



Economic Analysis of a U.S. Competitiveness Program to Level the Playing Field for U.S. Rice Farmers: Request for Proposal

I. Introduction & Overview

The USA Rice Federation (USA Rice)

USA Rice is a nonprofit trade association representing all segments of the U.S. rice industry: producers, millers, exporters, and merchants, as well as other entities involved in the production and marketing of U.S. rice.

USA Rice’s grower representation includes approximately 90% of the U.S. rice crop. The organization also represents virtually all U.S. rice millers and processors, as well as the nation’s major rice exporters, which account for practically one hundred percent of U.S. rice supplies and exports. Furthermore, associate members of the USA Rice Federation cover almost the entire marketing and distribution channels for U.S. rice.

USA Rice operates a domestic promotion program as well as export promotion programs in more than 20 countries. Programs are funded by both Federation members and through various public programs for which the Federation competes annually.

USA Rice has a total staff of approximately 30 employees, with its main office in Arlington, Virginia, United States of America, and other offices in Arkansas, Louisiana and Germany. Consultants and agencies are used as appropriate for a wide variety of projects, including for domestic and international promotion programs. USA Rice is an equal opportunity employer.

Situation Overview

India is now the world’s largest rice producer, surpassing China. It is also the world’s largest exporter by a longshot, shipping roughly 16 million MT in 2023 despite export curbs on parboiled rice and an export ban on broken rice extending from 2022 and the imposition of a non-basmati rice export ban in July 2023, followed by a floor price for basmati exports. Despite eliminating its export ban in the fall of 2024, India still exported 22.5 million MT in the calendar year.

In its “Rice: Global Competitiveness of the U.S. Industry” and “Rice: Global Competitiveness and Impacts on Trade and the U.S. Industry” studies from 2015 and 2025, respectively, the U.S.

International Trade Commission has catalogued the last ten years of India's trade-distorting government support as well as other bad actors' government interventions that allow for Asia-origin rice to be sold on the global marketplace for cheaper prices than U.S. rice.

At USA Rice's insistence, the U.S. government filed its second and third WTO counter-notification against India's rice and wheat supports in April 2023 and November 2024, respectively. Along with the U.S., there were five other cosponsors in 2023: Australia, Canada, Paraguay, Thailand, and Ukraine. In 2024, Australia, Canada, Argentina, Thailand, and Ukraine cosponsored the third counter-notification with the United States. These counter-notifications cited that India subsidizes as much as 94 percent of their cost of production for rice, allowing for their export prices to be insulated and artificially low. The Indian government takes huge losses to keep their rice production profitable.

India's 2022 and more serious 2023 export restrictions were imposed to help fight inflation and address domestic food security concerns. However, these export curbs hit many of India's customers hard, resulting in price hikes for the neediest countries in Africa and parts of Asia. In July of 2023, India reacted to the late arrival of monsoon rains and out of an abundance of caution, banned the export of non-basmati white rice in addition to broken. Shortly thereafter, India imposed further export curbs on parboiled rice and basmati. However, in September 2024, India announced a series of actions easing the export restrictions including resumption of non-basmati white rice exports. With India's resurgence in the global market coinciding with its 10-year record crop harvest this year, global prices have depreciated significantly given such market saturation, severely impacting the global rice trade and the competitiveness of U.S. rice.

In summary, the single largest issue that threatens the U.S. rice industry is a lack of a level playing field. The industry is now at a crossroads with global supply and prices beyond recognition. Domestically, USDA has projected losses for the 2025 rice crop at \$364 per acre. That figure is second, just to cotton. On top of that, the planting costs for U.S. rice are projected to exceed \$1,330 per acre for the 2025 crop.

II. Scope of Work

The scope of the study is to examine the monetary amount that would allow U.S. rice exporters to maintain global competitiveness compared to India, and others', subsidized rice in third markets and in the United States. Similar to the 2015 USDA research that investigated "competitor studies" to analyze how other competing markets funded and supported their countries exports, this analysis will also determine what would be necessary to put U.S. rice exporters on a level playing field of other rice exporting countries.

The study should analyze the landing costs of long-grain milled non-basmati rice specifically from India, Thailand, Pakistan, and Vietnam in third markets such as: Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Cote d'Ivoire, the European Union, and the United Kingdom. The report should further analyze

economic implications for the U.S. government and estimate adequate funding coverage to the U.S. farmer to compete on a level playing field in the third markets listed above. The research would also look at how a support program would be delivered to U.S. farmers and finalize an annual estimated cost to the U.S. taxpayer.

III. Objective

To determine the amount it would cost to support U.S. rice farmers to achieve and sustain equitable competition with cheap Asian-origin rice exports in global markets. This study will further demonstrate the disadvantage that U.S. producers are at to those competitors whose government provide substantial financial support.

IV. Stakeholders

- U.S. rice producers, millers and exporters
- Those that use rice as a rotation crop
- Ancillary industries: Fertilizer, chemical, seed, irrigation, equipment, transportation, waterfowl, hunting etc.

V. Methods

- Determine projected cost of production at the producer level and miller level independently as well as a whole industry (including costs associated with fertilizer, chemical, seed, irrigation, equipment, rent, land value, etc.).
- Determine historical and projected cost of production and landing prices from competing origins (India, Thailand, Vietnam, Pakistan) in priority markets: Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Cote d'Ivoire, the European Union, and the United Kingdom.
- Compare them to U.S. prices to establish the cost of equitable competition in the priority markets.
- Determine other factors that may fulfill objective.
- Finally, analyze the economic impact to fund a program to achieve equitable competition.

VI. Parameters

The economic analysis will use, among other studies, price elasticity of demand, price elasticity of supply to measure the impact of the uncertainty in the market has on U.S. rice in aggregate. The cost of production should include any subsidies received from respective governments throughout the supply chain.

VII. Proposals

USA Rice requests that you include the following components in discussing your capabilities:

- Describe how you/your consultancy will achieve the Scope of Work outlined in section II above.
- Explain why your qualifications and background make you the best individual/consultancy to conduct this research.
- Provide information regarding your past work that make you qualified to conduct this research.
- Please detail which of your staff members will be involved in the research.
- Include an end-result rate that is inclusive of all costs necessary to complete this scope of work.
- Include any additional information that demonstrates the ability to perform the functions outlined in this Request for Proposal.

VIII. Conflicts of Interest

Potential conflicts of interest relative to this program are as follows: a firm of record for any U.S. or foreign rice company. Please disclose any conflicts of interest in your proposal. If your proposal is selected, you agree to file and submit USA Rice's Annual Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form for Sub-Contractors/Vendors.

IX. Selection Criteria

USA Rice reserves the right to award the contract to the individual or consultancy with the best combination of attributes, not necessarily the lowest bid. USA Rice prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or familial status.

X. Administration

The individual or consultancy selected for the position will report directly to Karah Janevicius, Director of International Trade Policy and Sarah Moran, Chief Operating Officer.

XI. Conclusion

Final Report

The study will conclude with a final report examining the costs associated and finalize an estimated cost to fund and implement a program that would allow U.S. rice farmers and exporters to maintain global competitiveness compared specifically to India, Thailand, Pakistan, and Vietnam in third markets outlined in II. Scope of Work.

Proposal for Services

The U.S. rice industry is seeking an individual/institution to conduct a study to determine the amount it would cost to support U.S. rice farmers to achieve and sustain equitable competition with cheap Asia-origin rice exports in global markets. The contract period is from February 23, 2026 – May 30, 2026, but may be extended at the discretion of USA Rice in writing and signed by both parties.

The annual budget for this work is no more than \$30,000. Submitted proposals should reflect this budget. Funds for this project come from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Regional Agricultural Promotion Program (RAPP) and/or Foreign Market Development (FMD) programs and are subject to the availability of funds in those programs.

Your proposal should address the manner by which you will gather data and the proposed methodology.

Submission of Proposals

Individuals / agencies are invited to submit proposals to USA Rice by close of business (5 pm EST) February 13, 2026. Please email your proposal to the following addresses:

Karah Janevicius: Kjanevicius@usarice.com

Sarah Moran: smoran@usarice.com