

## **2012 Geographical Distribution of Arkansas Rice Acreage**

In 2012, rice was planted on approximately 1.28 million acres in Arkansas. This was an increase of approximately 11% from 2011 rice acreage planted. Rice production is primarily focused in the eastern half of the state where the Arkansas Delta region leads in rice production. The major production region extends from Clay County in the north to Chicot County in the south. Smaller amounts of rice are also produced in the Arkansas River Valley, as well as in southwest Arkansas. In 2012, rice was produced in 40 of Arkansas' 75 counties (FSA 2013).

Rice typically follows soybeans in rotation, at a rate of 68% of rice acreage. Approximately 28% of rice acreage follows rice, and the remaining 4% follow other crops such as corn, grain sorghum, cotton, wheat, oats, and fallow. The most common soil type for rice production is silt loam soils (48% of total acreage), with an increasing amount produced on clay (27%) and clay loam (21%) soils (Wilson Jr., et al. 2009).

Recommended optimal planting dates vary based on geographic location. For the South region, it is recommended to begin planting April 1, with a cut-off of May 20. For the Central region, it is recommended to begin planting April 10, with a cut-off of May 15. And finally, for the North region, it is recommended to begin planting April 15, with a cut-off of May 10 (Runsick 2013). Because most Arkansas rice planting is done in the direct dry seeded manner, flooding of rice fields typically begins at the end of May and early June. Approximately 83% of Arkansas rice acreage is irrigated with groundwater, with the remaining 17% irrigated with surface water obtained from reservoirs, streams, or bayous. Approximately 70% of rice planted is drill seeded, 28% is broadcast seeded, and a small 2% is water seeded. Rice harvest begins during the middle of August, with half of the crop typically harvested by 25<sup>th</sup> of September (Wilson Jr., et al. 2009).

In 2012, Arkansas ranked first among the six major rice producing states, accounting for approximately 46% of the U.S. value of rice production. In 2012, rice was Arkansas' second most valuable crop, with a value of production over \$1.36 billion dollars. This was an increase of approximately 30% from 2011's value of production (NASS 2013a). The annual rice crop accounts for thousands of jobs, making it an important crop to rural Arkansas communities. The rice industry of the Eastern part of the state alone supports 2,500 rice farms and more than 35,000 employees working in trucking, barge loading, rail shipments, rice milling, rice storage, marketing and research and development. The rice industry accounts for about 2% of Arkansas' total employment (Coats 2010).

### **Rice Acreage**

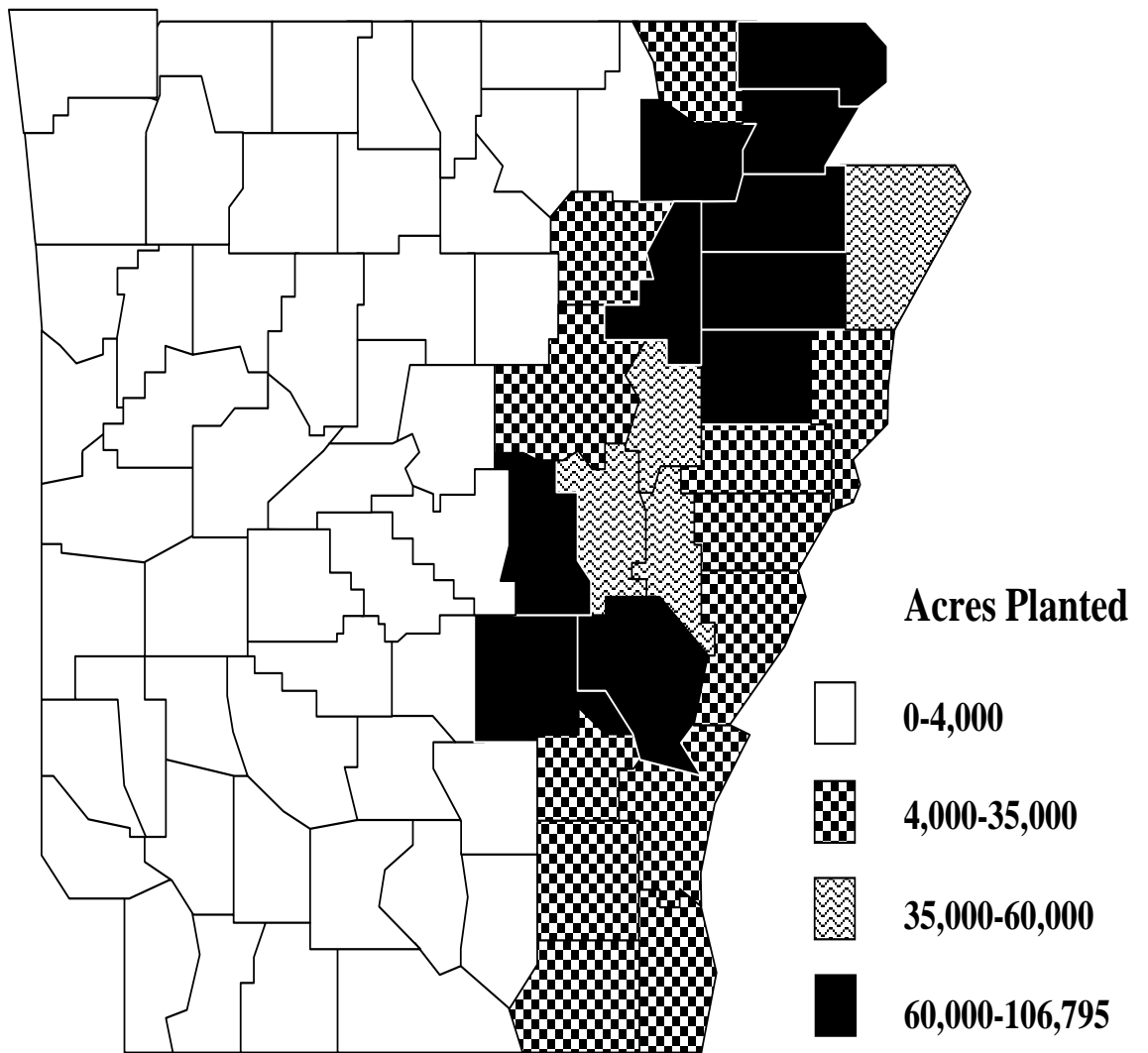
Counties in Arkansas are divided into 9 districts by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS 2013b). A map of the district boundaries can be found in the appendix. Table 1 presents USDA Farm Service Agency's 2012 certified Arkansas rice planted acreage by NASS district (FSA 2012). In 2012, rice was planted on 1.28 million acres in the state. The leading two districts are District 3 and District 6, with 624,394 and 501,512 total acres planted, respectively.

These two districts are located in the Delta region, and represented nearly 88% of planted acreage in 2012.

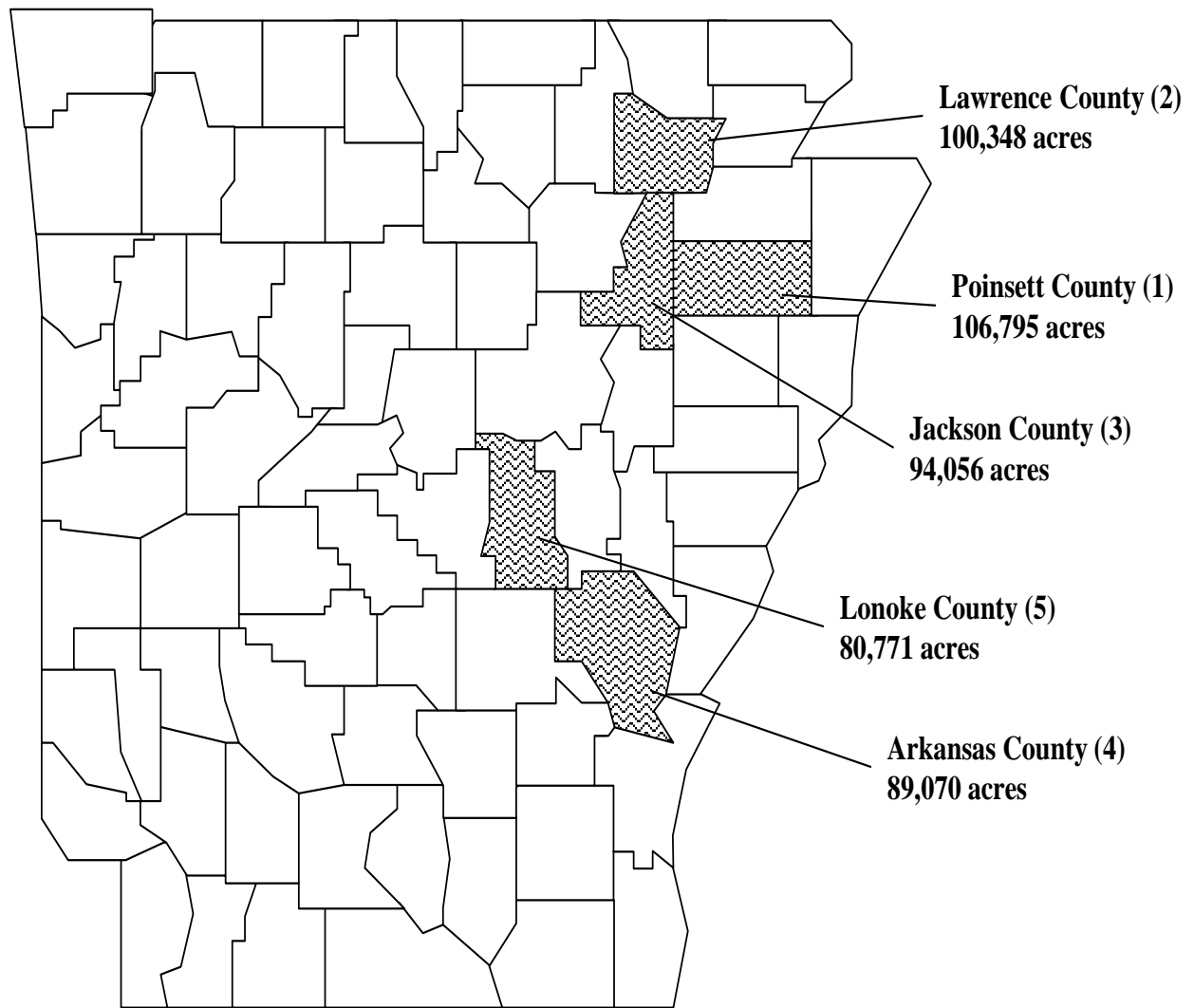
Figure 1 shows planted acreage categories for Arkansas counties and Figure 2 shows the top five counties. Poinsett and Lawrence counties led the state in rice acreage planted, with 106,795 and 100,348 acres planted, respectively. The counties of Jackson, Arkansas, and Lonoke complete the top five counties in acreage planted. These five counties represented approximately 37% of total rice acreage planted in 2012.

**Table 1. Rice Acreage by NASS District, Arkansas, 2012**

<b>District</b>	<b>District Totals</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>624,394</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>2,983</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>9,004</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>501,512</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>1,197</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>1,287</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>135,497</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>1,278,269</b>



**Figure 1. Rice Planted Acreage, Arkansas Counties, 2012**



**Figure 2. Top Five Counties, Rice Planted Acreage, Arkansas Counties, 2012**

## Summary

Arkansas has been the leading producer of rice in the United States since 1973. Rice production continues to be focused in the eastern part of Arkansas, specifically in the Arkansas Delta region, where Districts 3 and 6 led production. Poinsett and Lawrence counties led Arkansas rice planted acreage in 2012. Arkansas led the six major rice producing states with a value of production over \$1.36 billion dollars. Rice is a vital crop to the Arkansas state economy, and provides thousands of jobs across the state, mostly in rural areas.

## References

Coats, Robert. "Arkansas Multi-Billion Dollar Crop." Arkansas Agriculture, Edition 18. Internet Site: <http://epubs.democratprinting.com/allarticle/7012/43726/43726/allarticle.html> (Accessed June 2013).

Runsick, Stewart. "2012 Arkansas Rice Quick Facts." University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, Research and Extension. Internet Site: <http://www.arkansas-crops.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/2013-Arkansas-Rice-Quick-Facts.pdf> (Accessed June 2013).

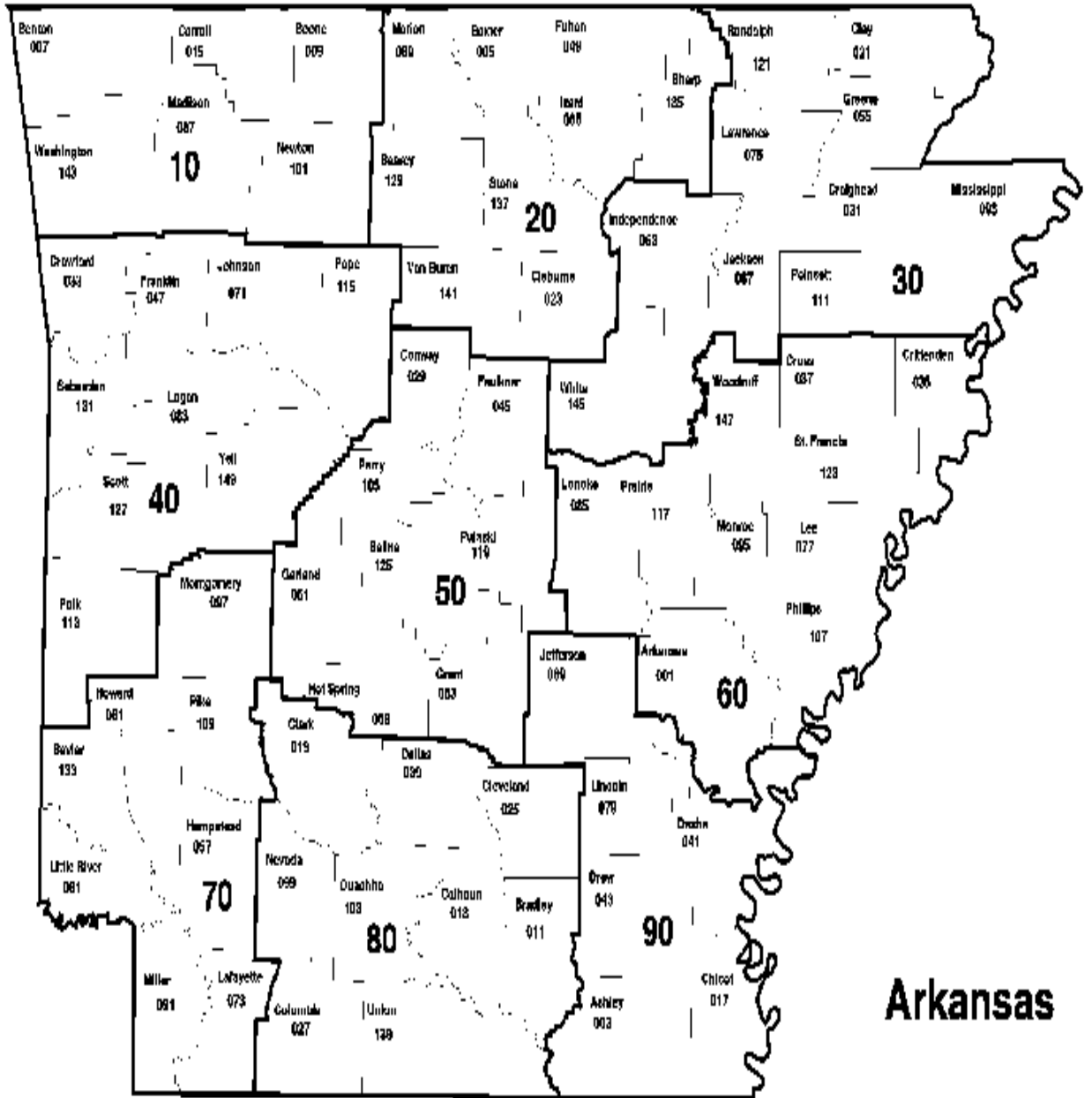
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency (USDA, FSA). "Crop Acreage Data." Internet Site: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=newsroom&subject=landing&topic=foi-er-fri-cad> (Accessed June 2013).

U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service (USDA, NASS). "Crop Values, 2011 Summary." Internet Site: <http://usda01.library.cornell.edu/usda/nass/CropValuSu//2010s/2012/CropValuSu-02-16-2012.pdf> (Accessed June 2013).

U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service (USDA, NASS). "County Estimates, Arkansas, District Map." Internet Site: [http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/Arkansas/Publications/County\\_Estimates/DistMap.pdf](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Arkansas/Publications/County_Estimates/DistMap.pdf) (Accessed June 2012).

Wilson, Jr., C. E., S. K. Runsick, and R. Mazzanti. "Trends in Arkansas Rice Production." Internet Site: <http://arkansasagnews.uark.edu/571-1.pdf> (Accessed June 2013).

# Appendix



**Arkansas District and County Map**

University of Arkansas, United States Department of Agriculture and County Governments Cooperating.

The Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.