



## THB30bn fertiliser subsidy plan ‘delayed until next year’



**Agriculture Minister Thamanat Prompow said he has scheduled talks with economic ministers on the troubled fertiliser subsidy policy after revealing it could be suspended until next year.**

Subsidies of 500 baht per rai capped at 10,000 baht were due to be offered to over 4.5 million farmers starting from Monday (July 15) after being approved by the Cabinet on June 25. The government said the co-payment programme would cost around 30 billion baht, saving 24.3 billion baht compared with the previous administration’s rice farming subsidies.

However, the plan has been hit by budget constraints and objections from several parties.

Thamanat said on Monday it would take time to resolve misunderstandings over the subsidy, warning it might not be launched this year.

“The policy aims to reduce farmers’ expenses and promote precision farming to boost rice productivity,” he said.

Talks would be held within the Agriculture Ministry and with economic ministers on how to continue with the policy, he added.

“Political issues are another factor that triggered suspension of the fertiliser subsidy policy, as some parties have to lose benefits,” he said. “However, we want them to understand and focus on farmers’ benefits.”

Thamanat said the policy would have to be delayed until next year if negotiations and study are prolonged.

He also addressed efforts to reclaim the title of the world’s second largest rice exporter from Vietnam by improving the aroma and taste of Thai rice. The ministry now had over 30 rice species suitable for cultivation in different areas of the country, he said.

Thailand ranked third among rice exporters with export volume of 5.27 million tonnes in 2023. India topped the ranking with 14.09 million tonnes, followed by Vietnam with 5.81 million tonnes.

Natthakit Khongthip, director-general of the Rice Department, confirmed the fertiliser subsidy policy would be postponed this year due to differing views among farmers.

Some farmers did not have money to purchase fertiliser upfront as required by the policy, or had already begun cultivation, he said. He added that only 500 of Thailand’s 1,000-plus farming cooperatives were participating in the policy.

He expects the policy to launch in January or February next year. The postponement would not affect fertiliser manufacturers that are already part of the programme, he said.

**Source:** <https://www.nationthailand.com/news/policy/40039724>