



BEHIND THE BUSINESS

“Mississippi’s economy is made up of the most creative, unique, and innovative businesses in the entire world. The Secretary of State’s Office is proud to spotlight these businesses, and provide support for all ventures which choose to invest in our great State.”

Dellunt

Delta Blues Rice

Hugh Arant, Jr., David Arant, Sr., and David Arant, Jr.

Delta Blues Rice was founded by Hugh Arant, Jr., who currently runs the enterprise with his brother David Arant, Sr., and his nephew David Arant, Jr. It was the younger David, when he returned to farming after working as a civil engineer, who researched and proposed the process in which the Delta Blues Rice became an LLC and fully working farm-to-table operation.



Delta Blues Rice is taking their family farm to Mississippi’s dining table. “We’re hoping to keep going with this,” said Hugh Arant of Delta Blues Rice, reciting what has quickly become the unofficial business mantra of his family’s laid back rice farm turned artisan food company. From just raising rice to feed their family and neighbors, the family’s goal over the past 12 months has transitioned into producing and selling locally grown, artisan-milled rice to all of Mississippi – and beyond.

The family has been growing rice since the early 60s and, up until last year, was only using their delta-grown rice to feed themselves or to give to friends and neighbors. Delta Blues Rice is a total Mississippi product: its seed varieties were developed by the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry experiment station in Washington County; the rice is grown in Bolivar County fields and the grain is processed and bagged in neighboring Leflore County.

The company ships rice to some small and large retailers across the state with its distinctive brown kraft paper and black-and-white labeled bags found on store shelves from Southaven to Pascagoula. With retail outlets in seven other states, the Arants have also shipped online orders to Chicago, New York, and Memphis. The company’s largest retailer is Whole Foods market located in Jackson.

Arant believes that Delta Blues Rice will be able separate itself from the larger rice companies because it only has one variety of rice in each of its bags. He said it’s common to find multiple varieties of rice in one bag at any standard grocery store and Delta Blues Rice uses a much smaller rice mill to help maintain some of the rice’s original nutrients which can easily be shaved off in a larger rice mill.

“We are truly a farm to table operation. We oversee and carryout each step in the farming, milling, and packaging operation,” he explained. “At the beginning of each year, we select the best rice variety and plant seed rice that we have grown and stored over the winter. Our seed meets the highest industry standards and is identity preserved. During the growing season, we utilize farming practices that help to conserve our water and soil resources while also growing a healthy crop. In the fall, we harvest the rice and store it for milling. We mill our rice to order in small batches to ensure a quality product.”