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FOOD EDITORS RELEASE

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The Search is On for America's Best Wild Rice Recipe

Contest Offers Cash Prizes, National Recognition, and a Chance to Compete at the World Food Championships

The Minnesota Cultivated Wild Rice Council opened the 17th Annual "Get Wild with Wild Rice" Recipe Contest for submissions and is inviting home cooks, food lovers, and adventurous eaters from across the country to bring their best wild rice recipes to the table.

Whether it's a comforting family favorite, a bold new flavor combination, an easy one-pot meal, or a crowd-pleasing appetizer, the Council wants to see how creative cooks can make wild rice shine. This annual contest celebrates the flavor, versatility, and wholesome goodness of wild rice — the only cereal grain native to North America.

Contestants have the chance to compete for more than bragging rights. One recipe will earn the \$500 Grand Prize selected by the judging panel, while fans across the country will vote online during National Rice Month to award the \$250 People's Choice Award. One lucky finalist will also receive a coveted Golden Ticket to compete at the 2026 World Food Championships, where top culinary talent from around the nation battle for major prizes and national attention.

Up to 16 finalists will receive wild prize packs featuring 3 pounds of wild rice plus a choice of Minnesota State Fair tickets or exclusive wild rice merchandise. Finalist recipes are featured in the Council's 2026-2027 recipe brochure, inspiring wild rice lovers and cooks across the country.

Recipes entered in the contest must include at least ¼ cup cooked wild rice per serving and feature sponsor products from Just Bare®, Minnesota Beef Council, Minnesota Pork Board, Minnesota Turkey Research & Promotion Council, and Northern Canola Growers Association. Categories include Appetizer, Entrée, Salad, Soup, Side Dish, and Other, with one recipe allowed per category.

Entries will be accepted through June 8, 2026. Judges will be looking for recipes that are not only flavorful and creative, but also approachable for today's busy cooks. Simple meals for two, seven-ingredient recipes, no-heat dishes, and easy one-pot meals are all encouraged.

Last year's winners showed just how imaginative wild rice recipes can be. Laura Kurella of Wellston, MI, earned the Grand Prize with her flavor-packed Wildly Robust Beans & Rice Birria Bites, while Cameron Miller of Blaine, MN, captured the People's Choice Award with his Minnesota Wild Rice Turkey Pinwheels.

Whether contestants are known for classic comfort foods or unexpected flavor twists, this year's contest is the perfect opportunity to showcase culinary creativity, share favorite recipes, and prove that wild rice belongs in every kitchen.

To enter the contest or view complete contest rules, visit www.mnwildrice.org.

Wildly Robust Beans & Rice Birria Bites

2025 Grand Prize winner Laura Kurella of Wellston, MI

- 1 yellow onion, minced
- 1 tbsp butter
- ¼ cup canola oil
- 1½ cups cooked wild rice
- 1 can (7 oz) chipotle peppers in adobo sauce
- 1 jar (16 oz) salsa
- 1 cup chicken bone broth
- 1 can (15.5 oz) red beans
- 1½ lbs cooked and shredded (any combo): beef chuck roast, pork shoulder, and turkey breast
- pure maple syrup, to taste
- soft corn tortillas, lightly pan toasted
- roasted bell pepper, red onion, lime wedges, garnish

In large skillet, sauté onion in butter and oil until caramelized. Stir in wild rice; reduce heat to low. In blender, combine chipotle peppers in adobo sauce, salsa, and broth. Puree until very smooth. Stir puree and beans into skillet. Evenly divide wild rice mixture into separate skillets for each meat; stir in meat(s). Heat and stir until sauce becomes pasty. Add syrup. Serve in tortillas; garnish. 6 servings.

Minnesota Wild Rice Turkey Pinwheels

2025 People's Choice winner Cameron Miller of Blaine, MN

- 16 oz cream cheese, softened
- 2 tsp taco seasoning
- 2 cups cooked wild rice, warmed
- 8 oz mesquite turkey deli slices, finely chopped
- 8 oz shredded triple cheddar cheese
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- ½ cup cooked and crumbled bacon
- 4 large spinach tortilla wraps
- ½ cup sliced green onion

In large bowl, mix cream cheese and taco seasoning. Stir in next five ingredients. Spread mixture evenly over tortillas. Place line of green onion in middle of tortilla; roll tortillas towards onion. Wrap in plastic wrap; refrigerate. Cut each into eight slices. 8 servings.

Wildly Robust Beans & Rice Birria Bites

Credit: Minnesota Cultivated Wild Rice Council



Minnesota Wild Rice Turkey Pinwheels

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