

Australian Rice Varieties

Rice is an important crop worldwide – feeding more than half of the world’s population.

Rice varieties grown in Australia are different to those seen in South East Asia. Australian researchers have specifically bred various strains of rice to suit our climate.

Rice grown in Australia has been cultivated from rice varieties grown in similar climates throughout the world such as California and the Mediterranean.

Below are the most common varieties grown in Australia:

Name	Description
AMAROO	Semi-dwarf medium grain, high yielding
REIZIQ	Semi-dwarf medium grain, but a longer grain than AMAROO and more appealing to Middle East consumers
QUEST	New semi-dwarf medium grain, short season
JARRAH	Semi-dwarf medium grain, short season
KOSHIHIKARI	Tall-strawed ‘Japanese quality’ short grain, low yielding
OPUS	Semi-dwarf ‘Japanese quality’ short grain, higher yielding than KOSHIHIKARI
ILLABONG	Semi-dwarf ‘arborio’ medium grain
LANGI	Semi-dwarf long grain, soft cooking
DOONGARA	Semi-dwarf long grain, hard cooking for premium markets
KYEEMA	Tall strawed ‘fragrant’ long grain, low yielding

Australian rice varieties are not suited to tropical climates; in fact almost all of the rice produced in Australia is of the variety *Japonica* which is perfectly suited to the dry temperate micro-climate of the Australian rice growing region. *Japonica* rice is usually grown in temperate climates, like Australia, California, Egypt, China and Japan.

Rice can be divided into two types – *Japonica* and *Indica*. *Japonica* rice is usually grown in temperate climates, like Australia, California, Egypt, China and Japan. The grains are round and when cooked, this rice is sticky and moist.

Australian Rice Varieties Continued

Indica rice is grown in hot, tropical climates. The grains are long and when cooked, the rice is fluffy and does not stick together. Most of the rice produced in Southern Asia, including India, Thailand, Vietnam and Southern China is Indica rice.

Australian rice uses less water. In 2003, Australian researchers and developers revolutionised the rice industry and launched a new breed of rice that is **designed to reduce water use by a further 10%.**

Australia grows varieties of rice that are grown throughout the world in climates similar to Australia. These climates reach high summer temperatures without the humidity of tropical climates and are well suited to the varieties of rice Australia grows and require substantially less water.

There is high demand for Australian rice. Australian rice is of a very high quality and is sought after in markets all over the world. The largest overseas markets for Australian rice are the Middle East, Papua New Guinea, Japan and other Asian and Pacific countries.

Australian rice breeders have been very successful in the development of rice varieties to meet the demands of different international markets. For example, Australia has developed the *Opus* variety for the Japanese style of cuisine and *Reiziq* which is fast becoming a premium product in the Middle East.