

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

WILD RICE GROWERS ASSOCIATION TOUR

GRAND RAPIDS, MINNESOTA

AUGUST 8, 1975

It is a pleasure to visit today with the Wild Rice Growers Association.

Yours is an exciting product with a promising future. While wild rice is not produced in a large area of the country, it is quite likely that it will spread to other areas in the near future.

At the present time, Minnesota produces about two million pounds of finished wild rice, or roughly 75 percent of the amount grown in North America.

There always has been a great deal of romance surrounding wild rice. The legend of the "Mahnomen" tells how the Chippewa Indians came to eat wild rice.

Long ago, a young Chippewa youth stumbled upon a strange feathery grass as he was wandering in the wilderness, cast upon his own resources to find food and shelter. He fashioned a canoe, since the lake was too deep to wade into the water, and he gathered some green stalks to take back to the tribe.

While some of the seeds were still green, the squaws planted them in another lake so that the grain could grow and they could enjoy its beauty.

When the rice which the squaws had planted grew to maturity, a wise old Indian came to their settlement and when he saw the wild rice, he cried, "Mahnomen! Mahnomen!" He told the Chippewas that Mahnomen, which means good berry, was good to eat, and they have used it ever since.

From these early legends, a great deal has happened to bring us to today's situation where wild rice is increasingly in demand.

Wild rice, or America's first grain, is a unique crop, having its origin in North America. It is rapidly becoming a major food crop in areas of the midwest, but there are certain problems which must be addressed if its full potential is to be realized.

I salute the work which your organization has been carrying out in order to deal with these problems and expand on the use of this delicious food.

Your representatives have testified before both the House and Senate Appropriations subcommittees regarding the need for increased funding to deal with the problems connected with growing wild rice.

At this point, I am convinced that a relatively small investment will yield major dividends in terms of increased wild rice production. I am happy to have been of assistance in getting your message to the appropriations subcommittees.

The Senate provided \$195,000 for wild rice research in the Agriculture Appropriations bill. It is my understanding that approximately \$100,000 of this

amount would be for Minnesota under the agricultural research service.

Unfortunately, the House Appropriations Subcommittee provided only \$70,000 for this purpose, and we will have to make every effort to raise that amount in the Conference committee.

There are a number of wild rice production and processing problems, which need to be addressed. They fall into four general categories.

1. Disease -- particularly leaf blight and stem root.
2. Bird predators -- especially blackbirds, geese and ducks.
3. Processing problems -- kernel separation, premature dropping of seeds, and shattering of kernels.
4. Weather -- droughts, floods, and storms. A single severe windstorm may put the entire crop into the water.

It is urgent that federal funding be provided to promote this research effort. The State of Minnesota has been providing about \$100,000 per year in research funding.

Carrying forth an effective research program on wild rice will be of benefit to our state, the nation and the world.

The role of the United States in addressing the world food problem is without doubt of critical importance.

Wild rice can play a growing part in addressing this need which could lead to food deficits of 100 million tons by 1985 in the developing countries.

One of the important keys to expanding our food supplies is a high level of investment in agricultural research.

Since the early days of our country, agricultural research has been of real importance. We are aware of Thomas Jefferson's interest in looking for improved rice varieties, experimenting with crop rotation and soil fertility, and developing a lower resistance moldboard plow.

Our land grant universities have played a major role in expanding agricultural production through research programs.

The work of the University of Minnesota has led to a number of important research breakthroughs, such as a new semi-dwarf wheat variety which yields about five bushels per acre more than earlier varieties.

Research on plant diseases, such as stem and leaf rust as well as fungi, has resulted in considerable savings of grain which otherwise would have been lost.

Also, work at the University of Minnesota experiment station has resulted in new soybean

varieties with a higher protein yield. It is anticipated that the extra yield from two million acres will thereby meet the protein requirements of an additional one million people for a year.

The United States -- through the Agency for International Development, the Department of Agriculture, and our land-grant universities -- supports research in the developing world.

Working with other groups such as the World Bank, the Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation, international research centers have been established throughout the world to develop new and higher yielding varieties of rice, corn and wheat. Our country has rightly made a major contribution to this effort.

At this stage, one of my concerns is that we coordinate our research programs more effectively in order to achieve maximum benefits from the dollars invested.

It is urgent that we outline our research priorities and develop the necessary implementation program.

I have requested that an in-depth study be launched to develop a priority listing of the agricultural research which should be carried out. In addition, I believe that new coordinating mechanisms must be established in order to achieve a more effective research effort.

One of the obvious areas requiring priority attention -- and one where I have introduced legislation -- is agricultural energy research.

Agriculture is a great user of energy and energy products. In recent years, we have come to realize the vital connection between agricultural production and petroleum products. As the cost of petroleum products continues to rise, energy conservation will be a major concern.

Another priority area where I have urged increased funding is soybean research. With its unique "fixation process" holding an important key in terms of conserving nitrogen fertilizer, this is an obvious priority concern.

Thus, as people interested in the problems associated with wild rice research and production, you are part of a large and highly important effort.

Other agricultural groups share some of the same concerns and problems which you are now facing. You need to look for allies in the fight to tell your story and obtain funding to carry out this worthwhile program.

We must keep in mind that agricultural research is not a dull topic which is of interest only to the professionals. It involves food production and prices for the entire nation.

For many people throughout the world, it is a matter of life and death.

In his remarks before the World Food Conference, Secretary of State Kissinger stated:

"The United States regards our good fortune and strength in the field of food production as a global trust. We recognize the responsibilities we bear by virtue of our extraordinary productivity, our advanced technology and our tradition of assistance."

I most strongly support this view and the Secretary's commitment. The United States has a unique opportunity and a challenge which can only be described as awesome.

I salute the Wild Rice Growers Association, and I urge you to continue your efforts to expand your wild rice research program.

I pledge my assistance in this effort.

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IT IS A PLEASURE TO VISIT TODAY WITH THE WILD  
RICE GROWERS ASSOCIATION.

L YOURS IS AN EXCITING PRODUCT WITH A PROMISING  
FUTURE. WHILE WILD RICE IS NOT PRODUCED IN A  
LARGE AREA OF THE COUNTRY, IT IS QUITE LIKELY THAT  
IT WILL SPREAD TO OTHER AREAS IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

L AT THE PRESENT TIME, MINNESOTA PRODUCES ABOUT  
TWO MILLION POUNDS OF FINISHED WILD RICE, OR ROUGHLY  
75 PERCENT OF THE AMOUNT GROWN IN NORTH AMERICA.

L THERE ALWAYS HAS BEEN A GREAT DEAL OF ROMANCE  
SURROUNDING WILD RICE.

*Wild Rice  
American  
Uniquely  
Mean*

*Be contented*

THE LEGEND OF THE "MAHNOMEN" TELLS HOW THE CHIPPEWA

INDIANS CAME TO EAT WILD RICE.

L LONG AGO, A YOUNG CHIPPEWA YOUTH STUMBLED UPON

A STRANGE FEATHERY GRASS AS HE WAS WANDERING IN THE

WILDERNESS, CAST UPON HIS OWN RESOURCES TO FIND

FOOD AND SHELTER, HE FASHIONED A CANOE, SINCE THE

LAKE WAS TOO DEEP TO WADE INTO THE WATER, AND HE

GATHERED SOME GREEN STALKS TO TAKE BACK TO THE

TRIBE.

L WHILE SOME OF THE SEEDS WERE STILL GREEN, THE

SQUAWS PLANTED THEM IN ANOTHER LAKE SO THAT THE

GRAIN COULD GROW AND THEY COULD ENJOY ITS BEAUTY.

(Beauty)

When the rice which the squaws had planted grew  
to maturity, a wise old Indian came to their  
settlement and when he saw the wild rice, he cried,  
"MAHNOMEN! MAHNOMEN!" He told the Chippewas that  
MAHNOMEN, which means good berry, was good to eat,  
and they have used it ever since.

From these early legends, a great deal has  
happened to bring us to today's situation where  
wild rice is increasingly in demand.

Wild rice, or America's first grain, is a unique  
crop, having its origin in North America.

IT IS RAPIDLY BECOMING A MAJOR FOOD CROP IN AREAS  
OF THE MIDWEST; BUT THERE ARE CERTAIN PROBLEMS WHICH  
MUST BE ADDRESSED IF ITS FULL POTENTIAL IS TO BE  
REALIZED.

*Salute to U of M  
Mum Feqs II.*

*L* I SALUTE THE WORK WHICH YOUR ORGANIZATION HAS  
BEEN CARRYING OUT IN ORDER TO DEAL WITH THESE PROBLEMS  
AND EXPAND ON THE USE OF THIS DELICIOUS FOOD.

*L* YOUR REPRESENTATIVES HAVE TESTIFIED BEFORE BOTH  
*congress*  
THE HOUSE AND SENATE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEES  
REGARDING THE NEED FOR INCREASED FUNDING TO DEAL  
WITH THE PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH GROWING WILD  
RICE.

AT THIS POINT, I AM CONVINCED THAT A RELATIVELY  
SMALL INVESTMENT WILL YIELD MAJOR DIVIDENDS IN TERMS  
OF INCREASED WILD RICE PRODUCTION I AM HAPPY TO HAVE  
BEEN OF ASSISTANCE IN GETTING YOUR MESSAGE TO THE  
APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEES.

↳ THE SENATE PROVIDED \$195,000 FOR WILD RICE RESEARCH  
IN THE AGRICULTURE APPROPRIATIONS BILL ↳ IT IS MY  
UNDERSTANDING THAT APPROXIMATELY \$100,000 OF THIS  
AMOUNT WOULD BE FOR MINNESOTA UNDER THE AGRICULTURAL  
RESEARCH SERVICE.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE  
PROVIDED ONLY \$70,000 FOR THIS PURPOSE, AND WE WILL  
HAVE TO MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO RAISE THAT AMOUNT IN THE  
CONFERENCE COMMITTEE.

↳ THERE ARE A NUMBER OF WILD RICE PRODUCTION AND  
PROCESSING PROBLEMS, WHICH NEED TO BE ADDRESSED.

↳ THEY FALL INTO FOUR GENERAL CATEGORIES.

1. DISEASE -- PARTICULARLY LEAF BLIGHT AND STEM

ROOT.

2. BIRD PREDATORS -- ESPECIALLY BLACKBIRDS, GEESE

AND DUCKS.

3. PROCESSING PROBLEMS -- KERNEL SEPARATION,  
PREMATURE DROPPING OF SEEDS, AND SHATTERING OF KERNELS.

4. WEATHER -- DROUGHTS, FLOODS, AND STORMS. A  
SINGLE SEVERE WINDSTORM MAY PUT THE ENTIRE CROP INTO  
THE WATER.

IT IS URGENT THAT FEDERAL FUNDING BE PROVIDED  
TO PROMOTE THIS RESEARCH EFFORT THE STATE OF  
MINNESOTA HAS BEEN PROVIDING ABOUT \$100,000 PER YEAR  
IN RESEARCH FUNDING.

CARRYING FORTH AN EFFECTIVE RESEARCH PROGRAM ON  
WILD RICE WILL BE OF BENEFIT TO OUR STATE, THE NATION  
AND THE WORLD.

# World Food

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L THE ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES IN ADDRESSING THE  
WORLD FOOD PROBLEM IS WITHOUT DOUBT OF CRITICAL  
IMPORTANCE.

L WILD RICE CAN PLAY A GROWING PART IN ADDRESSING  
THIS NEED WHICH COULD LEAD TO FOOD DEFICITS OF 100  
MILLION TONS BY 1985 IN THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

L ONE OF THE IMPORTANT KEYS TO EXPANDING OUR FOOD  
SUPPLIES IS A HIGH LEVEL OF INVESTMENT IN AGRICULTURAL  
RESEARCH. (Research)

L SINCE THE EARLY DAYS OF OUR COUNTRY, AGRICULTURAL  
RESEARCH HAS BEEN OF REAL IMPORTANCE.

WE ARE AWARE OF THOMAS JEFFERSON'S INTEREST IN  
LOOKING FOR IMPROVED RICE VARIETIES, EXPERIMENTING  
WITH CROP ROTATION AND SOIL FERTILITY, AND DEVELOPING  
A LOWER RESISTANCE MOLDBOARD PLOW.

↳ OUR LAND GRANT UNIVERSITIES HAVE PLAYED A MAJOR  
ROLE IN EXPANDING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION THROUGH  
RESEARCH PROGRAMS. *Extension Service*

↳ THE WORK OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA HAS LED  
TO A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT RESEARCH BREAKTHROUGHS  
*For example*  
SUCH AS A NEW SEMI-DWARF WHEAT VARIETY WHICH YIELDS  
ABOUT FIVE BUSHELS PER ACRE MORE THAN EARLIER  
VARIETIES.

RESEARCH ON PLANT DISEASES, SUCH AS STEM AND  
LEAF RUST AS WELL AS FUNGI, HAS RESULTED IN  
CONSIDERABLE SAVINGS OF GRAIN WHICH OTHERWISE WOULD  
HAVE BEEN LOST.

ALSO, WORK AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
EXPERIMENT STATION HAS RESULTED IN NEW SOYBEAN  
VARIETIES WITH A HIGHER PROTEIN YIELD. IT IS  
ANTICIPATED THAT THE EXTRA YIELD FROM TWO MILLION  
ACRES WILL THEREBY MEET THE PROTEIN REQUIREMENTS  
OF AN ADDITIONAL ONE MILLION PEOPLE FOR A YEAR.

L THE UNITED STATES -- THROUGH THE AGENCY FOR  
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, THE DEPARTMENT OF  
AGRICULTURE, AND OUR LAND-GRANT UNIVERSITIES --  
SUPPORTS RESEARCH IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD.

L WORKING WITH OTHER GROUPS SUCH AS THE WORLD  
BANK, THE FORD FOUNDATION AND THE ROCKEFELLER  
FOUNDATION, INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH CENTERS HAVE  
BEEN ESTABLISHED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD TO DEVELOP  
NEW AND HIGHER YIELDING VARIETIES OF RICE, CORN  
AND WHEAT. OUR COUNTRY HAS RIGHTLY MADE A MAJOR  
CONTRIBUTUION TO THIS EFFORT.

↳ AT THIS STAGE, ONE OF MY CONCERNS IS THAT WE  
COORDINATE OUR RESEARCH PROGRAMS MORE EFFECTIVELY  
IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE MAXIMUM BENEFITS FROM THE DOLLARS  
INVESTED.

↳ IT IS URGENT THAT WE OUTLINE OUR RESEARCH  
PRIORITIES AND DEVELOP THE NECESSARY IMPLEMENTATION  
PROGRAM.

↳ I HAVE REQUESTED THAT AN IN-DEPTH STUDY BE  
LAUNCHED TO DEVELOP A PRIORITY LISTING OF THE  
AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH WHICH SHOULD BE CARRIED OUT.

L IN ADDITION, I BELIEVE THAT NEW COORDINATING  
MECHANISMS MUST BE ESTABLISHED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE  
A MORE EFFECTIVE RESEARCH EFFORT.

L ONE OF THE OBVIOUS AREAS REQUIRING PRIORITY  
ATTENTION -- AND ONE WHERE I HAVE INTRODUCED LEGISLATION  
-- IS AGRICULTURAL ENERGY RESEARCH,

Energy Research

L AGRICULTURE IS A GREAT USER OF ENERGY AND ENERGY  
PRODUCTS. L IN RECENT YEARS, WE HAVE COME TO REALIZE  
THE VITAL CONNECTION BETWEEN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION  
AND PETROLEUM PRODUCTS, AS THE COST OF PETROLEUM  
PRODUCTS CONTINUES TO RISE, ENERGY CONSERVATION  
WILL BE A MAJOR CONCERN.

L ANOTHER PRIORITY AREA WHERE I HAVE URGED INCREASED  
FUNDING IS SOYBEAN RESEARCH, WITH ITS UNIQUE  
"FIXATION PROCESS" HOLDING AN IMPORTANT KEY IN TERMS  
OF CONSERVING NITROGEN FERTILIZER, THIS IS AN  
OBVIOUS PRIORITY CONCERN.

~~THIS~~ AS PEOPLE INTERESTED IN THE PROBLEMS  
ASSOCIATED WITH WILD RICE RESEARCH AND PRODUCTION,  
YOU ARE PART OF A LARGE AND HIGHLY IMPORTANT EFFORT.

L OTHER AGRICULTURAL GROUPS SHARE SOME OF THE  
SAME CONCERNS AND PROBLEMS WHICH YOU ARE NOW FACING.

L YOU NEED TO LOOK FOR ALLIES IN THE FIGHT TO TELL  
YOUR STORY AND OBTAIN FUNDING TO CARRY OUT THIS  
WORTHWHILE PROGRAM.

need  
allies

↳ WE MUST KEEP IN MIND THAT AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

IS NOT A DULL TOPIC WHICH IS OF INTEREST ONLY TO

THE PROFESSIONALS. ↳ IT INVOLVES FOOD PRODUCTION AND <sup>Supply</sup> FOOD

PRICES FOR THE ENTIRE NATION.

↳ FOR MANY PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, IT IS A

MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH.

↳ IN HIS REMARKS BEFORE THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE,

SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER STATED:

"THE UNITED STATES REGARDS OUR GOOD FORTUNE AND  
STRENGTH IN THE FIELD OF FOOD PRODUCTION AS A GLOBAL

TRUST.

WE RECOGNIZE THE RESPONSIBILITIES WE BEAR  
BY VIRTUE OF OUR EXTRAORDINARY PRODUCTIVITY, OUR  
ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY AND OUR TRADITION OF ASSISTANCE."

I MOST STRONGLY SUPPORT THIS VIEW AND THE  
SECRETARY'S COMMITMENT. THE UNITED STATES HAS A  
UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY AND A CHALLENGE WHICH CAN ONLY  
BE DESCRIBED AS AWESOME.

I SALUTE THE WILD RICE GROWERS ASSOCIATION, AND  
I URGE YOU TO CONTINUE YOUR EFFORTS TO EXPAND YOUR  
WILD RICE RESEARCH PROGRAM.

I PLEDGE MY ASSISTANCE IN THIS EFFORT.

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