

# Rice Knowledge Bank

*Showcasing rice production techniques, agricultural technologies, and best farming practices based on knowledge from research findings, learning and media resources, and in-country projects.*

## ✓ Background

Key research findings and knowledge were locked in peer-reviewed journals that were difficult to access by the general public. The science and research described therein were not being translated into messages that built the capacity of extension professionals and therefore were not being communicated to farmers.

The Rice Knowledge Bank (RKB) showcases rice production techniques, agricultural technologies and best farming practices based on the International Rice Research Institute's (IRRI's) pool of knowledge from research findings, learning and media resources and country programs. To bridge the gap between research and practice in rice production, IRRI developed RKB—a digital extension service that provides practical knowledge solutions specialized for small-scale farmers in developing countries.

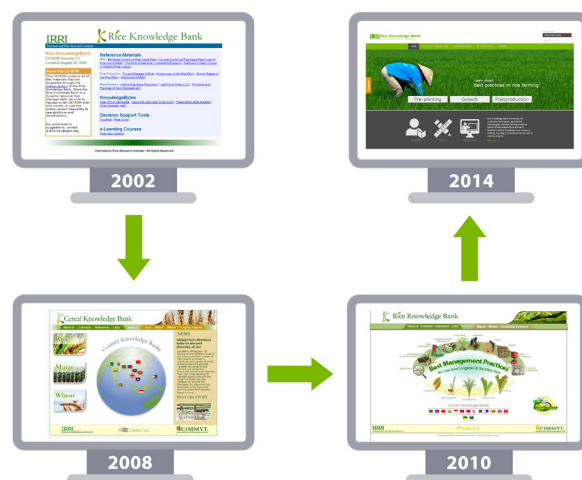
IRRI's Rice Knowledge Bank was first made available to countries on CD-ROM that could be used by national training programs. From there, the materials were shifted to a centralized website for a one-stop shop to make knowledge more widely accessible. The CDs were widely popularized through IRRI country programs.

The core objectives of the Rice Knowledge Bank are

- To create a clear channel between research and extension
- To bring together organizational training materials and synthesize institutional knowledge
- To make IRRI's knowledge available in easy, translatable and ready to use formats that can be used by the extension intermediaries
- To provide inclusive, easy and quick access to all rice-growing communities
- Act as a one-stop standardized source of information for the rice growing world

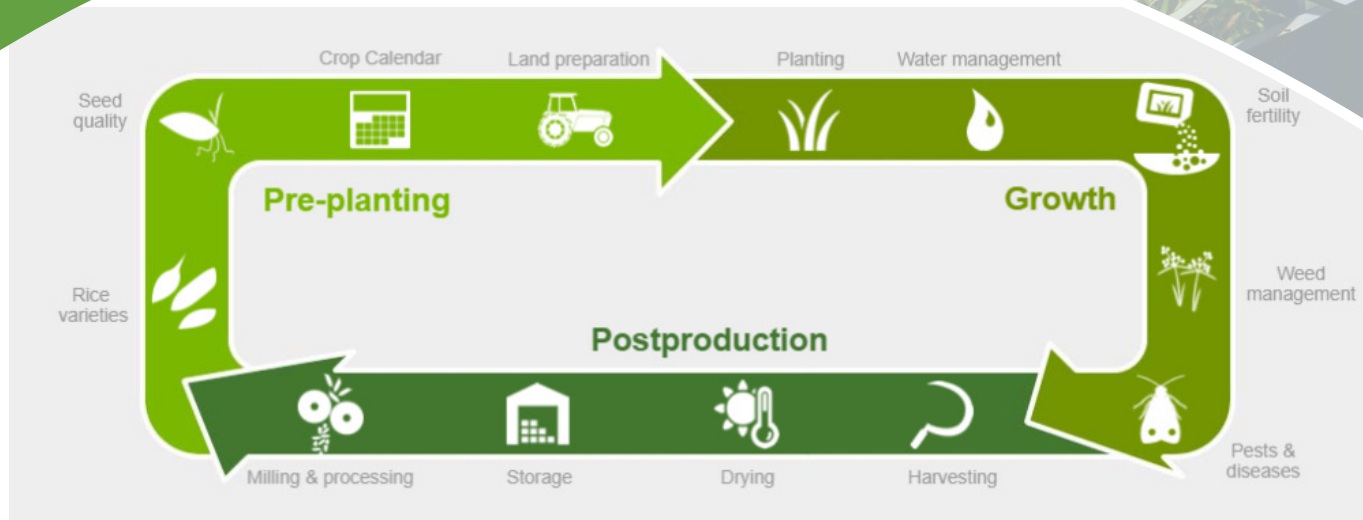
## ✓ The Challenge

RKB serves to address the biggest challenge to agricultural development by supporting fast and effective transfer of technologies and knowledge from the research laboratory to the farmer's field. As an organization, IRRI's aim is to see significant and sustainable changes in the lives and health of resource-poor farmers from marginalized communities and ecologies. Accessible, affordable and appropriate knowledge and technologies are key to unlocking farmers' potential.



## ► Results

- From January 2013 - February 2018, RKB has had **2.5 million users and 8.4 million page views** from countries such as India, Philippines, the United States, Malaysia, the United Kingdom, and others.
- RKB, in its effort to go local, has also contributed to the development of **country knowledge banks in 16 rice-producing countries**.
- **85.9% of respondents** reported that RKB was helpful in finding information



## ✓ How does it work?

Information housed in RKB and used by extension intermediaries, academia and scientists, must be location-specific, language accessible, and in formats that are useful for extension professionals in the public, private and civil society sectors. The formats for this information can range from eLearning platforms, SMS messages, videos, kiosk services, extension leaflets, radio programs or mobile phone calls.

To facilitate easy access to information, RKB highlights (1) Step-by-step Production Stages from pre-planting to post-production management, (2) Decision Tools, and (3) Agronomy Guides to help its audience make informed farming decisions. RKB's "step-by-step" production section offers research based on **best management practices**, including

- crop cycle-based seed to market information system
- localized, country-specific content
- diversity of formats for various learning styles

RKB is presented as a web interface and an offline mobile application (RKB Lite).

## ✓ Lessons Learned and Recommendations

- **Incentives for knowledge sharing:** Aggregating scientific research is a daunting challenge. Internally, IRRI is identifying the most appealing methods for scientists to share their research findings more broadly and in a consistent method.

- **Content is queen:** Credible, authorized content is the priority. Content is then adapted to the most appropriate communication platforms, i.e., internet, mobile, print, radio and video.
- **Context-specific content is king:** While having research content translated and integrated into RKB is key, having content that is specific to the geography where audiences are located is paramount. With country-specific pages and partnerships with country partners, RKB can provide more relevant, credible sources of information about rice production.
- **Open access to information assists broader dissemination:** Open Access or licensing that supports coherence and transformation of products strengthens the position of the IRRI RKB or national RKBs in accelerating dissemination of credible content.

## ▶ Next Steps

- **Country collaborations:** The team continues to explore the production of geography-specific content with country partners by expanding and strengthening country collaborations as a channel to provide more localized and ready-to-use knowledge.
- **Integration with IRRI Education:** One of the key platforms for sharing IRRI's scientific research as well as reaching a wide breadth of stakeholders is through the courses that IRRI Education offers. Using RKB as a foundation for these courses, RKB will grow as a knowledge hub for wider audiences for large-scale dissemination on best agricultural practices.

For more information,  
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