



California Drought Statement (March 2023)

Early 2023 storms bring [hope of a lifeline](#) to the businesses, communities and [wildlife uniquely connected to California's rice crop](#).

“Three years of severe drought and an [unprecedented 2022 season](#) put people’s [businesses, livelihoods and communities](#) on the brink,” said President & CEO of the California Rice Commission Tim Johnson. “While the start to the growing season isn’t until late spring, this year could be make-or-break for those dependent on ag lands in production. Even with the recent storms, businesses like rice mills, dryers, storage facilities and trucking companies throughout the Sacramento Valley are now dealing with ‘delayed drought’ ramifications and won’t have the chance to recover until the fall, when harvest is complete.”

When planted, every acre of [California rice can benefit many](#) – connected businesses, communities, local and state economies, and rice grown in the Sacramento Valley has the unique ability to contribute to [230 wildlife species](#), the environment and broader ecosystem.

Planted rice fields in the Sacramento Valley are a [vital source of food](#) for the millions of ducks and geese traveling great distances along the ancient Pacific Flyway migration route. Rice fields are also internationally recognized as an integral stop for migrating shorebirds for the valuable habitat they provide.

In addition to the dual water use for both farms and waterfowl, of the water added to rice fields [40% gets recycled](#), flowing to other neighboring farms to help irrigate different crops, traveling to wildlife refuges for further reuse or continuing downstream returning to the environment.