

Arkansas Rice Federation Holds First Meeting

LITTLE ROCK, ARK.

Sen. Blanche Lincoln (D-AR) praised the work of a new statewide rice industry entity, the Arkansas Rice Federation, which held its first official meeting Dec. 6, during the 2008 USA Rice Outlook Conference.

The Arkansas Rice Federation – comprised of the Arkansas Rice Producers' Group, Arkansas Rice Council, Arkansas Rice Millers, and Arkansas Rice Merchants – is the only group to officially represent the entire state's rice industry.

Sen. Blanche Lincoln (D-AR) praised the work of the Arkansas Rice Federation during her speech to more than 750 attendees of the 2008 USA Rice Outlook Conference.

"Arkansas has long been blessed with strong leadership among the rice industry and this trend continues. However, today's changing and challenging environment calls for increased activity and proactive outreach to state and federal elected officials, the media, regulatory agencies, and state and national commodity groups," Noble said.

Sen. Lincoln in Dec. 7 speech to an audience of more than 750 USA Rice Outlook Conference attendees commented on the formation of Arkansas Rice, "We appreciate them coming together and working as a unified rice industry."

"They are a great group" and "they do an ex-

cellent job representing the Arkansas rice industry," she said.

In addition to Noble, the meeting was also led by Robert Petter, a De Valls Bluff, AR, rice grower and Arkansas Rice Council chairman; Brian King, Marked Tree, AR, rice merchant and Arkansas Rice Merchants chairman; and Gary Sebree, Stuttgart, AR, rice grower and Arkansas Rice Producers Group chairman.

Arkansas Rice will serve as the full-time voice for the Arkansas rice industry, he said. Federation activities will include:

- Providing proactive outreach to the Arkansas General Assembly
- Serving as liaison to Arkansas governor's office
- Serving as the primary media contact for Arkansas rice industry issues
- Providing outreach to the state congressional delegation in Washington, D.C.
- Coordinating on key issues with state and national commodity groups
- Attend state and national meetings of the rice industry

Arkansas Rice Council Chairman Robert Petter visits with AR State Rep.-elect Tiffany Rogers (D-14th District) during a Nov. 20 event honoring Sen. Blanche Lincoln, (D-AR).

For more information see:
<http://www.arkansasricefarmers.org> Δ