

SPEAKER 1: We started this now when we seen at the Farmer's Market of a good way of getting our product to the people. And it's been interesting coming down here and a lot of people have gotten their rice from it. And there--

SPEAKER 2: Is it hard to grow? Tell us about that.

SPEAKER 1: Yes, it's very hard to grow. You dike your land and rototill the ground and flood it. And then you seed your rice in that. And then you've got to care for it during the summer. And you get a lot of trouble with blackbirds and worms and things like this. And then when it's ready to be harvested, they go in and they drain the paddies.

And then they come in with combines, and they are equipped with tracks on the combines. And so it's a regular farm product now.

SPEAKER 2: Now, how long has it been a farm product rather than a wild product?

SPEAKER 3: Approximately about seven years now.

SPEAKER 2: Have you folks been growing it for seven years?

SPEAKER 3: Yes, we've been-- we started experimenting on it seven years ago. And since then, we've taken off and started growing it. And it's went through the state of Minnesota and up into Canada pretty much. Our seed and our ways of doing it is spread through the state of Minnesota, and they're looking for it in Michigan now. In Wisconsin, they're growing it there.

SPEAKER 2: When do you plant? What month?

SPEAKER 3: We usually try and get it in by the 1st of May or at least by the 1st of June, if we possibly can, because we've got to catch the water when it's the right temperature to start germinating.

SPEAKER 2: And how many acres do you have?

SPEAKER 3: We've got approximately 100 acres right now.

SPEAKER 2: All in wild rice?

SPEAKER 3: All in wild rice, yeah.

SPEAKER 2: And do you have a good deal of loss from those 100 acres?

SPEAKER 3: Yes, sometimes we do. We have hail and birds and whole floods. We've got everything.

SPEAKER 2: How are your sales going here at the Farmer's Market?

SPEAKER 3: It's been doing pretty good here.

SPEAKER 2: And from now on--

SPEAKER 3: It's really good.

SPEAKER 2: --ought to be really picking up, with Thanksgiving coming.

SPEAKER 3: Yes, I think it'll pick up towards Christmas now. They use this a lot for Christmas presents because it's a lot of people that don't know what to buy somebody for Christmas present, where if they can buy this, it's something that they probably wouldn't buy themselves. And they pick it up by 10, 15, 20 pounds, and they give it to friends and relatives, and so on, for presents.

Most of your people here in Minnesota has never tasted this wild rice, see. This is why we're down here at the market, and we're trying to sell them on the rice, see. And well, it is a very good product to eat now.

SPEAKER 2: Well, now, your price is \$1.75 for the broken rice. And how much for the whole rice?

SPEAKER 3: \$3.25 for the whole rice.

SPEAKER 2: Now, that's quite a comedown in price, isn't it, over previous years?

SPEAKER 3: Yes, we can-- through the Farmer's Market, we can sell it cheaper because you take your grocery stores and so on, they've got to charge--

SPEAKER 1: They've got to make money.

SPEAKER 3: They've got to make money on it. Where if the people get it right from the farmer, they do save money on it. Anything about this product is we've only got 5% of the people in the United States that's ever tasted it. So we're trying to get recipes and learn people how to cook it and prepare it and to try it, to see if they do like it. You never like nothing you don't try. [LAUGHS]

SPEAKER 2: Well, you got to know how to cook it, that's for sure.

SPEAKER 3: Yeah. And this is why we have got the recipes on it to show them how to cook it in there. So some people, they say that they really know how to cook it, but then they say, well, I had it once before, and I don't like it. But have you tried it? Just like my brother here, I don't know how many years ago, he said, have you had wild rice? I said, no, I have never ate it.

And I go up to his place, and I try it once, now I'm just stuck on it. He's the one that told me he never liked it.

SPEAKER 2: Yeah. [LAUGHS]

SPEAKER 3: Yeah, but he can't get me off it, no.

SPEAKER 2: All right, that's great. Thanks very much.

SPEAKER 3: Thank you.