

Existing law provides for the 13-member La. Rice Research Board to be appointed by the governor, subject to Senate confirmation, as follows:

- (1) Six members appointed from a list of 10 persons nominated by the La. Farm Bureau Federation, Inc.
- (2) Five members appointed from a list of eight persons nominated by the La. Rice Growers Assoc.
- (3) Two members appointed from a list of four persons nominated by the American Rice Growers Cooperative Assoc.

Prior law provided for four-year terms of office beginning July 1, 1988, and every four years thereafter.

New law changes the effective date for terms from July 1, 1988 to August 15, 2014, and adds the following two members to the board:

- (1) One member appointed from a list of three persons nominated by the La. Independent Rice Producers Assoc.
- (2) The commissioner of agriculture or his designee, who will not be subject to Senate confirmation. Also removes the commissioner as an advisor to the board.

Prior law required nominating entities to submit their respective list of nominees for appointment consideration no later than 30 days prior to July 1, 1988, and every four years thereafter.

New law changes the date for submission of nominee lists from 30 days prior to July 1, 1988, to 30 days prior to Aug. 15, 2014. Adds the La. Independent Rice Producers Assoc. as a nominating entity required to submit a list of nominees by a certain date.

Prior law provided for board members to plan and conduct referenda among producers for the approval or disapproval of the program. New law removes the board duty to plan and conduct referenda.

Existing law provides for an assessment to be levied and imposed at a rate not to exceed 3¢ per hundredweight of dry rough "paddy" rice to be collected at the first point of sale.

Prior law provided that the assessment not be imposed until its imposition and the amount thereof has been submitted to a majority of rice producers in a referendum vote.

New law changes the assessment amount from a 0-to-3¢ range to 3¢ per hundredweight on dry rough "paddy" rice and removes the referendum provision for assessment purposes.

Existing law provides for an assessment refund upon written application to the commissioner within 30 days from the date of the sale and prior to the annual accounting and transfer of funds to the board.

Prior law provided for a referendum vote of the producers to abolish the refund provisions which would render such refund null and void.

New law removes referendum requirements and provides that the refund be paid to the producer no later than 60 days after the commissioner receives the producer's application for a refund. Further requires a two-thirds vote of the legislature to repeal the refund.

Existing law provides for the commissioner to transfer to the board funds collected minus administrative costs in an amount not to exceed 2% of the gross amount collected. Further provides that the annual settlement to the board be accompanied by a complete audit of all funds collected and disbursed.

Prior law provided for the funds to be transferred annually to the board.

New law changes the fund transfer period from annually to monthly.

Prior law provides for the levy of an additional assessment at a rate not to exceed 2¢ per hundredweight on dry rough "paddy" rice.

New law changes the additional assessment rate from a 0-to-2¢ range to 2¢ per hundredweight.

Existing law authorizes the board to determine an amount needed for rice research and to contract for services to accomplish such need. Further provides for the application of funds within or outside of the state subject to the benefit of La. rice producers.

Prior law allowed the use of funds to defray costs or referenda. New law removes this provision.

Prior law allows the assessment on rice to be extended indefinitely in five-year increments by approval in a referendum vote of rice producers. New law repeals prior law.

Prior law provides for the imposition of the assessment only by referendum vote of a majority of rice producers. Further provides for criteria for participation in a referendum and for notification of the referendum results. New law repeals prior law.

Prior law provides that additional assessments be subject to all other assessment requirements including provisions for referenda and extension in five-year increments, subject to referenda. New law repeals prior law.

Effective Aug. 1, 2014.

(Amends R.S. 3:3543(B), (C), and (D), 3544(A)(1) and (3), (E), (F)(3) and (4), and (H)(1) and 3547(A); Repeals R.S. 3:3543(E) and 3544(A)(10), (B), and (H)(5))