

Analyst Tells Rice Farmers To Be Patient On Prices

CROWLEY, LA.

Farmers should be patient for rice prices to catch up with other commodities, a Chicago financial analyst said at the annual joint meeting of the Louisiana Rice Council and the Louisiana Rice Growers Association and a briefing by the USA Rice Federation.

Rice acreage is expected to decrease in 2011 to 3 million acres nationwide, and that will help boost prices, said Jack Scoville of the Price Futures Group.

Prices will make a significant increase this year, Scoville said, but warned the price may dip to \$12 per hundredweight before increasing to \$18-\$20 per hundredweight by the end of the year.

"I think we'll be pleasantly surprised with how strong the market will be," he said. Because the rate of return for soybeans and cotton is greater than rice, U.S. farmers are expected to plant fewer acres in rice.

It's unlikely that Australia will re-enter the rice market, and India has halted rice exports, while Thailand and Vietnam have sold their surpluses to China, Scoville said.

Promotions to encourage U.S. consumers to buy American-grown rice are meeting with success, said Betsy Ward, USA Rice Federation president. Work will continue to further trade with Cuba, but she didn't hold out the promise of any developments soon.

"I wouldn't look for any bright spots for Cuba

in the short term," she said.

2010 was a record year for exports to Mexico, the No. 1 buyer of American rice. Efforts are continuing to regain the European market, Ward said. She also noted that rice represents 43 percent of all Louisiana agricultural exports.

China could begin commercial production of genetically modified rice this year, and that could lead to other nations easing restrictions on varieties that have been genetically altered, she said.

The rice federation staff traveled to Rayville on Jan. 26 to present the annual update to north Louisiana rice farmers. Also making the trip were LSU AgCenter rice scientists.

Steve Linscombe, director of the LSU AgCenter Rice Research Station, briefed farmers on new varieties released this year, including the long-grain, aromatic Jazzman 2; a Clearfield long-grain variety, CL152; and a medium-grain variety, Caffey, named after retired AgCenter Chancellor H. Rouse Caffey, also a past director of the rice station.

LSU AgCenter agronomist Dustin Harrell advised farmers on fertilizer applications and zinc deficiency, while LSU AgCenter entomologist Natalie Hummel described her work with seed treatments aimed at controlling rice water weevils.

LSU AgCenter rice specialist Johnny Saichuk gave an overview of the 2010 rice crop and the AgCenter's Rice Verification Program. Δ



Farmers and crop consultants listen to Steve Linscombe, director of the LSU AgCenter Rice Research Station, at a meeting Jan. 26 in Rayville by the LSU AgCenter and the USA Rice Federation for northeast Louisiana rice farmers.

Photo by Bruce Schultz

Farmer Jimmy Hoppe, of Fenton, holds a plaque he received Jan. 25 from the Louisiana Rice Council for his work as President of the Louisiana Rice Council and for promoting the U.S. Rice Industry.

Photo by Bruce Schultz



Link Directly To: **CASH RIVER**



Link Directly To: **SYNGENTA**



Link Directly To: **VERMEER**