

Colombia Approved Its first Plan for Rice Productivity

Minagricultura / 25 January 2019



On 25 January 2019, Mr. Andres Valencia Pinzon, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development joined the First National Council on Rice and approved the Plan for Rice Productivity for 2019, for the first time of the country. This plan aims to increase the competitiveness of Colombian rice in the world market with measures to stimulate rice farmers' productivity and profits, and to increase the plantation area to 478,000 hectares this year.

The Plan for Rice Productivity consists of 5 proposals for action, namely;

1. Explore the most productive areas
2. Cultivation planning
3. Promote technology assistance
4. Promote access to financial assistance and risk management
5. Improve infrastructure and commercialization

For cultivation planning, the statistics on domestic consumption, inventories and importations will be used in order to determine the plantation areas for 2019, with an intention to increase to 478,000 hectares. This is to bring the rice cultivation area to the increasing path as in 2016 and 2017, after seeing a decrease the previous year.

In order to promote access to financial assistance, the Ministry of Agriculture proposes 3 special types of credit; loans for investment on rice cultivation, loans for promotion of cultivation through the government's product sales insurance program that offers a lower rate than the market, with a rate of 3.5% for small producers and 5.5% for medium producers, and loans for machinery purchase and infrastructure construction with special conditions, with interest rate ranging from 6.5% to 8.5% depending on the size of the producer (small, medium and large). Also, to meet the needs of rice farmers, there are measures to relief the debts of farmers and simplify the conditions of access to the incentive for agricultural insurance.

For the promotion of technology assistance, the Ministry of Agriculture, National Rice Farmers Federation (Fedearroz) and National Fund for Rice will cooperate to expand the areas benefited from the sowing technology promotion program (AMTEC). In terms of infrastructure and commercialization improvement, the establishment of soil adaptation plan, according to APP specifications, has been considered. In addition, the rice producers will also benefit from the Colombian Mercantile Exchange's incentives for commercialization throughout 2019.

The Minister aims to apply this plan to all rice production areas in the country and hopes to use it as a template for the Rice Plan 2022.

In 2018, Colombia produced about 2.3 million tons of rice, or 4.8 tons per hectare, which decreases from the previous by 9%.

Source: <https://www.minagricultura.gov.co/noticias/Paginas/Se-aprueba-plan-de-ordenamiento-productivo-para-el-arroz-.aspx/>

Thailand Office of Agricultural Affairs, Los Angeles

February 2019