

# Louisiana Farmers Donate Rice To Haiti

**LAKE CHARLES, LA.**

**R**ice farmers and a Lake Charles rice mill are donating rice for Haitians to eat after the massive earthquake hit.

The Louisiana Rice Growers Association (LRGA) has agreed to buy two tons of rice, and Farmer's Rice Mill is donating five tons in addition to providing a 10 percent match to any other rice donated for the cause. Jeff Durand, LRGA chairman, said Louisiana rice farmers were blessed in 2009 with an abundant crop, and it's only natural that growers would help the earthquake victims. He said farmers give rice to food banks and other charities every year.

"It's just natural that we should help," Durand said. "It's just the humanitarian thing to do."

Rice is a staple food in Haiti, he said, and the country has been a regular customer of the U.S. rice industry.

Several rice farmers have individually bought

rice to ship to Haiti, Durand said.

"It's the right thing to do," Durand said. "And this won't be the last of the shipments either. The people of Haiti will continue to need help with food, and we hope that rice will continue to be donated for the Caribbean nation as it recovers from the devastation."

Jamie Warshaw, manager of Farmer's Rice Mill, said two large shipments of rice from the U.S. government, one for 4,500 tons and another for 6,500 tons, are being loaded on vessels at the Port of Lake Charles to sail for Haiti.

He said the rice donated by farmers and the mill is being barged to Haiti by Friend Ships International.

Steve Linscombe, director of the LSU AgCenter Rice Research Station, said he's not surprised by the generosity.

"Farmers are charitable by nature, and Louisiana's rice farmers especially are eager to help those in need," Linscombe said. Δ



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