



Texas Rice

Texas A&M University System
Agricultural Research and Extension Center
Beaumont, Texas

May 2005 Volume V Number 3

The Plight of the Texas Rice Farmer

The following is an excerpt of a speech delivered to the U.S. House of Representatives, April 28, 2005 by Congressman Ted Poe.

The SPEAKER pro tempore: Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Poe, is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. POE: Madam Speaker, on Friday night, April 15, I had a meeting with local rice farmers in my southeast Texas district. We met out in the country in the lowland plains of east Texas on Aggie Drive in Beaumont, Texas. Really, it was closer to China, Texas. Many of these men had finished a 14-hour day and came to the meeting after working all that time in the fields. They drove up in their standard work vehicles: Texas pickup trucks. Their appearances would fool you, however. They are highly intelligent, some very well educated. They know more about farming, farming machinery, nature, conservation, irrigation, water resources, meteorology, pesticides, insecticides, fertilizer, trade, global competition, foreign governments, and efficiency than many who have a string of degrees behind their names, especially those near this House.

As we sat around and ate fried catfish made with rice flour, I talked to them for several hours about their plight. One rice farmer said this was his last year in farming. He was finally just going to sell off his equipment and sell the land. They painted for me, Madam Speaker, the extremely bleak picture of the present and future in rice farming. And while one could argue that economic decline plagues all rural America across the board on account of the death tax and high tax levels, too many government regulations, the rice farming industry has been hit particularly hard.

Consider the following: in 1997, 8 years ago, there were about 10,000 rice farms in the United States. By 2002, that number had dropped to about 8,000. The State of Texas in 1972 had more than 600,000 acres of rice farming. That is about the size of Rhode Island. Last year, it was less than 200,000 acres, a two-thirds loss of the land to something else. Unfortunately, rice farmers, those in southeast Texas, for example, cannot change to alternative crops because other crops do not thrive in this environment, the marshy, unique wetlands and humid climate of southeast Texas.

In addition, the farmers have to contend with the whims of the Lone Star weather, ranging from sun to hail, too much rain to not enough

rain, or none at all. Natural disasters like hurricanes, they come and go and ravage the land where we live. According to the United States Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service, in 2002, the average American rice farmer made about \$1,700 from farming, or about 82 cents an hour for a 40-hour work week. I will repeat that. That is 82 cents an hour for a 40-hour work week, and that was with government support. This harsh reality forces most farmers to rely on non-farming income to support their households.

Rice farmers work their own land, Madam Speaker. They do not hire day laborers or seasonal workers. They cannot afford it. The farmer and his kids, they work the land. Rice farmers can barely support themselves financially, let alone make needed contributions to the industry to keep it afloat.

At one time the American Rice Growers Cooperative Association in Dayton, Texas, (that is in my district) owned an irrigation system using the Trinity River to irrigate between 5,000 and 6,000 acres of rice land. It has not run in 3 years because not enough farmers could financially commit to pay \$25,000 to run the pumps to irrigate the land.

Now, get this, Madam Speaker. The water rights have been sold to the city of Houston, and the land is being used for trailer parks, which, as one farmer put it, once the land

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From the Editor...



Welcome to the May issue of *Texas Rice*. A major feature in this issue is a presentation made by Congressman Ted Poe to the U.S. House of Representatives. Congressman Poe's presentation highlighted the plight of the Texas rice farmer and the impact U.S. government policy has had on the ability of U.S. farmers to participate in the world market. Congressman Poe has certainly taken to heart the need to serve his agricultural constituency. His meeting with rice producers on April 15 at the Beaumont Center suggests he is a champion of U.S. and Texas agriculture.

Congressman Poe's presentation pointed out some of the problems with U.S. trade policy. From Iran, to Iraq, to Cuba, and elsewhere, policies put in place to punish countries whose national policies are counter to that of the U.S., have had very mixed results. While the standard of living for these countries has undoubtedly been reduced, leaders of these countries have continued to lead the good life.

Evidence also shows that the increasing global nature of trade has provided opportunities for other countries to fill the void left by our country's exit from these markets, particularly when it comes to importation of agricultural products. People can live with fewer televisions, computers, and cars, but the same thing can't be said about food. If countries are not able to obtain agricultural products from the U.S., they will make do with food from a wide range of other countries.

Unfortunately, U.S. trade policies that hinder the export of U.S. products to "rogue" nations has had the unforeseen consequence of negatively impacting U.S. agriculture, while increasing the viability of the agricultural infrastructure of many of our competitors.

One of our articles in this issue presents an overview of Texas legislators in the U.S. House of Representatives, whose districts cover parts of our rice belt. These people are exceptionally busy and are pulled in many directions by different clientele groups. As the U.S. population has grown, especially in the cities, an

increasing amount of their time is spent addressing the needs of urban clientele.

Therefore, it behooves each of us to make an effort to work with our state and federal legislators to convey to them the importance of a secure, affordable and plentiful food supply.

This issue of *Texas Rice* also provides a brief overview of some of the rice research being funded by the Texas rice industry and being conducted by our scientists at Beaumont, College Station, and Eagle Lake. The next time you have the chance, please thank our rice producers who generously provide their time by serving on the Texas Rice Producer's Board, which oversees producer's funds that support this research, and our producers who serve on the Texas Rice Research Foundation Board, who provide untold hours deciding how to best spend these funds.

Also, thank our scientists whose experiments continue to help the rice industry through the production of new varieties, and improved production and management methods.

Keep on sending us your ideas for new articles.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "L.T. Wilson".

L.T. Wilson

Professor and Center Director
Jack B. Wendt Endowed Chair
in Rice Research

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Farmers Supporting Research

Through farmer check-off dollars, the Texas Rice Research Foundation has provided nearly \$600,000 for research in 2005. This is the first in a two part article summarizing the projects funded.

Jay Cockrell - \$9,108

Communications, Press and Public Outreach

The main objective of the communications project is to continue to publish and upgrade *Texas Rice* newsletter. *Texas Rice* serves our producers in many ways, with valuable research information, updates on political issues that affect our industry, and tried and true wisdom from other farmers. The newsletter also serves to educate consumers, highlighting the value of rice production in Texas, and the contribution our farmers make to the state's economy.

The communications project will also produce educational materials for presentations and projects dealing with rice production, targeting school children and the general public. And as always, we will work closely with media contacts to continue coverage of events at the Center, and to highlight the valuable role of agriculture in Texas.

Joseph Krausz - \$11,630

Developing a Cultivar Screening Technique for Bacterial Panicle Blight

Bacterial panicle blight, caused by the bacterium *Burkholderia glumae*, frequently results in significant yield losses by causing panicles to be partially to entirely blanked.

The incidence and severity of panicle blight each year is very weather dependent. Some years we experience very little panicle blight and in other years the losses are significant. The weather-dependent nature of panicle blight makes it difficult for rice breeders and plant pathologists to effectively screen rice cultivars and breeding lines for reaction to the disease. Years can go by where insignificant panicle blight development in field trials results in ineffective screening for rice varietal reaction to the disease.

Even when the rice plants are inoculated in the field with the bacterial pathogen, it may prove ineffective if weather conditions are not favorable for disease panicle blight development. The work in progress this

summer is looking for effective ways to screen varieties for panicle blight reaction in the greenhouse environment, where environmental conditions can be partially managed.

If successful, screening for varietal reaction to panicle blight could be effectively done in a semi-controlled environment and help speed along the rice breeding process.

Garry McCauley, Mike Chandler - \$65,000

Water Management and Weed Science Research in Rice

This research focuses on the impact of main crop and ratoon crop management on ratoon crop production; and the efficacy and economics of weed management systems using labeled herbicides. The project will also evaluate the impact of growth stage and soil moisture on alligatorweed control with Grasp and the efficacy and economics of perennial grass management systems using labeled herbicides.

And finally, the project will evaluate fall and spring vegetation management prior to planting in a stale seedbed and determine the impact of tillage intensity in rice production systems on the level of weed management inputs required to optimize weed control.

Anna McClung - \$31,600

Development of Southern US Rice Varieties Through Conventional Breeding and Marker Assisted Selection

Funds will be used to augment the USDA-ARS rice breeding efforts to develop conventional long grain and specialty rice cultivars that are adapted for production in the Southern US. In addition, multi-location yield data will be collected so that a summary on the performance of commercial cultivars can be made to rice growers.

Rodante Tabien - \$109,577

Development of High Yielding Rice Varieties with Diverse Genetic Base

All U.S. released rice varieties can be traced back to 22 introduced germplasm lines. This genetic homogeneity poses vulnerability to pest and disease outbreaks similar to the corn blight epidemic in 1970.

This project will focus on using diverse germplasm to develop new varieties that are high-yielding and disease-resistant, with superior grain quality and seedling cold tolerance. *

Poe Speech continued...



Representative Poe visiting with Dayton rice farmer Ray Stoesser.

is gone, it is over for the rice farmers. You see, rice land takes years to develop. If it remains unused for extended periods of time, like 3 years, the land becomes useless for rice farming.

Moreover, industry representatives are dwindling. Farm machines, the John Deere stores, they are disappearing. Each year, older farmers quit or retire. Each year, less acreage is being used for crops. Each year, fewer young men go into farming because the cost versus the return on this investment is not sufficient for any type of lifestyle. What is the incentive for the young to enter the farming industry?

This meeting we had on April 15, most of the farmers there were at least 50 or older. Farming, rice farming is a very labor- and energy-intensive business. It requires electricity to run the pumps to irrigate the crops, diesel fuel to run the combines, and fuel for the crop dusters, pesticides to control insect problems. And we have a lot of insects in southeast Texas.

In addition to the labor from early morning to dark, from February to November, it is about 8:30 now, Madam Speaker, in southeast Texas, most of the rice farmers are coming in from working all day.

All the costs have increased, yet the price that the farmer receives for selling his crop remains the same or has dropped. It also takes an enormous amount of time to fill out Federal forms, which has tripled, according to the farmers.

These farmers are required just to sell the rice they grow. Due to government regulations, sanctions have prohibited farmers from making sales of their crops in an open market. They are even told by this government, our government, how much they can plant.

Back in the 1970s, in what was called the rural renaissance, an average of 300 farmers or so would attend the American Rice Growers annual dinner. Last year at the dinner, 14 rice farmers showed up.

Once the experienced rice farmers leave the industry, we cannot restore this lost knowledge. No government program can do that. Not to mention that the present farm program constitutes only four-tenths of 1 percent of the national budget.

Madam Speaker, I would like to take some time to recount the personal stories of two of the countless Texas rice farmers, to give this body an idea just who these folks are.

Ray Stoesser, he is a friend of mine. He is also a third-generation rice farmer in southeast Texas. He has a true appreciation for the value of research, education, and he loves the land. One of the most successful and consistent producers, he brings an exceptional crop each year to the rice market.

Ray is quick to point out there is no secret to rice farming. He says, "I believe that God could give me the talent and the strength to become a good farmer."

Ray's grandfather, Emil Joseph Stoesser, immigrated from Germany around the turn of the century and settled in Illinois. He learned about rice farming through a friend, decided to move his family to Texas, southeast Texas.

He had a different type of farming apparatus. He brought with him two Clydesdale horses, probably the first two Clydesdale horses ever in the State of Texas. They came with the farming community and he hoped to use them to plow his rice fields. Soon after moving to Texas, however, the Clydesdales succumbed to the heat and the humidity and mosquitoes common in our area. After that, they used mules to pull the plow.

Ray remembers how, as a boy, he worked long hours to clear the new property and get ready for rice production. He said, "Dad had 3,000 acres that was completely unimproved. We had to clear the trees, pull up the roots, build the canals, dig the wells just to get it ready."

Ray's dad was a dedicated and talented farmer. And Ray attributes his strong work ethic and teachings to his dad. Every day after school Ray would meet his dad on the farm and work until well after dark.

Ray also had a son that followed him into the rice farming industry. Neal Stoesser is 26 and has been

Poe Speech continued...

farming since his senior year in high school. Although he works in partnership with Ray, Neal also farms 1,000 acres of rice and soybeans independently of his dad.

In 2002, Ray and Neal had 2,000 acres of rice, all in Cocodrie, 5,000 acres of milo, 650 acres of soybeans. This was a father and son team that farmed from one end of Liberty County to the other.

In good years the Stoessers average about 7,300 pounds an acre on this main crop of rice. They sell to the Beaumont Rice Mill and the Gulf Rice Mill. Ray has considered joining the Riceland Co-op out of Arkansas, but he prefers to have his rice sold and milled in Texas. He says, “declining infrastructure is a real problem for our Texas rice industry, and we want to do what we can to support our local mills.”

But Ray feels that the government policies regarding food exports have really hurt American farmers. He recalls the years when Iran and Iraq were two of our best export markets. They would buy the lion’s share of U.S. rice. Not surprisingly, Ray feels the Cuban market should be open to U.S. farmers, as export embargoes only serve to hurt American farmers. They hurt farmers here at home. And they are not effective in dealing with political problem governments.

Ray’s younger son, Grant, is also very involved in the family farming operation as well as promoting the rice industry. And of course, there is Mom, Eileen Stoesser, very proud of all of her boys. She includes Ray as one of her boys, and has had many happy stories to tell about their life on the farm as the wife of a rice farmer. She remembers making a trip with her family and driving past endless fields of green. Eileen thought this was the most beautiful sight she had ever seen, and asked her parents what is growing on these flooded fields? Little did she know how important that beautiful crop would be, how it would come to shape her life. It was rice growing in southeast Texas.

Ray and Eileen, they are humble folks. They believe that all their success comes from the good Lord. Ray said, “I can plant the crop, but I cannot make it grow, only the good Lord can do that. I have been blessed with a wonderful upbringing, a beautiful family, and the talent to serve God by producing food for the American people.” That is Ray’s story. He is still farming in southeast Texas.

Jack Wendt is also a third-generation rice farmer.

He just planted his 64th rice crop. Jack, he is not a young guy. Some would call him a senior. He is in his eighties. But you would be hard-pressed to keep up with the pace that he sets each day. Jack and his wife Billie, they live in Richmond, Texas, and the house outside of Kendleton is used for social gatherings, receptions, weddings, church functions and rice meetings. That is what they do in the country, Madam Speaker.

Much of the furniture in the house is from their parents. There are several door frames dating back to 1868 from the original homestead of Billie’s grandparents in Fulshear. That farm had been continuously operated by her family for over 100 years and was designated as a Texas Century Farm by the Texas Department of Agriculture. There are old photographs of Billie’s and Jack’s ancestors around the house, kitchenware and tools that date back to the 1800s.

Jack takes pride in their family heritage. The man Jack called Grandpa Wendt came to America, like many other rice farmers, from Germany. He came in 1856, and he settled in this town called Sweet Home, Texas. That is right, Madam Speaker. It is Sweet Home, Texas. His father, William George, born in August of 1886, served in World War I, fighting for the United States. In 1936 his family moved to Stowell, Texas and started farming rice.

Jack Wendt is an activist, and he has written our President, President Bush, and a number of Members of Congress, letters about the issue of rice. (See Jack’s letter in the April 05 issue of Texas Rice.)

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, with two comments in quotations from former Presidents. One is from President Dwight David Eisenhower when he said: “Our farmers are the most efficient in the world. In no country do so few people produce so much food to feed so many at such reasonable prices.”

He also quotes President Bush, when he said: “Our Nation owes a debt of gratitude to our farmers and to our ranchers to help ensure the stability of our economy, for providing food products that amply meet our citizens’ needs and for representing what is best about America and its people.”

He concludes in his letter, Madam Speaker: “Therefore, Mr. President, I urge you oppose proposals to reopen the farm bill and single out farming families. And please give us new markets for our rice.”*

Building Industry Leaders

The Rice Leadership Development Program gives future leaders a comprehensive understanding of the rice industry, with an emphasis on personal development and communication skills. The class attends four one-week sessions over a two-year period that encompasses studies of all aspects of the rice industry. They also attend seminars and workshops designed to strengthen leadership and communication skills.

A special committee of rice industry and agribusiness leaders evaluate applications and letters of recommendation, as well as conduct personal interviews with finalists to determine the five rice producers and two individuals from rice-industry related professions who will make up the Rice Leadership Development Class.

The Rice Leadership Development Program is funded by grants from John Deere Company and Syngenta Crop Protection, Inc. to The Rice Foundation. The USA Rice Federation develops and manages the program on behalf of The Rice Foundation.

The 2005-07 class includes rice producers Jeff Durand, St. Martinville, LA; David Gairhan, Trumann, AR; Jeff Rutledge, Newport, AR; Don Traynham, Arbuckle, CA; and Christian Richard, Kaplan, LA. The industry-related members are Philip Bertrand, Elton, LA and Tim Walker, Cleveland, MS.

Their first session took place last month, when they toured the Texas and Louisiana Gulf Coast rice growing areas. They began with an orientation of the U.S. rice industry, the structure of the various organizations, and how to be effective leaders. The class then had a session with Riviana Foods, Inc. where they learned about consumer and industrial marketing of rice. The next stop was in Alvin for a tour of Rice Tec, then on to Garrett Farms for a tour hosted by Traci Garrett Harvey '02. (Many of the people who host their visits are alumni of the program.) Next they stopped at Rice Belt Warehouse to see the seed processing plant with Ralph Novosad '96 and Dick Ottis. Jay Davis with Coastal Rice & Futures gave an overview of rice marketing and exports. The next day they



L to R standing: Dr. Tim Walker, David Gairhan, Philip Bertrand, Jeff Durand, Dr. Steve Linscombe, Director of the LSU Rice Experiment Station and Christian Richard. *L to R seated:* Don Traynham and Jeff Rutledge.

toured Anheuser Busch, the largest buyer of rice in the U.S. Afterwards, the class learned about the role of rice brokers in international markets from Michael Creed '92 with Creed Rice, Inc. They finished up in Houston with a visit to the U.S. Rice Producers Association headquarters hosted by Dwight Roberts. When the class came to Beaumont they were treated to a Cajun crawfish boil, hosted by Mike Doguet '92 with Doguet's Rice Milling Company. That afternoon they traveled to Lake Charles for a tour of Farmers Rice Milling Company, and then on to Crowley for a visit to the LSU Rice Research Station hosted by Station Director and rice breeder Steve Linscombe '97.

In June session two will take them through Arkansas and the mid-west. In September of 2006 session three will be in California and the class will finish up in February 2007 in Washington D.C.

The Rice Leadership Development Program is managed by Chuck Wilson, Director of The Rice Foundation. Wilson has worked with the Rice Leadership Program since it began in 1989. As manager, Wilson works with the Chairman of The Rice Foundation and the Selection Committee in the selection process for each class, develops the itineraries, sets up all the travel arrangements, sends out reports from each session to the sponsors, Selection Committee, The Rice Foundation and USA Rice Federation Boards of Directors, as well as travels with each class during the program.

Speaking of his responsibilities, Wilson said, "It is truly an honor and a privilege for me to have the opportunity to have some small part in the development of these outstanding young leaders for the U.S. rice industry."*

Representatives in the News...



Elected Officials in the Texas Rice Belt

“If liberty and equality are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be best attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost.”

Aristotle

This was true over two thousand years ago when Aristotle first spoke to the people of Athens, and it still holds true today. As the time approaches for our elected officials to craft a new farm bill, it is imperative that the farming community stay abreast of these developments and have their voices heard. To that end, we are highlighting U.S. Congressmen that represent the Texas Rice Belt.

2nd District Judge Ted Poe

With his swearing in on January 4, 2005 as the United States Representative for Texas’ 2nd Congressional District, Judge Ted Poe continues his career of public service to the Lone Star state.

Ted Poe earned his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Abilene Christian University, where he served as class president. He went on to receive his Juris Doctor from the University of Houston Law Center, where he was a member of the Law School Honor Society.

A felony court judge in Houston for more than 22 years, Judge Poe garnered national media attention for his “Poetic Justice” in sentencing criminals. Among his innovative punishments, Poe ordered thieves to carry signs in front of stores from which they stole; required men who abused their wives to publicly apologize on the steps of Houston’s City Hall; commanded sex offenders to place warning signs on their home after serving jail time; and directed murderers to securely place a photo of their victims on the wall of their prison cells creating a daily reminder of their crime.

In February 2005, Congressman Poe was one of



Representative Ted Poe visiting with farmers during a meeting hosted at the Beaumont Center.

two members of Congress to travel to Iraq to observe the historic Iraqi elections. A veteran of the U.S. Air Force Reserve, it gave Congressman Poe great pride to visit polling locations, speak with Iraqi voters and visit with troops from Texas and around the United States while in Iraq.

Since entering Congress this session, Representative Poe has called for the expansion of U.S. rice trade to countries such as Iraq and Cuba, which would provide increased opportunities for Texas rice farmers. During his trip to Iraq in January, Congressman Poe met with James Smith, Counselor of Agricultural Affairs in the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad and has also issued a “Dear Colleague” in Congress to rally the support of fellow members to sign a letter to USDA Secretary, Mike Johanns, requesting that the Export Credit Guarantee Program for Iraq be reinstated. Due to the debts that Iraq incurred under the regime of Saddam Hussein, the USDA is hesitant toward offering credit protections to financial institutions that extend money to the Iraqi Grain Board. The USA Rice Federation and the U.S. Rice Producers Association estimate that the U.S. lost approximately \$1.9 billion in rice export sales to Iraq from 1991 to 2003.

Until Congress’ passage of the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000, the Cuban market had also been closed to American agriculture products because of the lingering U.S. sanc-

Representatives in the News continued...

tions imposed in 1963. With the reopening mandated by this Act, rice sales to Cuba have grown to \$64 million per year. On February 22nd though, the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control announced it was redefining the definition of "payment of cash in advance", a ruling that could jeopardize future trade. As Cubans begin looking to Vietnam, Thailand, and other sources for rice, Congressman Poe has already co-signed a measure, H.R. 1339, urging Congress to clarify its original intent on cash payment in advance to promote the growth of this trade relationship.

On March 16th, H.R. 1339 was referred to three House committees - Financial Services, International Relations, and Agriculture - so they may each consider the provisions, which fall within their respective jurisdictions.

Contact Representative Poe at 866-425-6565.

8th District Kevin Brady

U.S. Congressman Kevin Brady is serving his fifth term in Congress, representing the Eighth District of Texas in the U.S. House of Representatives. The 8th District of Texas includes Hardin, Jasper, Montgomery, Newton, Orange, Polk, San Jacinto, Tyler and Walker counties as well as portions of Liberty and Trinity counties.

As a member of Congress, Brady has focused on international trade, technology, and tax reform. Currently, one of Brady's top priorities is strengthening trade between the United States and Central America. He is spearheading Congressional support for the Dominican Republic - Central America Free Trade Agreement. Negotiations have concluded and the agreement is now awaiting consideration and passage in Congress.

Congressman Brady believes that one of the most important steps that can be taken



Representative Kevin Brady

on behalf of the agricultural industry in general--and rice growers specifically--is to help find new customers for high quality U.S. agricultural products. Building strong international trade ties is essential for all U.S. farmers, manufacturers, and service sectors since it is estimated that 96% of the world's potential customers live outside of the United States

According to the U.S. Rice Federation, the CAFTA-DR countries - Costa Rica, the Dominican

Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua - represent one of the top-5 regional markets for U.S. rice exports, with current annual sales to the region at about 700,000 tons.

Congressman Brady is a Member of the House Ways & Means Committee. Considered by many to be the most powerful committee in Congress, the Ways & Means Committee has jurisdiction over all legislation relating to taxes, Medicare, international trade, welfare, and Social Security. Brady serves on the Social Security and Trade Subcommittees. The future of the 8th Congressional District, and to a large extent the future of America, will be shaped by the critical issues that begin in the Ways & Means Committee.

In Congress, Brady has been named a Hero of the Taxpayer, Small Business Champion and a Super Friend-of-the-Seniors. He has received the Golden Bulldog Award by Watchdogs of the Treasury, special recognition by Citizens Against Government Waste, and is a perennial winner of the Guardian of Small Business Award and Spirit of Enterprise Award. Congressman Brady has also been named a "Friend of Agriculture" by the Texas Farm Bureau for his support of farmers and agricultural issues in Congress.

Contact Representative Brady at 936-441-5700.



Representative McCaul visiting with a constituent after his swearing in ceremony.

Representatives in the News continued...

10th District Michael McCaul

In November of 2004, Michael McCaul was elected to represent Texas' 10th District in the United States Congress. The 10th Congressional District of Texas stretches across 8 counties from Austin to the Houston suburbs, and includes Austin, Bastrop, Burleson, Harris, Lee, Travis, Washington and Waller Counties.

A third generation Texan, Congressman McCaul has spent the vast majority of his career in public service working on issues ranging from homeland security and child protection laws to agriculture. He earned a B.A. in Business and History from Trinity University, and holds a J.D. from St. Mary's University School of Law. He is also a graduate of the Senior Executive Fellows Program of the School of Government, Harvard University.

After the tragic events of September 11th, McCaul served as the Chief of Terrorism and National Security in the United States Department of Justice for the Western Judicial District of Texas. There, he was able to maintain a leadership role in fighting the war on terrorism and held a National Security Clearance, which enabled him to investigate and prosecute potential terrorists, investigate the Mexico border, and participate in active intelligence gathering. He also participated in the Joint Terrorism Task Force, which was charged with preparing Texas to provide a coordinated effort in detecting, deterring and preventing terrorist activity.

Congressman McCaul is co-sponsoring the Risk Management Enhancement Act, which allows producers to insure their crops against individual loss and against county loss. He is also supporting the Central American Free Trade Agreement, which is expected to mean more opportunities for American rice Farmers to sell their crops to other nations.

Contact Representative McCaul at 281-398-1247.

14th District Dr. Ron Paul

Congressman Ron Paul of the 14th district in Texas is a strong proponent for limited constitutional government, low taxes, free markets, and a return to sound monetary policies based on commodity-backed currency. He is known among both his colleagues in Congress and his constituents for his consistent voting

record in the House of Representatives: Dr. Paul never votes for legislation unless the proposed measure is expressly authorized by the Constitution.

Ron Paul was born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He graduated from Gettysburg College and the Duke University School of Medicine,



Representative Ron Paul

before proudly serving as a flight surgeon in the U.S. Air Force during the 1960s. He and his wife Carol moved to Texas in 1968, where he began his medical practice in Brazoria County. As a specialist in obstetrics/gynecology, Dr. Paul has delivered more than 4,000 babies. He and Carol, who reside in Surfside Beach, Texas, are the proud parents of five children and have seventeen grandchildren.

While serving in Congress during the late 1970s and early 1980s, Dr. Paul's limited-government ideals were not popular in Washington. He served on the House Banking committee, where he was a strong advocate for sound monetary policy and an outspoken critic of the Federal Reserve's inflationary measures. He also was a key member of the Gold Commission, advocating a return to a gold standard for our currency. He was an unwavering advocate of pro-life and pro-family values. Dr. Paul consistently voted to lower or abolish federal taxes, spending, and regulation, and used his House seat to actively promote the return of government to its proper constitutional levels. In 1984, he voluntarily relinquished his House seat and returned to his medical practice.

Dr. Paul returned to Congress in 1997 and now serves on the House of Representatives Financial Services Committee, and the International Relations committee. On the Financial Services Committee, Rep. Paul serves as the vice-chairman of the Oversight and Investigations subcommittee. He continues to advocate a dramatic reduction in the size of the federal gov-

Representatives in the News continued...

ernment and a return to constitutional principles.

Dr. Paul is the author of several books, including *Challenge to Liberty*; *The Case for Gold*; and *A Republic, If You Can Keep It*. He has been a distinguished counselor to the Ludwig von Mises Institute, and is widely quoted by scholars and writers in the fields of monetary policy, banking, and political economy. He has received many awards and honors during his career in Congress, from organizations such as the National Taxpayers Union, Citizens Against Government Waste, the Council for a Competitive Economy, Young Americans for Freedom, and countless others.

Regarding agriculture, Congressman Paul believes that the government should end all embargos, which only penalize our own farmers. He is not in favor of NAFTA or CAFTA, calling it “internationally managed trade”. He believes that by participating in these agreements the U.S. loses sovereignty and fails to reap any benefits. He is also opposed to the import/export bank, and any form of foreign aid.

Contact Representative Paul at 979-285-0231.

22nd District

Tom DeLay

Since 1984, Congressman Tom DeLay has represented the 22nd District of Texas, which includes Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, and Harris Counties.

Tom DeLay serves as majority leader, the second ranking leader in the United States House of Representatives. He is responsible for developing the issues and policies that form the Republican agenda, in conjunction with committee chairmen and the rest of the leadership. DeLay sets the legislative schedule by selecting which bills the House will consider and the timing of their consideration. DeLay also coordinates House committees’ work to ensure national priorities are addressed.

Following the Republican victory of 1994, DeLay was elected whip by the new GOP majority. Widely credited with revolutionizing the office, DeLay has been called the most effective whip in the history of



Center right: Representative Tom DeLay speaking with President Bush.

the House of Representatives. During the eight years he counted votes, DeLay regularly overcame daunting odds to deliver victories for House Republicans.

Long considered a leading voice on domestic policies, Majority Leader DeLay increasingly asserts leadership on international affairs. Two dominant principles shape his response to foreign policy questions. DeLay believes the United States must strongly support democratic

allies who share our commitment to liberty, like Israel and Taiwan, while aggressively promoting the expansion of freedom to closed societies. He also believes tyrants and rogue regimes must be confronted before they harm American interests. In his view, the price of freedom remains an active opposition to terror and tyranny.

A native Texan, Tom DeLay was born along the banks of the Rio Grande River in the historic border city of Laredo on April 8, 1947. During his childhood, the DeLay family lived in South America for a number of years. His father’s career in the oil and gas industry required several job postings to Venezuela’s rural interior, and the DeLay family made their home in small towns near the oil fields.

DeLay’s years in Venezuela were a formative political experience. His family lived through the turbulence and uncertainty of three revolutions. Two of these events were violent, and neighboring townspeople died at the hands of marauding revolutionaries. DeLay points to this early exposure to political violence as the source of his lifelong “passion for freedom.”

DeLay graduated from the University of Houston in 1970 with a degree in biology. Shortly afterwards, DeLay opened a successful small business in Houston. The demands of attracting customers and running his business and the responsibility of making payroll for his employees every month convinced DeLay that the primary impediment to economic growth stems from the twin burdens of excessive taxation and unneeded regulation. He soon grew to appreciate the tre-

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mendous costs imposed on small businesses by state and federal regulations. The need to lower these burdens sparked his involvement in the political process.

During a Fort Bend County Republican Committee meeting in 1978, a party official suggested that DeLay run for an open Texas State House seat that had never elected a Republican. Excited by the prospect of lowering taxes and excess regulations, DeLay impressed enough voters to win the election. After serving in Austin for six years, he succeeded in becoming the first Republican Fort Bend County ever elected to the United States Congress.

Over the course of his congressional career, DeLay has built a voting record that consistently supports limited, constitutional government, peace through strength, lower taxes, and the sanctity of life.

Tom and Christine DeLay have a daughter Danielle and became grandparents in 2002 when she and her husband Steve had their first child. The DeLays share a deep interest in the circumstances facing abused and neglected children. They got involved with children's issues after Christine DeLay, a teacher, began volunteering as a Court Appointed Special Advocate for children in foster care. Eventually, the DeLays became foster parents themselves. Today, they are outspoken advocates in favor of reforming the present foster care system by making the child's best interest the paramount concern.

Contact Representative DeLay at 281-240-3700

29th District
Gene Green

Congressman Gene Green was first elected to Congress from the 29th Congressional District of Texas in 1992, after twenty years in the Texas House of Representatives and the Texas Senate. In 1996 he was appointed to the House Energy and Commerce Committee and currently serves on the following subcommittees: Health; Environment and Hazardous Materials; Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection; and Energy and Air Quality. Green also serves on the Ethics Committee and as a Senior Deputy Whip

and Regional Whip.

Since being elected to the House of Representatives, Congressman Green has been a champion of education, labor, and health issues. He has worked hard to increase the minimum wage, job training services, access to technology and to reform managed care and provide affordable prescription drug benefits to seniors.

Congressman Green has been involved in a number of issues and projects directly affecting the 29th District. In 1998, he was instrumental in the revitalization of the Houston Head Start program, ensuring that this vital program was made available to all children. He has worked to secure federal funds for the expansion of the Port of Houston and Intercontinental Airport, and in 2002, passed legislation to declare the Buffalo Bayou a National Heritage area.

Additionally, the Congressman has organized many annual events in the 29th District that serve to improve lives in the community. His annual "Immunization Day" and "Citizenship Day" are two of his most successful events. In 2004, 200 legal residents were assisted with their citizenship applications and 700 elementary age children received free vaccines.

Congressman Green has received numerous awards and recognitions during his years of public service. The University of Houston presented Congressman Green with their 1995 Distinguished Alumnus Award for his personal and professional accomplishments as well as his commitment to the University of Houston. He has also received awards from the National Rehabilitation Association, the Texas Rehabilitation Commission and the American Council for the Blind for his work on vocational rehabilitation programs. In 1998 he was bestowed the title of Honorary Member of LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens) and awarded the Fiestas Patrias "Mexicano de Corazon" award for his work and contributions to the Hispanic community. In 2003 Congressman Green received several awards. The U. S. Oncology Medal of Honor was presented for his work in directing more federal research funds towards find-



Representative Gene Green being briefed by custom officials on the Port of Houston security issues.

Representatives continued...

ing a cure for cancer; and he received the Distinguished Community Health Award from the National Association of Community Health Care Centers, Inc., and the Legislative Open Door Award from the National Association of Credit Management. In 2004, the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) presented Green with the Alfred K. Whitehead Legislative Award for his work on the SAFER Fire Fighters Act.

Congressman Gene Green, a native Houstonian, was born October 17, 1947. He received a degree in Business Administration from the University of Houston in 1971. He later attended Bates College of Law at the University of Houston and was admitted as a member of the State Bar of Texas in 1977. In January 1970, he married Helen Albers Green, who is a retired math teacher. They have two children. Angela, having received her degree from the University of Texas-Medical Branch is currently completing her residency; and Christopher who is a graduate of Texas A&M-Galveston. They have one grandchild, Lauren Elissa Hewlett. The Green's attend Spring Woods United Methodist Church in Houston.

His civic activities include Chambers of Commerce in the 29th Congressional District, Aldine Optimist Club, Communication Workers of America, the Texas Bar Association, and the American Bar Association. Green's Congressional affiliations include the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, the Vision Caucus, the Biomedical Research Caucus, the Congressional Steel Caucus, the Urban Caucus, the Urban Health Caucus and the Sportman's Caucus. Congressman Green is co-chair of the Democratic Israel Working Group.

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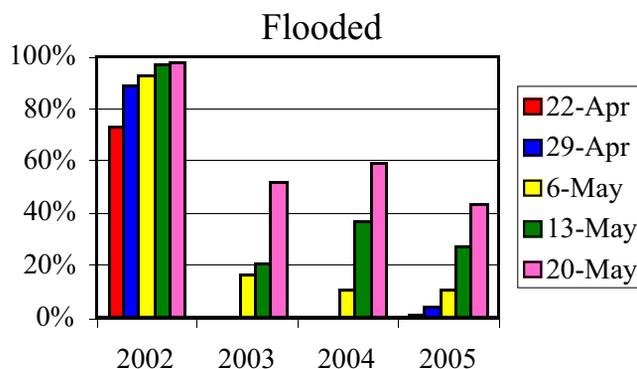
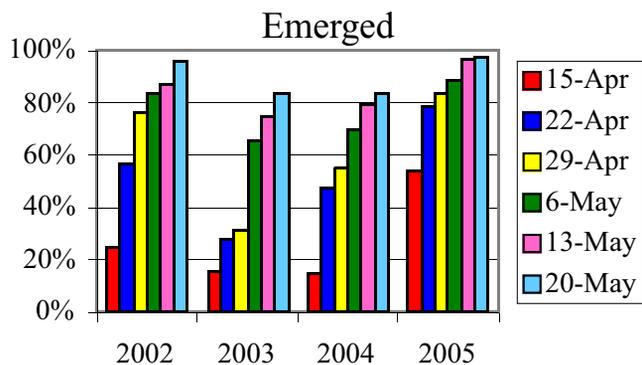
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Access back issues of *Texas Rice* at
<http://beaumont.tamu.edu>

Texas Rice is published 9 times a year by The Texas A&M University System Research and Extension Center at Beaumont. Interviews, writing and layout by Jay Cockrell. Editing by Ted Wilson, Jay Cockrell and Brandy Morace, with additional support by Jim Medley. Information is taken from sources believed to be reliable, but we cannot guarantee accuracy or completeness. Suggestions, story ideas and comments are encouraged.

Rice Crop Update

As of May 20th, 99% of the Texas rice crop was planted, which is 3 percentage points ahead of last year, but right on track with 2002 and 2003. Seedling emergence was at 98%, compared to 84% in 2003 and 2004, and just ahead of the 96% in 2002. Permanent flood was established in 44% of the fields surveyed, which is 15 percentage points behind 2004, and less than half of the 98% in 2002. Only 1% of the fields had reached PD, compared to 3% in 2004 and 16% in 2002.*



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