

## **WILD RICE Request for Information/Sources Sought Notice SUMMARY**

*April 18, 2012*

The USDA/Farm Service Agency (USDA/FSA) issued a Request for Information and Sources Sought Notice (RFI/Notice) to assess the Availability and Specifications of Wild Rice.

### **Background:**

Wikipedia states:

“Wild rice (also called Canada rice, Indian rice, and water oats) is four species of [grasses](#) forming the genus *Zizania*, and the grain which can be harvested from them. The grain was historically gathered and eaten in both [North America](#) and [China](#). While it is now something of a delicacy in North America, the grain is eaten less in China,<sup>[1]:165</sup> where the plant's stem is used as a vegetable.”

### **Number of Respondents:**

USDA/FSA received eight replies to the RFI/Notice. Seven of these responses were from manufacturers of WILD Rice. Two of these seven are Native American-owned.

### **Product Brand Names:**

All the commercial-brand products appear to have a history of successful distribution and use in domestic commercial channels, are old on the commercial market, and have an established level of consumer acceptance.

### **Respondents Interest:**

The respondent's interest ranged from their ability to increase sales, educating the public about the benefits of WILD Rice, to an internal economic stimulus for tribal members.

### **Capacity Capabilities:**

Respondents have offered to meet solicitation requirements from as little as one truckload to upwards of 7 million pounds.

### **Pack Size:**

The USDA/FSA RFI/Notice requested information on 1-pound or small pack sizes. Respondents can provide WILD Rice in 4-ounce, 6-ounce, 8-ounce, and one-pound/16-ounce packages. All pack sizes are prevalent in the commercial market place.

### **Shipment Configurations:**

One-pound or 16-ounce packages are available in cases sizes in 6, 12, 25, 40 and 48 counts. The truckload quantity ranges from 23,760 net pounds to 42,270 net pounds.

### **Serving per Container:**

A one-pound (16-ounce) container had a serving per package that ranged from 4-12 servings.

### **Ingredients composition:**

100 percent WILD Rice

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### **Nutritional information:**

All nutritional information is based on a 1/4 cup serving of dry (uncooked) WILD Rice.

Calories 140-170

Total fat 0-.5 grams

Saturated fat 0

Trans fat 0

Cholesterol 0

Sodium 0

Total Carbohydrates 30-34 grams

Dietary fiber 3 grams

Sugar 0-1 gram

Protein 6-7 grams

Vitamins –

Calcium 2 percent

Iron 4-6 percent

### **Cost/price:**

A one-pound (16-ounce) ranges in prices from \$2.40-\$6.75. The median price per box is \$3.77.

A truckload of WILD Rice will cost approximately \$160,000 plus transportation.

### **Shelf life & storage recommendations:**

The WILD Rice can be stored for two years in cool dry temperatures.

Household storage should be in sealed plastic or glass containers.

### **Warranty:**

The respondents did not offer a product warranty. One respondent verified that the WILD Rice that they sell is free from “genetically modified organisms.”

### **Harvest method:**

Six of the seven respondents produce the WILD Rice using commercial mechanized harvest methods.

One respondent does use the traditional harvest method. Their cost per one-pound package is \$6.25 per box. Their annual capacity was 20,000 pounds. This 20,000 pound total included product they produced as well as purchased.

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### **Organic/non-organic product:**

The respondents can provide WILD Rice that is organic or non-organic.

Respondents indicated:

*“WILD Rice is non-organic. Although it is not organic 99 percent of the WILD Rice is grown without pesticides.”*

*“Organic can be supplied, but will cost approximately 30 percent more.”*

*“Organic and non-organic are available. On a one-pound package the cost for organic is one dollar more per pound.”*

### **Grading and size standards:**

*Please note that there is no WILD Rice industry grading standard. Many producers have adopted the California Wild Rice Advisory Board grading standards which are based on length and width.*

WILD Rice grading is based on length and width. WILD Rice is available in Grades A, B, and C.

Grade A/B/C mechanical precision width and length. Industry grading is 64<sup>th</sup> inches by length and width. Long grain is greater than 20/64<sup>th</sup>.

Grade A/Black premium length 16/64 to 20/64; width 3.0/64 to 4.0/64<sup>th</sup>; brokens 5 percent.

Grade A/B Black 16/64 to 20/64; width 3.0/64 to 3.5/64<sup>th</sup>; brokens 10 percent.

Grading is completed following parching – heating the WILD Rice to remove the moisture and harden the grains.

### **Other relevant information to consider:**

WILD Rice is the only US native grain, grown and processed in America.

WILD Rice is a nutritious whole grain and a natural antioxidant.

One hundred percent domestic origin.