

# Funding US Graduate Student Research on Rice and Water

Russ Freed, Michigan State University, Robert Herdt, Cornell and Walt Rockwood, ARFUSA Emeritus Executive Director



Water is becoming a critical limiting factor in crop production. Rice is a very “water demanding” crop. Rice production utilizes 9% of the planet’s arable land and is a staple food for 3 billion people . Researchers, extension workers and farmers will need to annually increase rice production by 50 million tons to ward off growing hunger and poverty..



The **Asia Rice Foundation USA (ARFUSA)** works to make the rice world a better place . Its mission is to foster a world that can feed itself, appreciate the rich heritage of its rice cultures and value its rice growing land as a precious resource to be shared with future generations.

Two recent awardees include:

Emily E. Helliwell (2008), who works in the rice genomics lab of Dr. Yinong Yang at Penn State University. Her award will enable her to visit IRRI in the Fall of 2009 for a short stay in the lab of Dr. Hei Leung to further her work to characterize the rice AC synthetase gene OsACS2 in regard to its interactions with other factors of the ethylene signaling pathways.

ARFUSA is a catalyst for rice research and education connecting Asia and the USA. The Foundation gives financial awards for research, fellowships, travel or study related to rice to:

- Developing country scholars registered in US universities.
- American scholars in US or Developing Country universities.
- Activities to increase US public awareness of rice in the world.
- Research about any aspect of rice in the developing world.

Adam Famoso (2007) a Ph.D. candidate in plant breeding at Cornell University, worked with Dr. Susan McCouch, Cornell University, with the objective of increasing aluminum tolerance in rice. A travel-study grant allowed him to spend 3 weeks at the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Philippines, where he was able to interact with scientists and graduate students working on various biotic stresses. In his words, *“Interaction was useful to both of us because we discussed what has and has not worked in our different approaches and solutions that we have used.”*

In 2010 ARFUSA will grant up to \$3500 for travel, scientific research, education or artistic work about rice. Applicants must be registered scholars or faculty members at an accredited institution of higher education. This year we especially invite proposals that will enable farmers to grow more rice with less water. Proposals could address agronomy, genetics or policy. Linking students to IRRI scientists is especially encouraged. Proposals that involve travel to IRRI or a developing country are encouraged.



**Proposals are due June 1, 2010**

<http://www.asiariceusa.org/>