



The Rice Advocate

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NASS Reinstates Rice Stocks June Report

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) announced that it would retain and reinstate several key reports, including the rice stocks June report. Earlier in October, NASS had announced that it would eliminate the rice stocks June and September reports because of funding reductions in fiscal year 2011 and the likelihood of additional reductions in fiscal year 2012. Affected commodities had expressed concern and NASS reinstated these reports after conducting a deliberate review of all

programs against mission- and user-based criteria. NASS also made several enhancements within its programs and operations to deliver improved results, including opening a new national operations center in St. Louis to centralize data collection and service. NASS said efforts such as these provided the flexibility within its budget to retain and reinstate key reports. NASS will publish Federal Register notices reflecting these program changes in the near future.

Effort to Ease Farm Exports to Cuba Stripped from Spending Bill

Late this week, House and Senate lawmakers negotiated a final agreement to move forward on the final fiscal year 2012 appropriations legislation to fund the government. Nine spending bills were rolled into an Omnibus spending bill that would provide \$915 billion to fund federal spending on a wide range of activities, including defense, education, environmental regulation, and medical research.

In the final House-Senate conference negotiations, an attempt to make it easier for Cuba to buy U.S. imports was dropped. As reported earlier in the Rice Advocate, Senator Jerry Moran (R-KS) successfully added a provision in the Financial Services Appropriations Bill which would allow Cuban purchasers of U.S. farm goods to make payment directly to U.S. banks for U.S. agricultural sales. Specifically, the provision would have clarified the definitional requirements for U.S. agricultural exports to meet the "cash in advance" test for these exports as pro-

vided in the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000.

Conversely, the House version of the same bill included an amendment to roll back regulations issued by the Obama Administration that have made it easier for U.S. citizens with family in Cuba to travel and send money back to relatives in Cuba. The Obama White House consistently threatened to veto the Financial Services Appropriations bill unless these provisions to restrict travel to Cuba by US citizens were removed.

As it turned out, Cuba was one of the last issues holding up the \$915 billion spending bill. Among the final two changes made in the Omnibus appropriations bill, lawmakers decided to drop both of these provisions regarding Cuba sanctions. In effect this means that our agricultural export and travel policies as they relate to Cuba will remain unchanged and the status quo will prevail.

Iran Sanctions Bill Includes Narrowed Agricultural Export Exception

A bill authorizing the imposition of certain financial sector sanctions on transactions with Iran includes an exception for transactions "for the sale of food, medicine, or medical devices." Unfortunately, widespread efforts to include the term "agricultural commodities" in this exception were not successful. The broader term "agricultural commodities"

was used in the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act on which most sanctions are based. The use of the narrower term "food" raises a host of issues about what could be exported.

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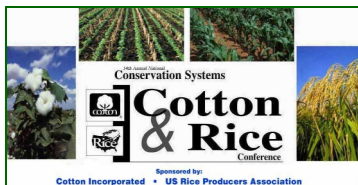
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Iran Sanctions Bill (continued)

It is not clear if this provision will have any immediate effect on U.S. agricultural exports to Iran. The provision takes effect 60 days after enactment of the bill, but it includes several findings requirements before sanctions maybe imposed and a waiver authority for the President to waive the imposition of sanctions contemplated under the provision.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



January 31 & February 1, 2012
Tunica, MS

State Rice Research News: Texas A&M AgriLIFE Research Center: The latest Texas Rice Crop Survey reports are available through the [Beaumont Center web-site](#)

For Texas rice farmers or those interested in following the developments regarding drought and lake water levels, check out the interactive website of <http://hydromet.lrcr.org>



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Additional Resources

For economic analysis on agricultural efficiency, efficacy, and equity issues: www.ers.usda.gov

Texas Rice from A&M AgriLife Research Ctr. at Beaumont: http://beaumont.tamu.edu/eLibrary/eLibrary_default.htm

AgFax - Editor: Owen Taylor:
www.agfax.com

Upcoming Events

December 16-17, 2011	FECARROZ Board Meeting; Houston, TX
January 17, 2012	Arkansas Rice Growers Association Meeting; Crawfordville, AR
January 18, 2012	Arkansas Rice Growers Association Meeting; Walnut Ridge, AR
January 18, 2012	Western Rice Belt Conference; El Campo, TX
January 19, 2012	South East Texas Rice Symposium; Winnie, TX
January 24, 2012	Arkansas Rice Growers Association Meeting; Lonoke, AR
January 25, 2012	Arkansas Rice Growers Association Meeting; Dewitt, AR
January 26, 2012	Arkansas Rice Growers Association Meeting; Dumas, AR
January 27, 2012	Arkansas Rice Growers Association Meeting; Newport, AR
Jan. 31 - Feb. 1, 2012	15th Annual NCS Cotton & Rice Conference, Tunica Resorts, MS
February 8, 2012	Arkansas State University Agribusiness Conference; Jonesboro, AR
February 8, 2012	3rd Annual Louisiana Independent Rice Producers Assn.; Welsh, LA
February 9, 2012	61st Annual Texas Rice Council Meeting; El Campo, TX
February 21-23, 2012	Middle East Grains Congress 2012; Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Feb. 27 - March 3, 2012	Rice Technical Working Group; Hot Springs, AR
June 5-7, 2012	Convencion Arroz de las Americas 2012; Miami, FL

For more information visit USRPA's online calendar at: www.usriceproducers.com/calendar

USDA Reports Next Week

Crop Progress (NASS)	Monday; December 21, 4:00pm
U.S. Export Sales (FAS)	Friday; December 25, 8:20am

All USDA reports are available by visiting http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/?navid=AGENCY_REPORTS=RT.

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