



WEEKLY UPDATE ON ASEAN PLUS THREE RICE SITUATIONS

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Cambodia

Cambodia decides to suspend exports of Cambodian white rice and paddy from 5 April 2020 onwards.

The Prime Minister of Cambodia ordered the suspension of Cambodian white rice and paddy exports, but fragrant rice exports is still allowing, with will effect from 11.59 pm on 5 April 2020 onward. This preventive strategy aims to secure domestic supplies due to the continuing spread of Covid-19 in Cambodia. On the deadline to close exports, traders and others, who have already bought paddy and readied to export to Thailand and Viet Nam, were allowed to export their shipments. Moreover, the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) was assigned to look into the possibility of disbursing funds to millers in order to buy paddy from those who are harvesting and need to sell, and all paddy to maintain good prices, as aiming to avoid lower prices during the period of no traders from Thailand and Viet Nam.

Source: The Phnom Penh Post. (2020, Mar 31). *PM orders suspension of white rice, paddy exports.*

Indonesia

The State Logistics Agency (BULOG) assures that the country has enough rice supply and staple goods amid the spread of Covid-19 pandemic.

According to the President Director of Bulog, the agency had readied sufficient supplies of rice and other foodstuffs to cater to the local demand, even in case of rapid rising in demand. The Bulog has ensured the online and offline sales of rice in the domestic market through its partners and outlets across the country. Currently, the agency has 1.4 million tonnes of rice stocks in the warehouse. Meanwhile, the rice supply is expected to increase due to the upcoming peak harvest season. Additionally, the agency has streamlined its online selling system in order to support the customers and the government's social and physical distancing measures to limit the spread of COVID-19 pandemic.

Source: Antara News. (2020, Mar 19). *Bulog ensures food stocks to suffice despite demand spike.*

Malaysia

Malaysia has rice stocks for two and a half months to cope with local demand.

Malaysia currently has 500,000 tonnes of rice stocks and consumes 200,000 tonnes a month. Regarding this, rice supply will enough for two and a half month, reported by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industries (MOFI). The Burnas, Malaysia's rice agency, performed early to secure rice export contracts until May 2020 from Viet Nam, even though the prices were high. In the next step, the country sets to purchase rice from other countries, including Pakistan, India, Myanmar, and Thailand.

Source: Reuters. (2020, Mar 27). *COVID-19: Malaysia has rice stocks for 2.5 months as Vietnam curbs exports.*

Philippines

The Philippines will call on the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to refrain trade restrictions during the COVID-19 crisis.

According to the Cabinet Secretary, the Philippines will ask neighbours in Southeast Asia to refrain from imposing trade-restrictive measures amid COVID-19 crisis, as an aim to ensure its sufficient supply during the mass quarantine in the country. The Department of Agriculture (DA), the Department of Finance (DOF), and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) will work with trading partners in the ASEAN to secure their contracts as well as continue the flow of supplies. If necessary, the country will import an additional 300,000 tonnes of rice from the ASEAN partners and other countries, such as India and Pakistan.

Source: ABS-CBN News. (2020, Mar 27). *PH to ask ASEAN partners to refrain from trade restrictions amid COVID-19 crisis.*

Viet Nam

Viet Nam will resume its rice shipments as the country has plenty of rice stockpile amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

Viet Nam is considering when it will resume exporting rice, after the first issued by the government on 24 March 2020 that the country would suspend the new rice contract signing. Currently, the authorities are reevaluating the situation because companies are confirming that rice supply is more than enough in the domestic storage, so citizens could stock up on food and stay at home to slow down the spread of Covid-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, the farmers in Mekong are harvesting rice production. The government formed a team to work with local authorities and rice exporting companies to review, inspect and evaluate the supply of rice, the rice exporting conditions, circulation of reserves, and the status of executing rice export contracts.

Source: VOA News. (2020, Mar 28). *Vietnam Considers Resuming Rice Shipments Amid Virus driven Stockpiling.*

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* 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.