

**- Ld 408: NEW RECOMMENDED RED RICE VARIETY FROM
LABUDUWA**

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Rice varieties of the 4-4 ½ months age group has contributed for 8 % of the total rice growing area of Sri Lanka and grown mainly in Kegalle, Kandy, Matara, Badulla, Mahaweli systems and the Northern region of the country. The demand for 4-4 ½ months varieties from the above areas is high due to the high amount of rainfall or water availability throughout the year. In addition, the 4-4½ month old varieties can withstand the damage of pest and diseases compared to those in the 3-3 ½ months age group, due to the long vegetative period of the former.

The rice varieties At 402 and Bg 406 are two recommended red rice varieties under this age group. However, At 402 is not much popular among farmers due to its disease susceptibility. The variety Bg 406 is released only for Northern region of Sri Lanka but it is also susceptible to Bacterial Leaf Blight (BLB). Therefore, there is a great demand from farmers for a better performing rice variety of the 4-4 ½ months age group.

The rice variety Ld 408 (110 days, red rice, grain type: intermediate Bold IB) was developed at the Rice Research Station, Labuduwa, Sri Lanka and recommended recently for island wide cultivation. It was developed through hybridization and selection procedures, where At 01 and Ld 98-152 were the parental lines. The yield potential and stability of the variety was evaluated by the National Coordinated Rice Varietal Trials (NCRVT), Variety Adaptability Trials (VAT) and Large Scale Variety Adaptability Trials (LSVAT) conducted island wide. Presently it yields 7.5 mt/ha yield with a higher head grain % during milling. The variety Ld 408 is low shattering and none-lodging, resistant to blast, moderately resistant to Brown plant Hopper (BPH) and Rice Gall Midge (RGM). It has good milling, cooking, eating and keeping qualities compared with the presently recommended varieties of the same age group. It also produces good quality flour suitable for other rice-based food products.