How Rice Grows

Field Preparation
Rice is grown in heavy clay soils which hold water similar to a bathtub. Farmers carefully level fields with precision GPS or laser-guided grading equipment. Level fields allow rice farmers to conserve water. Fertilizer is then added, and shallow furrows are rolled into the field.

Flooding and Seeding
Water is added to the fields to a depth of only 5 inches. Rice seed is then soaked, loaded into planes and planted by air at about 100 miles per hour. The heavy seeds sink into the furrows and begin to grow.

Rice Matures
The rice grows to a height of 3 feet. During this time, farmers maintain a consistent water depth of the same 5 inches. By late summer, the grain forms long panicles on the top of the plant. By September, the grain heads are mature and ready to be harvested. On average, each acre will yield over 8,000 pounds of rice!

Harvest
Fields are drained. Once they are dry, state-of-the-art harvesters collect the perfectly ripe grain. These harvesters gently and rapidly bring the grain in from the fields. Specialized vehicles called bankout wagons come alongside the harvesters, receiving the rice and delivering it to waiting trailers so the harvesters can continue without having to stop to unload.

Milling & Storage
Rice is carefully dried to an ideal moisture level and stored until the customer places an order. Milling is done year-round. At the mill, the hull is first removed, leaving brown rice. White rice is the result of gently removing the bran layers to leave just the inner, pearly grain. Rice mills in California are among the most advanced in the world meeting the highest quality standards.

Water for Wildlife
After harvest, a shallow depth of water is applied to fields. This helps the rice straw decompose and it provides food and a resting place for millions of birds. Sacramento Valley rice fields support nearly 230 wildlife species, including providing nearly 60 percent of the food for the millions of ducks and geese that travel along the Pacific Flyway each winter.