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## FOOD EDITORS RELEASE

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# ANCIENT GRAIN ADDS RUSTIC FLAIR TO YOUR THANKSGIVING DINNER

*Wild Rice – The Perfect Complement to Your Holiday Feast*

While many may think an ancient grain is something to be viewed under glass at a museum, you may be surprised to know the simple addition of one of those grains – wild rice – has the potential to transform your Thanksgiving feast from merely good to a wild tradition!

There is no holiday more closely associated with a specific meal than Thanksgiving! And while there are millions of variations, few would argue that the best supporting actor of the Thanksgiving extravaganza is the stuffing. Whether your guests prefer theirs with sausage, carrots, nuts, bacon, or extra sage, the secret to creating a star is the addition of the ancient grain, wild rice.

Ancient grains are more than just relics of the past, they are grains that have stood the test of time. As an ancient grain, wild rice is not only highly nutritious, rich in protein and essential nutrients, but possesses a flavor profile tailor-made for adding a distinctly nutty taste to your holiday stuffing.

Whether added to a traditional-style stuffing, or more contemporary fruit- or walnut-based dressings, wild rice is sure to add the perfect touch of rustic flair needed to make your Thanksgiving dinner a wild tradition. Liven up your Thanksgiving stuffing by trying one of these three easy-to-prepare wild rice recipes:

### ***Wild Rice Stuffing***

Incorporate the smoky, nutty flavor of wild rice into your holiday dinner with traditional *Wild Rice Stuffing*. Bacon, onion, sage, mushrooms, sausage, and wild rice join together to create an earthy blend of flavors and the perfect accompaniment to your holiday turkey.

### ***Fruited Wild Rice Stuffing***

Enjoy a hint of sweetness? *Fruited Wild Rice Stuffing* provides a bold and flavorful alternative to the more traditional stuffing options. This recipe blends wild rice with apples, raisins, orange juice, and walnuts for a lightly sweet stuffing option sure to please your family and friends.

### ***Wild Rice Walnut Dressing***

For a new twist on an old favorite, try our rustic *Wild Rice Walnut Dressing*. This unique and tasty dressing option combines wild rice with onion, celery, garlic, sage, and chopped walnuts for a lighter, yet flavorful complement to your Thanksgiving staples.

When adding wild rice to your Thanksgiving dinner, make things even more fun – and potentially profitable – by sharing your wild rice feast on Instagram. Starting November 13, upload your original photo or video cooking or enjoying wild rice using the hashtags #WildTraditions and #mnwildrice for a chance to win a cash prize. The contest runs through November 30. For full contest details, visit [mnwildrice.org/rules.php](http://mnwildrice.org/rules.php).

For even more great recipe ideas to spruce up your holiday feast or incorporate the great taste of wild rice into salads or sides, search the world's largest wild rice recipe library for other ideas on how to make your Thanksgiving traditions wild ([mnwildrice.org/search.php](http://mnwildrice.org/search.php)).

#### **WILD RICE STUFFING**

- 4 slices bacon, cut in 1" pieces
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- ½ lb mushrooms, sliced
- 3 ribs celery, chopped
- 3 cups cooked wild rice
- 1 tsp crushed leaf oregano
- ½ tsp crushed leaf sage
- 2 cups bread crumbs
- salt and pepper to taste
- ¼-½ cup chicken broth, optional

Preheat oven to 350°F. In large skillet, sauté bacon, onion, mushrooms, and celery; cook until bacon is crisp. Stir in wild rice, oregano, sage, and bread crumbs; adjust seasonings. Place in greased 2-qt. casserole, cover and bake 30-40 minutes. Add ¼-½ cup chicken broth, if needed, for moisture.

Sausage Stuffing: Add ½ lb crumbled, cooked, and drained sausage. 6-8 servings.

#### **FRUITED WILD RICE STUFFING**

- 3 cups cooked wild rice
- 1 cup bread crumbs
- ½ cup raisins
- ½ cup chopped walnuts, optional
- ½ cup fresh apple chunks
- ¼ cup extra light margarine, melted
- ¼ cup orange juice

Combine all ingredients. Use as stuffing for game birds, turkey, capon, or chicken, or turn into buttered 2-quart casserole and bake at 325°F for 1½ hours, covered. 8 servings.

#### **WILD RICE WALNUT DRESSING**

- ½ cup chopped onion
- ½ cup chopped celery
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1½ tbsp butter or margarine
- 3 cup cooked wild rice
- ½ cup chopped walnuts
- ½ tsp rubbed sage
- ¼ tsp seasoned salt
- ⅛ tsp ground black pepper
- ½ cup chicken broth

In small skillet, cook onion, celery, and garlic in butter until tender. Combine with remaining ingredients. Place in buttered baking dish. Cover and bake at 350°F for 20 minutes. Uncover and continue baking 5 minutes. 6 servings.

**Notes to Editor:**

For an electronic copy of the photos call or email our office. If emailing, please specify your preferred photo format.

Due to limited funds, we are unable to utilize a clipping service. Run our release and send us a copy — we'll return the favor by sending you a ½ pound of wild rice. If you cannot accept the wild rice, we'd still appreciate a clipping to show our growers — ***thanks!***

**Wild Rice Stuffing**

Credit: Minnesota Cultivated Wild Rice Council



**Fruited Wild Rice Stuffing**

Credit: Minnesota Cultivated Wild Rice Council

