlier. The long-grain 2012/13 carryin remains estimated at 24.3 million cwt, 32 percent below a year earlier. The medium- and short-grain carryin remains estimated at 14.7 million cwt, up 45 percent from a year earlier. Stocks of brokens, included in the all-rice stocks estimate, are not specified by class.

Total supplies for 2012/13 are forecast at 262.1 million cwt, up 0.5 million cwt from last month's forecast and almost 4 percent larger than a year earlier. A larger crop and near-record imports are projected to more than offset a smaller carryin. By class, long-grain supplies are projected at 187.4 million cwt, up 0.5 million cwt from last month's forecast and 11 percent larger than a year earlier. Medium- and short-grain supplies remain forecast at 72.5 million cwt, 11 percent below a year earlier.

U.S. 2012/13 Export Forecast Raised to 108.0 Million Cwt

Total use of U.S. rice in 2012/13 is projected at 233.0 million cwt, up 2.0 million cwt from last month's forecast and 10 percent above a year earlier. The upward revision is due to a higher export forecast. By class, long-grain total use is projected at 171.0 million cwt, up 2.0 million cwt from last month's forecast and 18 percent above a year earlier. Medium- and short-grain total use remains projected at 62.0 million cwt, more than 7 percent below a year earlier.

Total domestic and residual use of all rice in 2012/13 remains projected at 125.0 million cwt, 13.5 percent higher than a year earlier. For long-grain, 2012/13 domestic and residual use remains projected at 94.0 million cwt, 21 percent larger than a year earlier. Medium- and

short-grain domestic and residual use is projected at 31.0 million, 4 percent below a year earlier.

Total exports of U.S. all rice in 2012/13 are projected at 108.0 million cwt, up 2.0 million cwt from last month and 6 percent above a year earlier. The upward revision was largely driven by larger than expected sales to Iran and Latin America. Based on data from the February 28 U.S. Export Sales, total outstanding commercial sales and exports of all rice (based on actual shipment weight) were 19 percent ahead of a year earlier. By type, U.S. rough-rice exports are projected at 35.0 million cwt, up 1.0 million cwt from last month's forecast and 7 percent larger than a year earlier. Latin America is the largest market for U.S. rough rice exports.

Milled rice exports (combined milled- and brown-rice exports converted to a rough basis) remain projected at 73.0 million cwt, an increase of 1.0 million cwt from last month's forecast and 6 percent above a year earlier. Northeast Asia, the Caribbean, the Middle East, and Canada are the largest markets for U.S. milled-rice exports. Haiti is the largest market for U.S. milled rice in the Western Hemisphere, taking almost exclusively long-grain rice.

By class, long-grain exports are projected at 77.0 million cwt, up 2.0 million from the previous forecast and 15 percent above a year earlier. South America has been a stronger buyer of U.S. rice in 2012/13 than in the previous year. In addition, Iran has purchased more than 91,000 tons of U.S. long-grain milled rice, with 60,000 tons already shipped. Medium- and short-grain exports remain projected at 31.0 million cwt, 11 percent below the year-earlier near record.

U.S. ending stocks of all rice in 2012/13 are projected at 29.1 million cwt, down 1.5 million cwt from last month's forecast and 29 percent below a year earlier. The stocks-to-use ratio is calculated at 12.5 percent, down from 19.4 percent in 2011/12 and the lowest since 2003/04. By class, the 2012/13 U.S. long-grain carryout is projected at 16.5 million cwt, down 1.5 million cwt from last month's forecast and 32 percent below a year earlier. The long-grain stocks-to-use ratio is calculated at 9.6 percent, down from 16.8 percent a year earlier and the smallest since 2003/04. The medium- and short-grain carryout remains projected at 10.5 million cwt, almost 29 percent below a year earlier. The medium/short-grain stocks-to-use ratio is calculated at 16.9 percent, down from 21.9 percent in 2011/12.

U.S. 2012/13 Long-Grain Season-Average Price Forecast Raised

The 2012/13 season-average farm price (SAFP) for U.S. long-grain rice is forecast at \$14.20-\$14.80 per cwt, with the mid-point up 20 cents from the mid-point of last month's forecast of \$14.00-\$14.60 per cwt.

The 2012/13 long-grain SAFP is well above the 2011/12 SAFP of \$13.40 per cwt.

The combined medium- and short-grain 2012/13 U.S. SAFP is forecast at \$15.60-\$16.20 per cwt, with the mid-point down 30 cents from last month's mid-point. The 2012/13 medium- and short-grain SAFP is well below the 2011/12 SAFP of \$17.10.

In late February, NASS reported a mid-February U.S. long-grain rough-rice price of \$15.10 per cwt, up 70 cents from the revised January estimate and the highest since January 2009. The January price was lowered 30 cents from the mid-month estimate to \$14.40. For combined medium- and short-grain rice, the mid-February NASS price was reported at \$16.00 per cwt, up \$1.00 from the January revised price. The January price was lowered 50 cents from the mid-month estimate to \$15.00 per cwt.

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