



WEEKLY UPDATE ON ASEAN PLUS THREE RICE SITUATIONS

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Myanmar

Myanmar plans to seek more emergency rice aid from ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR). Myanmar is considering asking for more assistance from APTERR due to dwindling supply of the country's staple grain amid the onslaught of floods, according to Deputy Permanent Secretary from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MOLI). Since 2017, according to the information from APTERR Secretariat, Myanmar has sought the assistance from APTERR through Tier 3 Programme under rice contribution from Japan and Republic of Korea (ROK) with 500 tonnes each as emergency supply. Of the total 1,000-tonne rice aid from APTERR, 267 tonnes from ROK went to the victims in Rakhine state due to conflict; 311.477 tonnes from Japan to people affected by flash flood, landslide as well as human conflict in Kachin state; and 233 tonnes from ROK for poverty alleviation as well as flood-affected victims in Kachin, Mon states, and Magwe region. Regarding to the remaining of 188.523 tonnes of rice contributed by Japan, the government will provide 136 tonnes to the recent flood victims this year in Mon, Kayin states, and Bago region, which 50 tonnes have already supplied to Bago region.

So far, there are only 52.523-tonne rice left in the APTERR emergency rice aid.

Source: The Myanmar Times. (2018, Aug 14). *Myanmar to seek more emergency rice aid from ASEAN*; and APTERR Secretariat.

Philippines

Low-priced rice will be available in the market as the National Food Authority (NFA) imported rice arrived at Tacloban port. According to NFA regional manager of Eastern Visayas, the unloading of 3,950 tonnes of rice from Thailand started on Friday, 10 August 2018, after the vessel arrived at Tacloban port on 9 August 2018. Meanwhile, another foreign vessel carrying 7,000 tonnes of Thai rice, which had been stuck at Bacolod port for several weeks due to weather disturbances, finally arrived at Tacloban port on 10 August 2018. The rice will be distributed next week considering its proximity to the port. Replenishing of stocks will follow in Ormoc City in Western Leyte and Catbalogan City in Samar. Prices for NFA rice will be available at 27-32 pesos (0.5-0.6 USD) per kilogram, adding that NFA teams will be deployed to the market to prevent rice hoarding, mixing of NFA and commercial rice, and overpricing, said NFA regional manager.

*1 USD = 53.107 pesos

Source: Philstar Global. (2018, Aug 12). *NFA rice imports arrive in EV.*

Thailand

Thai rice export target 2018 has been raised to 11 million tonnes, citing continuously strong purchase demand. According to Director General of the Foreign Trade Department, from the first of January to 8 August 2018, Thailand had exported 6.79 million tonnes of rice worth 3.42 billion USD, up 1.82 percent in volume and 9.85 percent in value year-on-year. Rice exports are up in many foreign markets this year, especially Indonesia, followed by Malaysia, the Philippines, and South Africa. Thai rice

exports are tended to remain in good shape in this half of the year, due to robust global purchase demand particularly from Asia and Africa. In addition, China is expected to soon clinch a deal to buy an additional 1 million tonnes of rice this year as part of an investment package agreed earlier, including the initial high-speed rail project, and sales of 2 million tonnes of rice, along with the 200,000 tonnes of rubber. In accordance with Thai Rice Exporters Association (TREA), this year, Indonesia and the Philippines are likely to import an additional 1-2 million tonnes and 500,000 tonnes, respectively. Meanwhile, Iraq is also offering to buy rice from Thailand under government-to-government (G2G) contract. Regarding to these positive factors, Thai rice exports will definitely reach 11 million tonnes in 2018, said Director General.

Source: National News Bureau of Thailand. (2018, Aug 13). *Strong foreign demand sends Thai rice export projection to 11 million tons this year*; Bangkok Post. (2018, Aug 11). *Rice export success eyed*; Commerce New Agency. (2018, Aug 10); and Bangkok Post. (2018, Aug 9). *Rice exports to eclipse forecast*.

Viet Nam

The Mekong Delta province of Dong Thap plans to release floodwater into more than 81,000 hectares of rice fields during August to October 2018.

The delta's annual floods are caused by rising water levels of the Mekong Delta in the rainy season. According to the province's Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, farmers and local authorities will give suggestions about time and quantity of floodwater that should be released, which this will not affect the production of other fields and will help enrich fields with sediment. The flooding helps destroy germs, reduces the cost of improving the fertility of the fields, and helps crops grow. Last year, the province released floodwater into more than 113,600 hectares of rice fields, according to vice chairman of the provincial People's Committee.

Source: Viet Nam Net. (2018, Aug 9). *Dong Thap to release floodwater into rice fields*.

Can Tho city hopes to export more rice to China as increasing demand.

Due to a meeting on 8 August 2018 between Can Tho authorities and delegation from the Chinese Food Association, the Mekong Delta city of Can Tho will further support local businesses to increase the number of firms eligible to export rice to China as demand is still growing. Presently, Can Tho has only four enterprises that can meet China's quality rice standards and are permitted for direct rice exports, according to Director of the Can Tho Department of Industry and Trade. However, in accordance with commercial counselor of the Vietnamese Embassy in China, even China is a potential market, rice exports to China could face difficulties in the future due to changes in China's tariff on importation of rice and rice products effective from the first of July 2018. Regarding to this, rice quality should be improved in line with the commitments on quarantine signed between the two countries, with the aim of strengthening rice exports to China. Besides, it is necessary to proactively find partners through trade activities and to build the national rice brand, said commercial counselor.

Source: Viet Nam News. (2018, Aug 9). *Can Tho eyes rice exports to China*; The Saigon Times. (2018, Aug 8). *Chinese firms explore Mekong Delta for rice trade*; and Viet Nam Plus. (2018, Aug 8). *Can Tho to have more firms to export rice to China*.

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