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สำนักงานปลัดกระทรวงเกษตรและสหกรณ์

Thai rice production set to fall



Thai rice production is expected to drop by 871,000 tonnes of rice paddy, down 3.27% to 25.8 million tonnes, for the 2023-24 harvest season, mainly attributed to the El Nino weather phenomenon, according to the latest forecast by the Agricultural Economics Office under the Agriculture and Cooperatives Ministry.

Tantita Bunyamaneekul, deputy secretary-general of the Agricultural Economics Department, said the country's rice cultivation area for the 2023-24 crop year totalled 62.4 million rai, a decrease of 602,000 rai or 0.96% from the previous year.

The harvest area is estimated at 59.6 million rai, a decrease of 316,000 rai or 0.53% from the previous year.

The decline in cultivation area was attributed to changes in weather conditions, leading to delayed rainfall.

Rainfall is expected to be lower this crop year than last year, according to the Meteorological Department.

From mid-june to mid-july this year, there was a rainfall deficit, causing water shortages in agriculture, especially in non-irrigated dry areas.

This resulted in some farmers leaving their fields fallow, while others could only plant rice once. Yield per rai also fell because of the low rainfall.

In addition, there was a risk of disease and pest infestation, such as rice blast disease and rice thrips, leading to a decline in national rice production, said the department.

Rice prices steadily increased for Thai hom mali fragrant rice paddy, glutinous rice paddy, and 15% moisture content rice paddy since the beginning of 2022.

In the first nine months of this year, the average price of Thai hom mali rice paddy averaged 14,226 baht per tonne, up 13.3% year on year; 15% moisture content rice paddy averaged 10,499 baht per tonne, a gain of 20.6%; and glutinous rice paddy averaged 11,657 baht per tonne, an uptick of 27.7%.

Thai rice exports in the first seven months this year increased in both quantity and value compared with the same period in 2022.

Rice exports reached 2.54 million tonnes for the period, an increase of 30.2% year on year, with an export value of 40.8 billion baht, up 51.8%.

Exports of glutinous rice also increased, particularly in terms of export value, amounting to 3.34 billion baht, an increase of 14.1% year on year.

Mrs Tantita attributed the rise in domestic rice prices mainly to growing concerns about the El Nino weather phenomenon, which may negatively impact rice production.

In addition, the reduction in rice production in China, combined with restrictions on exports from India, the world's largest shipper, has created opportunities for Thailand to increase rice exports, she said.

Source: <https://www.bangkokpost.com/business/general/2651569/thai-rice-production-set-to-fall>