



Dr. Donn Beighley, Rice Research Fellow, Southeast Missouri State University believes Missouri conditions produce a higher quality grain year in and year out.
Photo by John LaRose

Beighley Moves Closer To New Medium Grain Rice Variety Release

MO5035 High Yield And High Quality

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Dr. Donn Beighley, Rice Research Fellow, Southeast Missouri State University, who works at the Missouri Rice Research Farm, believes Missouri provides an advantage to rice producers. “Our environmental conditions produce a higher quality grain year in and year out.”

Developing new rice varieties takes time. Eight to 12 growing seasons are needed to identify consistently high yielding varieties and then produce seed with high purity. Once field testing is complete, the rice varieties must be approved by the Missouri Rice Council.

Rice breeding efforts conducted at the Missouri Rice Research Farm near Glennonville, Mo. along with winter nursery line increases at the University of Puerto Rico-Mayaquez enables Beighley to plant and harvest two rice crops per year.

Beighley was asked for an update on his trials. “I have about five or six varieties that are actually looking very good. Two medium grains that are pretty strong in both yield and quality.

Quality is as important as yield when it comes to medium grains because companies like Gilster Mary Lee and Kelloggs, are looking for quality and particular types of medium grains.”

Beighley explained quality tests, such as a puff test, are conducted on medium grain rice used to make puffed rice krispie type of foods.

Long grain rice varieties round out Beighley’s trials. “We have about four or five long grain types that have done well. They have yielded well and have good milling quality. It is probably going to come down to which one is going to actually come out on top, which one do we want to go ahead and release.”

Beighley hopes to have major acres as early as next year. He is also working on increasing seed quantities. “That is one of the other things we are doing; getting enough seed that we can share with my colleagues.”

One variety, MO5035, is a stand out performer. “It is very strong but, to when it will be released depends on how soon we can get enough seed to go to a seed company which will increase it for us,” said Beighley. Δ

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