



A report summary from the Economic Research Service

Characteristics and Trends of U.S. Rice Production Practices, Costs, and Returns, 2013–24

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Key Points

- The total number of U.S. farms producing rice fell by 32 percent from 2012 to 2022, while the number of farms producing more than 1,000 acres of rice grew by 11 percent.
- Since 2013, total planted rice acreage in the United States has fluctuated annually due largely to adverse weather: Drought in California caused a steep drop in acreage in the State in 2022 and flooding in the southern United States adversely affected planted acreage in several years.
- In 2021, 48 percent of rice acres nationally were planted with herbicide-tolerant varieties and 44 percent were planted with hybrids. All adoption was in the South. In California, which primarily grows medium-grain rice, hybrid and herbicide-tolerant varieties are not available.
- In 2021 and 2022, U.S. agricultural input prices rose sharply, particularly for fertilizer. This contributed to an increase in production costs for rice and other crops. The nominal average total cost of producing 1 acre of rice increased 36 percent from \$954 in 2020 to \$1,296 in 2024. In real terms (adjusted for inflation), the total cost of producing 1 acre of rice declined from 2013 to 2020, after which it increased until 2022 before falling slightly in 2023 and again in 2024.

Why Does This Matter?

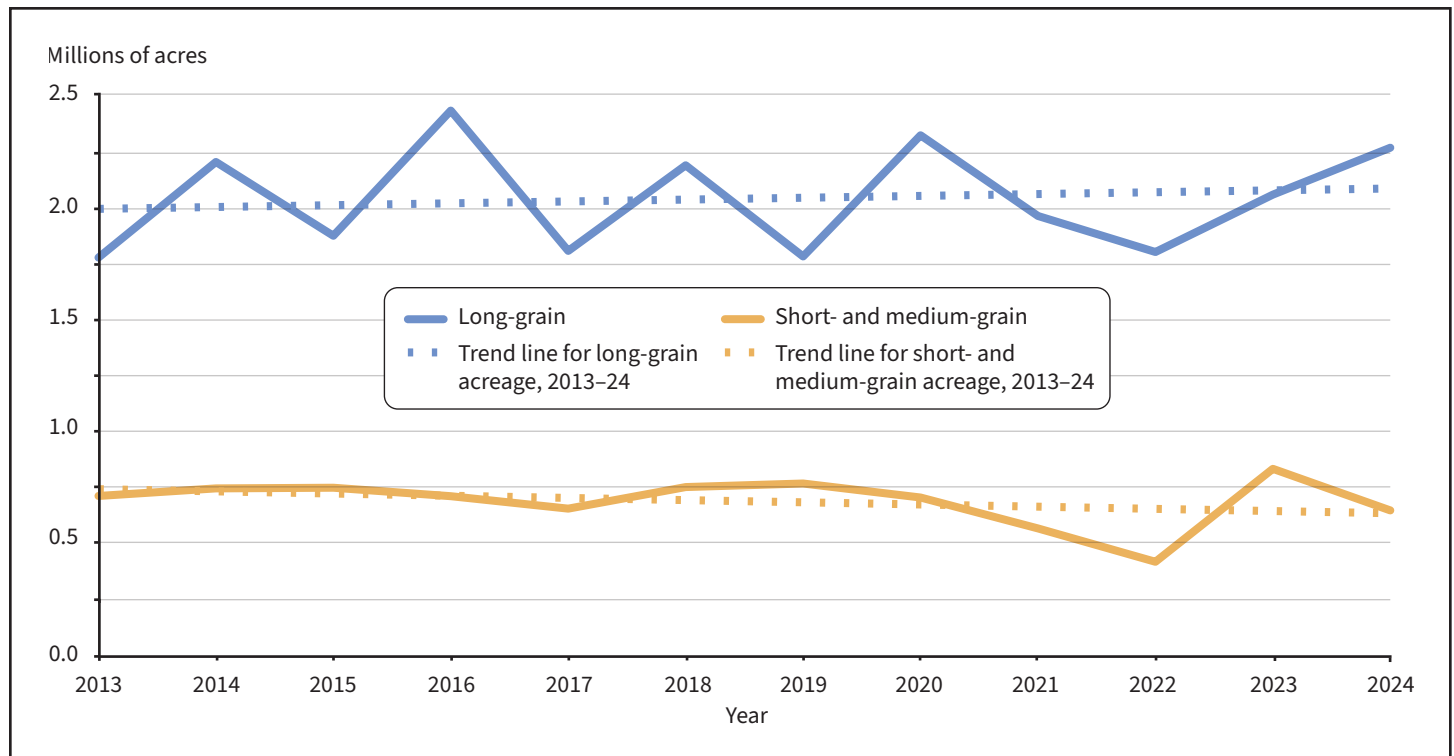
In the past decade, U.S. rice producers, who are almost entirely located in California or the South, have faced many challenges. This report identifies major trends in rice farming from approximately 2013 to 2024 and examines their causes and implications. Rice is relatively expensive to produce compared to other U.S. crops, leaving rice farmers particularly affected by increases

in input costs. The detailed information about trends in prices, costs, trade, structural change, technology use, management practices, and profitability documented in this report serves as a comprehensive update that can be used by a variety of stakeholders to understand the evolution of and changes in the U.S. rice sector in recent years.

A Few More Details

This study uses data from several sources, including USDA, Economic Research Service (ERS) Commodity Costs and Returns estimates and the 2021 USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and USDA, ERS Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS). In 2024, U.S. rice growers planted 2.28 million acres of long-grain rice, 615,000 acres of medium-grain rice, and 29,000 acres of short-grain rice (USDA, NASS, 2025a). Over the past decade, medium- and short-grain rice acreage was lowest in 2022 due primarily to drought in California. In 2023, medium- and short-grain rice acreage fully recovered, doubling its 2022 level. Long-grain rice acreage has fluctuated over the past decade, largely due to flooding in certain years, primarily in Arkansas, the largest long-grain producing State.

Total rice planted acreage in the United States



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service, *Crop Production*.

ERS is a primary source of economic research and analysis from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, providing timely information on economic and policy issues related to agriculture, food, the environment, and rural America.