



WEEKLY UPDATE ON ASEAN PLUS THREE RICE SITUATIONS

No. 116
1 - 7 May 2019

Cambodia

Rice exports to China increased following the European Union (EU) tariffs.

Cambodian rice exports to China have surged after the EU imposed tariffs in January 2019 on rice imports from Cambodian and Myanmar for three years to curb an increase in imports from both nations. According to the World Bank, Cambodian rice exports to the EU in last February reached only 10,080 tonnes, a 57.8 percent decrease from the previous month. The decline of Cambodian rice exports to the EU was more than offset by the increase in the country's rice exports to Chinese market. Compared to January, Cambodia's rice exports to China grew by 45.6 percent, adding that this managed to increase its overall rice exports by 2 percent during the first two months of this year.

Source: Reuters. (2019, May 6). *Cambodian rice exports to China surge following EU tariffs.*

Thailand

Five new rice varieties were launched in honour of Royal Coronation.

The Rice Department has initiated the project to introduce five new varieties of rice to celebrate the auspicious occasion of His Majesty King Maha Vajiralongkorn's coronation during 4 to 6 May 2019. According to the Department's Director General, the first variety named RD79 (Chainat 62) was certified on 21 February 2019, while the remaining, namely RD83 (Homnil Nong Khai 62), Khasor 62, Medfai 62, and Hom Baitoey 62, were certified later. These five rice varieties have outstanding characteristics, which some are suitable for export, while some are good for health and highly nutritious. Additionally, the mentioned rice varieties are also have the potential to become geographical indication (GI) products in the future that will generate income not only for farmers but also the country, said Director General. Besides, these five rice varieties will be showed for the national exhibition on Rice and Rice Farmers Day 2019 at the Rice Department during 5 to 7 June 2019.

Source: The Nation. (2019, May 8). *Five rice varieties launched in honour of Royal Coronation.*

Viet Nam

Viet Nam aims to export more rice to China after a fall in volume since 2018.

According to Deputy Chairman of the Vietnam Food Association (VFA), Vietnamese exporters have been struggling to access Chinese market despite massive demand for rice. Since 2018, Viet Nam's rice exports to China have dropped to 1.3 million tonnes, down from a record high of 3 million tonnes. The decline was due to changes in China's import policies, which required firms to be licensed to export to the market. Therefore, Viet Nam needs to be regularly updated with market information in order to have measures to help more firms meet China's requirements and boost export to the

market in the near future. Presently, only 22 Vietnamese firms are licensed to sell rice to China. From January to April 2019, Viet Nam's rice exports were estimated at 2.03 million tonnes worth 866 million USD, down by 7.9 percent in volume and 21.7 percent in value year-on-year. Regarding this period, rice exports to China alone reached only 43,300 tonnes worth 20.8 million USD, representing decreases of 89.5 percent in volume and 90.4 percent in value.

Source: Viet Nam Plus. (2019, May 7). *Vietnam looks to export more rice to China.*

Tra Vinh province is planned to grow other crops on 7,400 hectares of low-yield rice fields this year.

The Mekong Delta province of Tra Vinh has more than 17,000 hectares of coastal sand dunes, and rice yields here are very low due to lack of water during dry season. This year, the province is planned to use 7,400 hectares of low-yield rice fields for growing other crops, fruits, and aquaculture to generate more incomes for farmers. The provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development is now encouraging farmers to use 5,700 hectares to grow short-term crops such as corn, sweet potato, and peanut, 550 hectares for growing fruits, 240 hectares for growing coconuts, and the rest for simultaneously farming rice and aquatic species. Tra Vinh province has been made the switch since 2014, while the provincial authority has adopted many policies to help farmers restructure their agriculture production like providing financial support, developing agriculture cooperatives, and applying good agricultural practices.

Source: Viet Nam Plus. (2019, May 4). *Tra Vinh to switch to other crops on 7,400ha of low-yield rice fields.*

Japan

An organic rice farm project helps boost income in a poor Indian region.

Japanese experts have been teaching organic farming of Japanese rice in Allahabad, a city in a poor northern Indian region named Uttar Pradesh, for more than 10 years. Finally, their efforts are beginning to bear fruits. Rice yields have become stable and farmers are enjoying income growth. In the organic rice project, the experts selected Japanese rice varieties because they were sold at far higher prices than in Japan and therefore considered promising as a new source of income for local farmers. Also, demand for Japanese rice was expected to grow as India's middle-class consumers, who eat Japanese food, were increasing.

Source: The Japan News. (2019, May 7). *Organic rice farm project boosts poor Indian region;* and Jiji Press. (2019, May 6). *Japanese Teaching Organic Rice Farming in Poor Indian Region.*

Gathered by the APTERR Secretariat
Tel: +66 (0) 2579 4816-17 Fax: +66 (0) 2579 4840
Email: voraporn.mue@apterr.org
Website: <http://www.apterr.org/>

* This Weekly Update on ASEAN Plus Three Rice Situations is based on all available sources during the period. The APTERR Secretariat shall take no responsibility for data accuracy in this publication and any consequence of their use.