

“U.S. Rice In The Culinary Classroom” Offers A Complete Teaching Guide For Future Chefs

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American consumers spend roughly 50 percent of all food dollars on meals prepared outside the home, which makes capturing the attention of the foodservice audience an important objective. To that end, USA Rice Federation, which represents rice farmers, millers, merchants and allied businesses, has placed

quality rice last year, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Crop Production Annual Summary – enough to feed Americans and millions of other people around the globe. USA Rice Federation’s new U.S. Rice in the Culinary Classroom – The Complete Guide for Foodservice Educators and Professionals, offers an opportunity to reach a key audience in the increasingly competitive fight for food dollars.



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GROWN IN THE USA



The Grown in the USA Rice logo identifies rice grown to the highest quality standards.

strong focus on this important market segment through its innovative foodservice program featuring its Web site, www.MenuRice.com, designed to meet the needs of foodservice professionals. The program has been effective in moving the needle in foodservice, as the USA Rice annual milled rice shipments report shows increased shipments to foodservice through mainline distributors and other distribution channels.

The newest addition to the site is the Education Center featuring U.S. Rice in the Culinary Classroom, a comprehensive new teaching tool for the nation’s culinary educators to train future chefs about the history of rice, the U.S. rice industry and how various types and forms of rice may be used in popular cuisines in demand today.

Before developing the training resource, USA Rice asked chef-educators where they acquired their culinary teaching information. Overwhelmingly, those professionals said they obtained their information “directly from the source” and sought materials that

- were credible and relevant to today’s foodservice needs
- contained creative ideas and trend information
- provided print and online materials for greater flexibility in their curriculum

Armed with that information, USA Rice developed a teaching tool that includes a four-section manual covering a complete rice curriculum. Accompanying that is a PowerPoint presentation summarizing each section for instructors use in the classroom. Together, the materials may be used by culinary educators to train student chefs and foodservice professionals about how rice can be used to create exciting cuisines that are appealing, versatile and profitable.

Promoting the Benefits of Rice in Foodservice

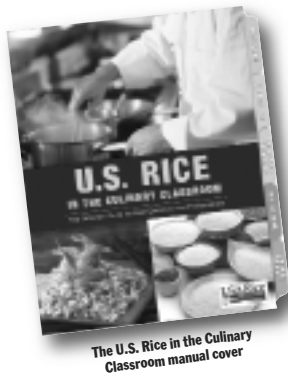
Although rice has been cultivated in the United States since the 17th century, many Americans are unaware that nearly 85 percent of the 25 pounds of rice they consume each year is grown here. While rice is undoubtedly popular in the United States, Americans consume far less rice per person than consumers in many other countries, especially in Asia, where rice is a mainstay of the diet. However, foodservice reports show that American consumers are seeking more ethnic dishes, which translates to an opportunity for growth.

To ramp up the profile of U.S.-grown rice, USA Rice is taking the key messages about this time-honored commodity to the chef educators who are training the next generation of foodservice professionals – an action that will benefit the culinary community and U.S. rice farmers.

American rice farmers in Arkansas, California, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, and Texas – produce more than 19 billion pounds of high-

quality rice last year, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Crop Production Annual Summary – enough to feed Americans and millions of other people around the globe. USA Rice Federation’s new U.S. Rice in the Culinary Classroom – The Complete Guide for Foodservice Educators and Professionals, offers an opportunity to reach a key audience in the increasingly competitive fight for food dollars.

The teaching guide is a resource chef-educators can use to provide new chefs with a knowledge of the history of U.S.-grown rice; an understanding of how it is grown, milled and processed; and how the many types and forms may be used in professional kitchens. The guide also emphasizes the impor-



The U.S. Rice in the Culinary Classroom manual cover

tance of rice in international cuisines in demand today, and popular recipes from around the world. And at less than 10 cents a serving, rice is an essential ingredient for controlling food costs while satisfying customers.

“As a life-long educator, I was happy to share insights prior to development, and I feel the finished piece exceeds my expectations,” says Andy Schloss, teacher, cookbook author and consultant. Chef Jason Labahn, culinary instructor at Le Cordon Bleu School of College of Culinary Arts in Las Vegas who recently taught a U.S. Rice Master Class using the teaching guide, said, “the content is excellent, it’s easy to use, and the recipes are ideal for teaching students classic cooking techniques that also encourage creative, contemporary applications.”

The Importance of Rice Cookery in Cuisine

Because of its international reach and appeal, rice cookery is an essential culinary building block that has taken on new importance in today’s professional kitchens. In addition, current interest in healthy eating, whole grains, vegetarian options and serving local and U.S.-grown foods has consumers increasingly adding grains like rice into everyday food choices.

Gary Reifeiss, VP Producers Rice Mill and Chairman of USA Rice Federation Foodservice Committee, points to the positive benefits of the educational guide. “Giving foodservice educators access to this tool will go a long way toward educating a new generation of chefs about the U.S. rice industry, the fundamentals of rice cookery and the honored place of rice in cuisines around the globe,” he said. “Chefs who choose U.S.-grown rice can be confident they are using rice grown to the highest standards by American rice farmers.”

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