



WEEKLY UPDATE ON ASEAN PLUS THREE RICE SITUATIONS

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Malaysia

Homegrown fragrant rice variety MRQ76 is equivalent to imported rice.

The MRQ76 variety of fragrant rice was successfully trial planted in the city of Selising; the Kelantan state of Malaysia and it is considered equality with fragrant rice imported from Thailand and Viet Nam. Regarding this, the Kemubu Agricultural Development Authority (KADA), which is administered by a board from both the state of Kelantan and the government of Malaysia, is trying to urge more farmers to start growing this rice variety. Moreover, MRQ76 planters will be helped with a government subsidy. Therefore, farmers could capitalise on the opportunity as the price of fragrant rice could improve their income. In order to determine the proportion of fields to be grown with MRQ76, the discussions will be held with the Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister, according to the chairman of KADA.

Source: Bernama.com. (2019, Jun 9). *Homegrown MRQ76 equal to imported fragrant rice.*

Myanmar

Myanmar gets an additional rice export quota of 100,000 tonnes from China.

Pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which was recently signed between Myanmar and China for bartering goods, the country got an additional rice export quota of 100,000 tonnes from China. Under a sister-city system with this MoU, which both governments recognised Kunming and Yangon as sister cities, China will purchase 100,000 tonnes of good-quality rice from Myanmar worth about 500 million USD this year, while Myanmar would also import machinery, equipment, and steels from China at the same value. Presently, there are only 11 rice mills in Myanmar that are certified by China and can export rice to the country. In order to be able to export the full volume efficiently, other 99 rice mills are undergoing the inspection by Myanmar Inspection and Testing Services (MITS); however, the results are not yet available. In addition to China, the Myanmar government will make efforts to get more rice export quotas from other countries to control the price decline in the harvest season.

Source: The Myanmar Times. (2019, Jun 11). *China to import US\$500m of Myanmar rice this year: minister*; Eleven Myanmar. (2019, Jun 11). *Myanmar gets additional rice export quota*; and Eleven Myanmar. (2019, Mar 13). *Myanmar to sign MoU with China to export rice under sister city system.*

Viet Nam

Provinces in the Mekong Delta of Viet Nam switch to smart rice farming.

The Mekong Delta provinces of Viet Nam, including 12 southern provinces and Can Tho city, are increasingly switching to smart rice farming to improve yields, reduce costs and protect the environment. Under this practice, farmers use fewer seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers compared to traditional farming methods without losing on yields or quality. Farmers in Dong Thap and Tra Vinh provinces have used smart rice farming to good results.

The use of urea has declined by around 40 percent and the cost of labour has fallen by 75 percent. The use of water required for irrigation has reduced by 30 percent, while seed requirement has reduced by 50 percent. Besides, smart rice farming helps reduce saltwater intrusion into rice fields as farmers can actively regulate freshwater through smart devices that monitor the quality of water. Consequently, the profit from this model is 20 percent higher than the traditional methods.

Source: Xinhua. (2019, Jun 11). *Vietnam's Mekong Delta opts for smart rice farming.*

Rice exports reached 2.83 million tonnes in January-May period of 2019.

During the first five months of this year, Viet Nam earned 1.21 billion USD from a total exported rice of 2.83 million tonnes, declining 20.7 percent in value and 4 percent in volume compared to the same time last year, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD). White rice was the largest proportion of total exports with 50.5 percent, followed by jasmine rice and fragrant rice with 34.1 percent, sticky rice with 8.1 percent, and japonica rice with 7.1 percent. The Philippines was the largest importer of Vietnamese rice during the four-month period of this year, accounting for 35.9 percent of the market share. Viet Nam shipped 814,500 tonnes of rice to the Philippines worth 320 million USD, up 4.4 times in volume and 3.9 times in value year-on-year.

Source: Vietnam Plus. (2019, Jun 7). *Vietnam's five-month rice exports drop.*

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