



# ฝ่ายเกษตร ประจำสถานกงสุลใหญ่ ณ นครลอสแอนเจลิส Thailand Office Of Agricultural Affairs, Los Angeles

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DOA discussed with APHIS emphasizing promotion of safe and high-value agricultural products exportation to the U.S. in alignment with Thai Ag Minister's policy



Mr. Rapibhat Chandarasrivongs, Director-General of the Department of Agriculture (DOA) welcomed Mr. Marc Gilkey, Asia-South Pacific Regional Manager, a representative of the Office of Plant and Animal Inspection Services (APHIS), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). In this occasion, DOA discussed with APHIS on agricultural cooperation between Thailand and the United States including fresh fruit irradiation under Pre-Clearance Program before exporting season this year (2024), sequencing list of Thai fresh fruits for reducing irradiation dose request, and market assess for the U.S. agricultural products. This is in accordance with the policies of Captain Thammanat Prompao, Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives, to seek agricultural cooperation with other countries, to solve the problems and obstacles for exporting Thai agricultural products, and to promote and expand the export market for Thai products. These policies aim to drive foreign agriculture policy into concrete results, and to raise agricultural sector income by three-fold within four years.

Director- General of DOA expressed his gratitude to APHIS in regards of Thailand's first fresh pummelo shipment to the U.S. The Director-General revealed that the U.S. requires eight types of fresh fruits from Thailand must be treated with 400 grays of Gamma radiation prior to the exportation. The eight fresh fruits include mango, lychee, longan, pineapple, mangosteen, dragon fruit, rambutan, and pummelo. Thailand is in process of proposing to reduce irradiation dose to below 400



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grays in accordance to the international standard. The objectives are to decrease the damages from the irradiation, to lessen the irradiation cost, and to increase competitiveness.

Mr. Rapibhat said “We are facing a rapid and severe climate changes. Such circumstances have led to the spread of major emerging pests. Therefore, it is necessary to use the modern biotechnology which is highly safe, cost effective, rapidly developed and low cost. MOAC realizes the challenge and has been promoting the utilization of gene editing (GE<sub>d</sub>) technology in responding to the rapidly changes in the global context. GE<sub>d</sub> can be applied to alter and modify genes in order for the plant to become healthier and stronger, resistant to pest, improved nutrition, higher crop yields, and lower cost. GE<sub>d</sub> does not transfer genes to other organisms. Thus, GE<sub>d</sub> does not fall into genetically modified organism (GMO). Furthermore, it is also highly safe and is environmental-friendly. FAO and European Union are both now recognizing GE<sub>d</sub> and imply regulations as conventional plants, no longer falling under GMO regulations.”

Director-General of DOA also consulted with APHIS regarding GE<sub>d</sub> technology cooperation during the meeting. Previously, DOA held seminar with the topic of understanding GE<sub>d</sub> technology control regulations together with Dr. Adam Cornish, Agricultural Advisor, Office of Agricultural Policy, Bureau of Economics and Business Affairs, U.S. Department of State; and Ms. Kelley Stange, Agricultural Counselor Agricultural Counselor of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Bangkok. During the seminar, Dr. Adam stated that many countries around the world have been investing in research, and have approved the utilization of GE<sub>d</sub> technology and recognize that the GE<sub>d</sub> plants can be consumed just like other plants. This is to achieve food security. The example of the countries are such as Canada, the U.S., Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Japan, China, U.K., Philippines, Kenya, Russia, and Australia.

Mr. Rapibhat concluded the meeting with appreciation toward Mr. Marc Gilkey and for the continuous cooperation with APHIS. The promotion of safe and quality agricultural products exportation to the U.S. will enhance Thai farmers’ competitiveness and in accordance to the minister’s policy to raise agricultural sector income by three - fold within four years.

Source:

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