## Rice big business in Arkansas

cross the shimmering Arkanas delta, a cluster of tall buildings springs from the horizon like the City of Oz, its blue outne easily mistaken for the sky-

ne of a great city.
But travelers are not fooled or long. Nearly every tiny town these bottomlands has its skyne of grain elevators, dominatng the frame houses and service tations scattered beneath them.

Equally familiar in eastern Arkansas are the huge letters ainted along the row of grain los, spelling out R-I-C-E-L-A-

Arkansas grows about 30 perent of the nation's rice and Riceland is the world's largest ice and soybean cooperative.

The mountains of rice poured into these silos will evenually resurface in Rice Krispies n Canadian breakfast tables, in udweiser beer bubbling into ans at St. Louis, in bags of "Perecto" rice on Puerto Rican grocery shelves, in Japanese dinner bowls and in Nigerian food

"About two-thirds of all the ce we receive ends up being old overseas," said Richard sell, executive vice president of ticeland. "Our most important narket is western Europe. We robably supply 40 percent of e American long-grain rice

Bell joined Riceland in 1977 after a long career with the U.S. Agriculture Department and is credited with helping the cooperative develop its export system. New markets, he said, are the best hedge against the current oversupply that is depressing rice prices.

"We have a group of agents that are scattered throughout the world that represent us," again to remove the outer layers of bran and germ. Then it is polished. Bell said in an interview. Three other men are based in Stuttgart but travel the world seeking new markets for the Riceland grain.

Riceland sells half the rice grown in Arkansas and about one-third of the soybean crop a total of 113 million bushels in

Anheuser-Busch, which uses used in the government's Food rice to brew its beer. The company has strict quality specifications but does not mind using broken kernels that Riceland cannot package and sell, Bell

Kellogg's, another American customer, uses medium-grain Riceland rice for its Rice Krisoies, and General Foods uses

Riceland rice for Minute Rice. The rice is grown in flooded fields throughout the Arkansas delta, harvested and hauled to 41 various driers, then tranported to one of six mills at

that's bought and used in west-ern Europe." Stuttgart or Jonesboro, Ark. Soybeans are processed at plants in Stuttgart and Helena, Ark.

Milling rice is fairly simple. After cleaning, hulls are removed by passing the kernels through rollers, yielding brown rice. It is shipped overseas in that form and milled later.

For rice staying in this country, the hulled rice is milled

Riceland parboils some of the rice, which gelatinizes the starch in the kernel and helps keep it from breaking. The process also prevents germination and kills mold or spores to extend shelf-life, and it keeps the rice from sticking together when it cooks.

Parboiled rice can be pack-The single largest customer is aged for sale and has also been

for Peace program.
"Markets are constantly changing," Bell said. "Four or five years ago our major market for rice other than western Europe was Iran. When Mr. Khomeini came in, we lost the market overnight. So when we went out to find a deal to replace it, it wasn't long before Iraq replaced Iran as being the No. 1 market for this class of rice. Then Iran and Iraq got in a war and we lost them both. That's when we started using the Un-

ited Arab Emirates. The Riceland rice still ends up in Iran and Iraq, "but no one will admit it," he said.

Soybeans are sold closer to home. Much of Riceland's soybean meal is used for poultry and livestock feed in Arkansas and surrounding states.

Soy flour, soy protein and soy

oil also have myriad uses in the food industry. Soybean lecithin can even be used in paint and

Even Riceland's byproducts can be sold. Rice hulls, for example, are used in livestock feed and to crush cranberries and apples for fruit juice. The Japanese use rice hulls in pillows because air can circulate through them.

Riceland was organized as the Arkansas Rice Growers Cooperative Association in 1921. Many Arkansas farmers had turned to rice when boll weevils decimated their cotton crops at the turn of the century. Riceland turned to soybeans when 1955 rice acreage controls left some of its

rice growers with unused land. Overseas, the value of the dollar has dampened demand for

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## Business cited by NRC

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The office also allegedly The NRC staff Tuesday said failed to watch radiographic

member of the public entering a high radiation area," the staff

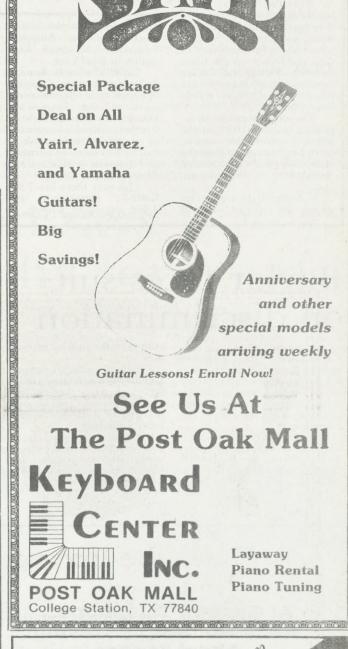
The NRC staff proposed a \$9,000 fine for the firm. The alleged violations were determined after inspections between July and October.



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