



สำนักงานที่ปรึกษาการเกษตรต่างประเทศ ประจำกรุงวอชิงตัน ดี.ซี.

Office of Agricultural Affairs - Royal Thai Embassy - Washington DC

Thai Farmers were Happy in 2023, Happiness Index Soars to 80.79



Office of Agricultural Economics (OAE) reveals that the farmer happiness index in 2023 is 80.79, a good level of development. Health and social aspects are very good, while the environmental and educational aspects need to be improved.

Mr. Chantanon Wannakejohn, Secretary-General of the Office of Agricultural Economics (OAE), Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, revealed that OAE determines the farmer happiness index annually as a tool to measure the success of farmers' quality of life development. It can be used as an indicator for the agricultural and cooperative 2023-2027 Action Plan. The farmer happiness index consists of 5 aspects which are economy, health, education, society and environment.

The national farmer happiness index in 2023 is at 80.79, a good level of development. It slightly increased from 2022, which was at 80.46. Considering the farmer happiness index in each region, it was found that the South had the highest index value of 82.29, followed by the North at 81.22, the Central region at 80.98, and the Northeast at 80.14. All regions are found to have good development.

The breakdown in each area are as follows: **National Health Index** has a value of 99.86, a very good level, similar to 99.85 in 2022. The Northeast has the highest index value of 99.91, followed

by the North at 99.88, the South at 99.82, and the Central region at 99.65. All regions are of very good level. These are partly a result of changes in consumption behavior with more health conscious and of better food safety concern. The government ran a campaign for healthy city by creating an environment conducive to good health. Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) are promoted for food safety and production of organic products which are beneficial to the health of farmers, consumers, and the environment.

In terms of **Society**, the national index is 92.83, a very good level and up from 91.06 in 2022. The North has the highest index of 94.37, followed by the Central region at 93.46, the Northeast at 92.08, and the South at 91.84. All regions are of very good level. This is a result of households caring for each other with close relationships. The government is preparing for a fully aging society with a plan to improve the quality of the elderly's life in a comprehensive and fair manner.

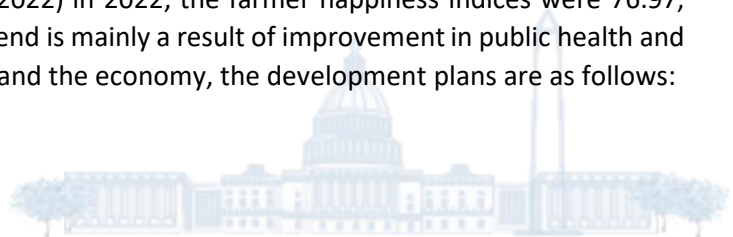
The national **Economic Index** is 76.97, which is considered a moderate level of development. It was down from 78.26 in 2022. The South has the highest index of 84.88, which is at a good level of development, followed by the Northeast at 78.21, the Central at 77.35, which are at a moderate level of development. The North is rated at 67.03, which is at a level that needs improvement.

The results of the survey on the socio-economic conditions of agricultural households and workforce found that farmers' land rights have decreased due to farmers' debts. The problems caused them to sell some or all of their land for cash flow. Alcohols and tobacco expenditures are added to the living cost as most farmers are under stress from low income and debt issues.

The **National Environmental** Index is 62.39, which is at a level that needs improvement. It is similar to 62.67 in the year 2022. The North has the highest index value of 75.70, which is considered a moderate level of development, followed by the Central region at 62.49, which is a level of development that needs improvement, the South at 58.40, and the Northeast at 55.60. The last two fall into the level that needs urgent improvement. In 2023, the target area for soil resource restoration decreased from 2022. The proportion of forest area to the total area of the country also decreased because the National Land Policy Committee (NLPC) allowed a conversion of land from forest areas into agricultural farms, community areas and infrastructure. There are forest areas that were adversely affected by forest fires.

In terms of **Education**, the national index value is 52.20, an increase from 2022, which was 50.39. It needs and urgent improvement as 48.42 % of the household leaders are over 60 years old. Most of them did not receive mandatory education. The South has the highest index of 59.07, followed by the Northeast at 52.57, the Central at 52.31 and the North at 47.51. The index values of all regions reflect developments that need to be urgently addressed.

Mr. Vinit Atisook, Deputy Secretary-General of OAE stated that the farmer happiness index has been increasing, considering the value of 80.79 in 2023. At the ends of the 10th National Development Plan (2007-2011) in 2011, the 11th National Development Plan (2012-2016) in 2016 and the 12th National Development Plan (2017-2022) in 2022, the farmer happiness indices were 76.97, 80.51 and 80.76 respectively. The upward trend is mainly a result of improvement in public health and society. As for education, the environment, and the economy, the development plans are as follows:



In terms of **Education**, there should be continuous improvement of knowledge and skills for elderly farmers tailored for specific agricultural activities and areas. Exchanging experiences and sharing modern technology between older and younger generation farmers as well as concerned government officials should be promoted. Members of farmer households should be encouraged to receive higher education to improve farming efficiency.

In terms of the **Environment**, farmers' awareness should be promoted on environmental conservation, such as growing economic forestry, agroforestry, disseminating knowledge on environmentally friendly farming, promoting resource recycling for maximum benefit (Zero waste), refraining from burning agricultural waste and encouraging farmers in all regions to continuously improve soil in their agricultural areas and plant crops suitable for the areas.

In terms of the **Economy**, farmers should be encouraged to improve agricultural production both in terms of quality and quantity. Farmland should be allocated to farmer households with small land ownership, especially in the central and northern regions. The land ownership should be distributed fairly.

In addition, farmers should be encouraged to keep household accounts in accordance with the requirements of relevant agencies, which will enable farmers to better evaluate their own financial status in terms of income, expenses, assets, debts, and production costs, and further used as information for more efficient production management.

Source: <https://www.bangkokbiznews.com/business/economic/1137490>

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