



California Rice Harvest Statement

California rice harvest delivers wildlife, environmental and ecosystem boosts to the Sacramento Valley with 460,000 acres of rice currently being harvested for the 2024 season.

“Rice harvest in the Sacramento Valley is especially important for wildlife, with every planted and harvested rice acre doubling as invaluable habitat for [230 different wildlife species](#),” said **Tim Johnson, president and CEO of the California Rice Commission**. “Millions of waterbirds and threatened species such as the Greater Sandhill Crane, Tricolored Blackbird, Giant Garter Snake, and Western Pond Turtle rely on rice fields all throughout the year for food, a safe space to rest, nest and raise their young.”

“Let’s not forget the long hours and hard work by the many people who are an important part of the rice workforce; from the farmers, the mills, drying and storage facilities, trucking companies and the many other connected businesses needed to get rice from the field to your table,” Johnson said.

The more than 460,000 harvested rice acres across the region will not only bring an economic boost to businesses and local farming communities, but also create environmental and ecosystem benefits by providing vital wildlife habitat that significantly helps sustain wildlife populations year-round.

What others are saying about the significance of California’s rice harvest:

“Scientists are increasingly recognizing the ways in which California’s rice fields can mimic important habitats and ecological processes for all kinds of species. Rice fields support food webs, critical habitat, and migratory pathways for all sorts of aquatic and terrestrial creatures which are endemic to California, including juvenile Chinook salmon. Rice is extremely important for our struggling biodiversity going forward.”

- Andrew Rypel, UC Davis professor, Department of Wildlife, Fish and Conservation Biology

“Rice fields pull double duty. They grow food for people in the spring and summer and then do it again, producing [abundant food web resources for waterbirds, salmon and other fish](#) when fields are re-flooded in the fall and winter and managed as surrogate wetland habitat.”

- Jacob Katz, California Trout senior scientist

“The Sacramento Valley is home to one of the greatest concentrations of waterfowl in the world and is designated as a site of international importance for helping to sustain bird populations. Planted rice fields are pivotal in protecting the [millions of ducks, geese and shorebirds](#) that visit the valley annually, by providing essential food and habitat resources.”

- Jeff McCreary, Ducks Unlimited Western Region Director of Operations

[Did you know?](#) California specializes in growing America’s sushi rice

Read- [Environmental Benefits of California Rice](#)

Watch- [Ricelands: Cultivating California’s Environmental Crop](#)

CA Rice in the [News](#)