

CEDAC Exports Organic Rice to the US

In early November 2011, CEDAC exported 39 tons of organic rice to the US. This is the fourth shipment to the US, CEDAC's first shipment was in late 2010. The buyer of this rice is Lotus Foods in California, a small company engaged in selling specialty rice and supports efforts to promote SRI rice.

Dr. Yang Saing Koma, CEDAC's President, said that this organic rice export is the fruit of hard labour as it was not easy to export organic rice to the US or European markets. He acknowledged that more hard work will be necessary to meet the requirements of these importing countries. Among others, this includes the improvement of organic seeds, production according to organic standards as well as separate milling and packaging.

For the rice to be recognized in the US market as 100% organic it was necessary to obtain certification for the farmers groups and the rice mill based on the standards of the National Organic Program (NOP) under the US Department of Agriculture. The German certifier BCS Oeko-Garantie conducted the necessary inspections of the Internal Control System (ICS) managed by the farmer groups.

CEDAC believes that Cambodia has huge potential for organic rice production as most farmers use relatively low levels of chemical-based inputs. Shifting to organic rice production by applying principles of SRI helps the farmers to increase yields and incomes from selling rice while cutting expenses for inputs and minimizing pollution.

It is important to note that in 2011, CEDAC plans to buy 3,000 tons of organic rice from organic rice farmer producer groups in 5 provinces including Takeo, Kampot, Kampong Speu, Kampong Chhnang and Kampong Cham provinces. Besides supplying to local markets and exporting to the US, CEDAC is also planning to export to Vietnam's and Malaysia's markets.



Packaging the organic rice