New Crowley plant will process rice bran and oil

CROWLEY (AP) — A plant scheduled to open later this summer could put Louisiana’s rice directly on the global health food market, officials of Food Sciences Inc. say.

The company announced this week that it will build a plant to process rice bran (the covering usually stripped off rice kernels) and rice oil (an oil pressed from rice).

The plant will create 40 jobs, officials of the Jennings-based company said.

Rice bran, used in flour and breakfast cereals, is believed to help reduce the chance of some forms of colon cancer.

Rice oil, popular for reducing cholesterol, can be used as a cooking oil.

The plant will use new technology to overcome the problem of rice bran and oil spoiling quickly, officials say.

The plant is expected to process $20 million a year in bran and other products.

**Report**

“Rice bran has never been available because it has never been stabilized,” said Food Sciences president Charles E. Langley.

Through the research of a Food Sciences biochemist, rice bran can now be processed more economically, stored for longer periods and used to yield marketable rice byproducts, such as proteins and liquid enzymes used in baking, Langley said.

“Today rice bran sells for about $1.60 a pound. We’ll be able to sell it for half that price or less,” Langley said.

H. Rouse Caffey, chancellor of the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center, has been working in conjunction with Food Sciences to launch the plant.

Too often, Caffey said, he has seen products on the shelf that contain rice bran or rice oil made in foreign countries that are large producers of rice.

“I notice a lot of crackers and baked snacks that have ‘Made in Japan’ on them, and I wonder why not use rice bran furnished through our state,” he said.

Construction of the Crowley plant, which is expected to process $20 million a year in bran and other products, is scheduled for completion by the end of in August, Langley said.

Langley also said the company will construct a similar plant in Scotland to process rice bran and oil products for the United Kingdom and the European Common Market.