

LSU AgCenter Announces Aromatic Rice Variety

CROWLEY, LA. The LSU AgCenter has approved a new variety of aromatic rice to compete with foreign imports. The variety, named Jazzman, will be an alternative to jasmine rice imported from Thailand, LSU AgCenter officials said.

“This specialty rice will give U.S. rice producers another growing option,” said Dr. David Boethel, LSU AgCenter vice chancellor for research. “It is the result of a lot of hard work by the rice breeding staff of the AgCenter.”

Rice varieties developed by the LSU AgCenter dominate the southern U.S. rice-growing region. Rice breeding by AgCenter scientists is funded in part by the Louisiana Rice Research Board’s allocation of checkoff funds.

Dr. Xueyan Sha, an LSU AgCenter rice breeder who developed the variety, said the project required 12 years of work to obtain a long-grain variety with good milling quality, high yield and the correct aroma and taste.

“For several years, individuals taste tested several different experimental lines before we obtained this variety,” Sha said. “This variety should be very appealing to Asian restaurants.”

Before its approval, the variety was known as LA2125.

“Jazzman will be available as foundation seed in 2009,” said Dr. Steve Linscombe, director of the LSU AgCenter’s Rice Research Station.

Linscombe said the variety could be a good op-

tion for organic growers who need a specialty variety with added value. Linscombe said Jazzman began with germplasm from China, and it is superior to a previous aromatic variety, Jasmine 85, which lacked the white luster and flavor of Thai jasmine.

Clarence Berken, chairman of the USA Rice Council and a rice farmer from Jefferson Davis Parish, said Jazzman could be a boost for Louisiana rice farmers.

“It’s a huge step forward,” Berken said. “In the last two years, we have lost market share to imports.”

Berken said Jazzman will be identified as domestically grown rice because of the “Grown in the USA” logo being licensed by the USA Rice Federation for packaging and advertising.

Specialty-rice gro-wer Jimmy Hoppe of Fenton has grown Jazzman in test plots. He said it grows well, with high yields and good milling quality, comparable to some of the best long-grain varieties, such as CL161 and Cypress.

Hoppe said a New Orleans company is ready to sell Jazzman as soon as it’s available. “They have nothing but good to say about it,” he said.

Hoppe said of the 400,000 tons of rice imported into the United States, 350,000 tons were the Thai Jasmine variety.

“With Jazzman, I think there’s a great opportunity to hold off the continued increase in Thai imports,” Hoppe said. Δ



Link Directly To: **APACHE**



Link Directly To: **AMERICOT**



Link Directly To: **KINZE**



Link Directly To: **PIONEER**



Link Directly To: **SYNGENTA**