



WEEKLY UPDATE ON ASEAN PLUS THREE RICE SITUATIONS

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Cambodia

Severe drought damages over 40,000 hectares of rice crops and further threatens water resources nationwide.

Severe drought has destroyed over 40,000 hectares of rice crops and another 5,000 hectares have been damaged. The most affected provinces are Battambang, Banteay Meanchey, and Kampong Thom. Meanwhile, water resources across the country continued to dry up, threatening the survival of rice crops. The National Committee for Disaster Management revealed that it is difficult to pump enough water to affected areas. Besides, the Mekong River Commission predicted that the drought conditions would further increase in some areas around Sekong river, Sesan river, and Srepok river in the northeast part of Cambodia.

Source: The Phnom Penh Post. (2020, Aug 6). *Severe drought takes toll on 40,000ha rice crops across country.*

Thailand

Thailand is awaiting a rice strategy rearrangement to improve competitiveness.

The Minister of the Ministry of Commerce (MOC) pledges to speed up the adjustment of the Thai rice strategy as quickly as possible because the rice industry faces a slew of challenges, which are a strong baht and rising

production costs. Regarding this, the MOC is seeking rice strategy to improve competitiveness in all systems, including marketing, cultivation, and Research and Development of new varieties, as well as reduce production costs for farmers. Recently, the ministry is promoting seven rice products and seed development as part of a marketing-led production strategy for 2020-2024. Moreover, the MOC will work closely with the Thai Rice Exporters Association to seek new trade partners for expanding the export market.

Source: Bangkok Post. (2020, Aug 6). *Rice strategy awaiting rejig.*

Viet Nam

Vietnamese rice exports to the African market are continuous growth.

According to the Vietnamese Trade Counsellor in Algeria, Viet Nam's rice exports to the African market rose sharply in the first half of 2020. This year, the locus swarms outbreak, the Covid-19 pandemic, high population growth, and competitive rice prices in the global market have caused governments and people in the African nations to increase their food stockpiles, including rice. Regarding this, the rice shipments bound for Africa are expected to continue rising for the remainder of the year and in 2021. Moreover, the Trade Office of Viet Nam in Algeria has been monitoring and updating changes policies, relevant regulations as well as demand for rice imports, as aiming to promptly provide information to the Viet Nam's Ministry of Industry and Trade and introduce the business opportunities to the Vietnamese companies.

Source: Vietnam News Agency. (2020, Aug 10). *Vietnam's rice exports to Africa continue to rise*; and Nhan Dan Online. (2020, Aug 10). *Vietnam sees hike in rice exports to Africa.*

Viet Nam exports 3.9 million tonnes of rice in the first seven months of 2020.

According to the Department of Agro Processing and Market Development, Viet Nam exported 3.9 million tonnes of rice and earned 1.9 billion USD from January to July 2020. The export volume fell 1.4 percent, whereas the value increased by 10.9 percent year-on-year. In the first half of this year, the Philippines was the top buyers of Vietnamese rice, which accounted for nearly 37 percent of the total country's rice export. The strong growth could also see in other markets, such as Senegal, Indonesia, and China.

Source: Vietnam News Agency. (2020, Aug 7). *Vietnam exports 3.9 million tonnes of rice in seven months.*

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