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FOOD EDITORS RELEASE

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NATIONAL RICE MONTH - MAKE IT A “WILD” TIME

September a Perfect Time to Liven-Up Your Meals with Wild Rice!

While most people may not associate National Rice Month with a “wild” time, it certainly can be if you incorporate a little (or a lot as we would recommend) **wild rice** into your meals. September is National Rice Month and presents the perfect opportunity to re-acquaint yourself and your family with the distinctive taste of wild rice.

Wild rice has long been a favorite of cooks everywhere who utilize its unique flavor to add flair and depth to their meals. It serves as a great addition to soups, salads, sides, main dishes, stir-fry, and even desserts, conveying a smoky, nutty flavor quite unlike anything else. *(For hundreds of great tasting wild rice recipes and ideas on the different ways wild rice can be used to liven up your own favorites go to www.mnwildrice.org/search.php.)*

In addition to its great flavor and versatility, wild rice is an exceptionally healthy meal option as well. Wild rice is a whole grain which contains no sodium, sugar, saturated fat or cholesterol and is a better source of protein than either white or brown rice. It is a high protein, natural food with no preservatives and no additives. Wild rice is gluten-free and a great source of dietary fiber, phosphorus, calcium, and iron...all part of a healthy, well balanced diet.

Another “wild” part of National Rice Month is the culmination of the Minnesota Cultivated Wild Rice Council’s “*Get Wild with Wild Rice*” Recipe Contest which offers visitors of our website the opportunity to vote for their favorite wild rice recipe.

Each year contestants submit their wild rice creations which go head-to-head in a taste test conducted by our culinary specialists to determine which recipes are selected as finalists. This year, 10 finalists made the cut and will be featured in an online contest celebrating National Rice Month. America will vote for their favorite recipe to determine the \$500 grand prize winner. Voting will begin on Saturday, September 1 and is available at www.mnwildrice.org. Be sure to visit our website to cast your vote for the grand prize winning recipe. You can also sign up to be notified when recipes will be solicited for our 2013 contest.

2012 finalists include:

Springtime Wild Rice Soup – Mary Marlowe Leverette, Columbia, SC
Quick & Spicy Pork Wild Rice Soup – Sally Sibthorpe, Shelby Township, MI
Curry Corn & Chicken Soup – Roxanne Chan, Albany, CA
Wild Rice Beef Stew with Red Wine – Sugiyarti Jorgenson, Kodiak, AK

Zesty Wild Rice Salad – Angela Smith, Bluffton, SC

Hearty Heartland Succotash Salad – Roxanne Chan, Albany, CA

Conquistadors – Margaret Bracher, Robertsdale, AL

Chicken & Wild Rice Enchiladas – Angela Smith, Bluffton, SC

Wild Rice & Sausage Frittata – Anne Lauer, Hugo, MN

Elegant Italian Stuffed Flank Steak - Margaret Bracher, Robertsdale, AL

Our 2011 Grand Prize Winner was: **Orange Beef** created by Deborah Puette, Lilburn, GA

Orange Beef features wild rice with sirloin steak, green onions, ginger, and broccoli for a delicious creation highlighted with hints of citrus and garlic. While *Orange Beef* is easy to prepare, it can also serve as an upscale dinner option for those special occasions.

ORANGE BEEF

- 1½ lbs sirloin steak, cut into bite-size pieces
- zest and juice of a medium orange, reserve juice
- 1 tbsp sesame oil
- 4 green onions, thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp minced ginger
- ½ cup tamari
- 2 tbsp cornstarch
- 1 pkg (9 oz) frozen Green Giant® Simply Steam® Broccoli Cuts, prepared as directed on pkg, drained
- 1 can (8 oz) sliced water chestnuts, drained
- 3 cups cooked wild rice

In large skillet, sauté sirloin and orange zest in oil. Stir in onions, garlic, and ginger; cook 2 minutes. In small bowl, mix tamari and cornstarch; stir into skillet mixture slowly. Stir in orange juice and remaining ingredients; heat through. 6 servings.