BETTER RICE, BETTER LIFE

A SUCCESS STORY FOR SMART RICE CULTIVATION IN VIET NAM

Leaving the crowded street of Can Tho, the center of the Mekong Delta, behind, the road leads us to the Tam Nong district, Dong Thap province. No more noise, no more polluted air, the picture changes. Instead of high buildings or shopping centers, there is only endless space filled with green rice fields, farmers working in the fields. We can smell the rice blossom fragrance.

Mr. Hung, a rice farmer, is 36 years old. He is a member in Tien Cuong farmer cooperative. The young man shows us his planted hectares and is very satisfied with his rice field. The harvest time is coming in one week. Fertilizer and crop protection products are part of his production inputs but well measured and applied expertly. *"Before I didn't join the cooperatives, I planned and planted myself, I used pesticides unmeasurably. I only thought that helped protect my crop, saved the expected yields, without thinking about how pesticides affect our health,"* Mr Hung leans over his rice plant, lovingly holds and shows his rice blossom.

Project name	Better Rice Initiative Asia
Countries	Vietnam, Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia
Partners and Donors	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Viet Nam (MARD) Thai Rice Department, Philippine Department of Agriculture, Indonesian Ministry of Agriculture BASF, Bayer CropScience, Royal DSM, Yara, Olam, Deutsche Bank
Implementing Agency in Viet Nam	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and Bayer Vietnam Ltd.
Office in Viet Nam	Hanoi - Ho Chi Minh City
Implemented Provinces in Viet Nam	Dong Thap, Hau Giang, Kien Giang

"It was a bad time because we couldn't sell our rice to the rice trader, or they only bought with the cheapest price. Now it is getting better, since we have joined the BRIA farmer cooperatives, our rice have been bought with higher price due to good product quality".

The young man points out the challenges: "*It was pretty difficult at the beginning to motivate other farmers to come to trainings. Some of them think, they won't be able to learn anything new, others don't want to change the traditional cultivation way or think they will lose their land to the cooperatives, even many of them don't care that they don't work safely.*" Patiently, Mr. Hung mobilized the other farmers in his community and convinced them to come to the training, even those who were hesitant in the beginning.

Day by day the number of participating farmers rises. In cooperation with the local Agriculture Extension Center and local Plant Protection Sub Department, BRIA's cultivated methods applied in the field are supervised by a technical group. They work closely with the leaders of the farmer to guide farmers in using a field diary to keep track of their farm operations. Every week they visit the fields and support the farmers in solving emerging issues.

Mr. Hung looks over his paddy fields. The fields of gold and green, an expected bumper harvest is ahead. "*Now we know that the rice quality is the most important market requirement. We save work, save our time but still earn more income. Last but not least, we save our living environment and our life by not using pesticides*".

BRIA expected outputs:

- At least 3000 rice farmers in three provinces apply recommended successfully tested smart rice cultivation systems.
- Developed concepts for smart rice cultivation systems show 20% gross margin increase through enhanced productivity and/or reduced application of agricultural inputs.
- Suitable and appropriate rice standards for quality markets have been developed and officially approved (documentations on standard development, indicator to be fulfilled by end of the project)
- At least 270 tons of high quality rice (according to the new rice standard) were produced in each of the three provinces.
- Concepts for the successful implementation of public-private-partnership projects have been developed and submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Results of pesticide residues and maximum residue levels on white rice produced in project sites

	Pesticides Web Version – EU MRLs (updated on 20/04/2017)				
		Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) (mg/kg) (ppm)			
Ord.	PESTICIDE TEST	EU (ALLOWED LEVEL)	HAU GIANG	DONG THAP	KIEN GIANG
1	Acetamiprid (R)	0.01 *	0.0000	0.0000	0.0013
2	Azoxystrobin	5	0.0000	0.0015	0.0068
3	Chlorpyrifos (F)	0.05 *	0.0000	0.0000	0.0014
4	Diazinon (F)	0.01 *	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
5	Difenoconazole	3	0.0000	0.0016	0.0027
6	Fenitrothion	0.05 *	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
7	Flusilazole (F) (R)	0.01 *	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
8	Hexaconazole	0.01 *	0.0000	0.0021	0.0023
9	Isoprothiolane	5	0.0000	0.0320	0.1000
10	Pirimiphos-methy (F)	0.5	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
11	Propiconazole (sum of isomers) (F)	1.5	0.0000	0.0088	0.0038
12	Tebuconazole (R)	1	0.0000	0.0000	0.0120
13	Tricyclazole	1	0.0000	0.0058	0.0300

(*) Indicates lower limit of analytical determination

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