Got Rice?

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Mary Donaldson/KMXT

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The worldwide shortage of rice has caused panics and riots in some countries and even forced stores in Anchorage to limit purchases. Now, it is causing some stores in Kodiak to institute rationing. Mary Donaldson has more.

Rice shortages around the world are making it difficult for people and businesses to purchase rice, and for countries to import the grain. Rice export restrictions by some of the world's biggest suppliers such as Japan and India, along with an uncooperative Mother Nature are disrupting rice supplies and causing increased prices. With rice exports limited, the effects are felt worldwide, including here on Kodiak Island.

Al Large, the owner of Cost Savers, says that his business is feeling the effects of the rice shortage.

(Shortage 1 :35s “…a few pallets of rice a week.”)

For now Cost Savers is limiting its sales of rice to one bag per customer regardless of size. But Large isn’t worried about purchasing rice in the future.

(Shortage 2 :10s “…more and more rice.”)

Asian Groceries and Gifts on Mill Bay Road does not limit customers on the amount of rice they can buy. The store receives about 25, 50-pound bags per week, and as long as they have some in stock, a spokesperson there said they will sell it.

Anna Bravo, owner of El Chicanos Restaurant says she has been forced to make changes on her menu because of the shortage.

(Shortage 3 :27s “…maybe a couple of weeks.”)

The Times of London reports that experts think
the panic and hoarding of rice could be offset by action from the government of Japan,
which has a large surplus of rice in silos. If Japan distributes some of its overstock, prices are likely to drop worldwide and the panic should subside.

I’m Mary Donaldson.

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