



Water-Saving Rice Production Can Reduce Arsenic Levels: Benefits for Environment and Human Health

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Because arsenic occurs naturally in soils and is taken up by plants in flooded conditions, it frequently contaminates rice. When the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) sets a new foodborne arsenic action level in 2024, American public health may improve from lower arsenic exposure, but farmers may face challenges meeting that action level. Alternative cultivation practices (ACP) for rice, including alternate wetting-drying and furrow irrigation, can decrease water use and reduce arsenic uptake; yet their adoption remains low despite these benefits. This talk describes those cultivation practices, the benefits in terms of water conservation, and the benefits associated with lower arsenic levels in rice.