



สำนักงานที่ปรึกษาการเกษตรต่างประเทศ
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Office of Agricultural Affairs - Royal Thai Embassy - Washington DC

Director-General of DOA Announces No Monkey Collecting Coconuts in Thailand



The Director-General of Department of Agriculture (DOA) handed out the "GAP Monkey Free Plus" certificate to verify that no monkey was abused in collecting coconuts in Ratchaburi and Samut Sakhon province plantations. He announces that Thailand does not use monkeys to collect coconuts.

Mr. Rapibhat Chandarasrivongs, Director-General of DOA, unveiled the "GAP Monkey Free Plus" (MFP) program during the world coconut forum "Consultative Virtual Meeting on Thailand Proposal for GAP Monkey Free Plus" held by International Coconut Community (ICC). This meeting was to signify that all the coconut processes are animal-cruelty-free (monkeys) and traceable throughout the production. ICC members and Third Party have supported such measures, which will help build customer confidence in the Thai coconut export industry.

On December 6, 2022, the Director-General of DOA chaired a meeting on the implementation of measures to prevent the use of monkey labor in coconut production

for export (Monkey Free Plus) and handed out the GAP Monkey-Free Plus certificates to Theppadungporn Coconut Co., Ltd., Ratchaburi, and K-Fresh Co Ltd., Samut Sakhon.

The Director-General of DOA said that all the GAP certified coconut farmers are welcome to join the program to get inspected and certified as a monkey-free plantation at any DOA's Agricultural Research and Development Centre. Those plots that have not yet been certified as GAP are welcome to apply, which can be simultaneously audited for both standards. It is expected that a large number of coconut plots will be certified as GAP Monkey Free Plus. Implementing such measures will help support the Thai coconut industry and coconut farmers.

Mr. Saichon Joiroi, a major supplier in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province, foresees that it is necessary for exported coconuts to comply with the GAP Monkey Free Plus standard. Therefore, he will support the GAP Monkey Free Plus inspection program and encourage his supplying farmers to get certified.



As a raw material buyer, a representative from Theppadungporn Coconut Co., Ltd. stated that once the packing houses clearly understand the certification measures, they will subsequently advise network farmers to obtain the audit. Government certification will help increase trading partners' and international consumers' confidence. This will result in a willingness to cooperate with the government in GAP certification.

Thai coconut milk currently holds the largest market share of coconut milk products in the United States and Europe. In 2021, Thailand exported 236,323 metric tons of coconut milk, worth 12,800 million baht, including 8,000 metric tons of young coconuts. However, Thailand has only 917,606 coconut trees, which is insufficient to meet the needs of the industry. Imports are needed during the shortage of coconuts. DOA encourages planting new coconut trees or replanting in the original plantation. Good varieties will be selected. With the supports from the GAP monkey free plus measures, Thai coconut industry will be strengthened and flourished in the future.

The Director-General concluded that DOA officials from the Horticultural Research Institute, Plant Standard and Certification Division and Ratchaburi Agricultural Research and Development Centre initiated a pilot project on GAP Monkey Free Plus inspection and

certification in Samut Sakhon province. Theppadungporn Coconut, K-Fresh and NC Coconut were the private companies participating in kicking off the program. The GAP Monkey Free Plus certificates were also awarded to the coconut farmers involved to confirm that monkey labor is no longer used in accordance with international standard.

Source: <https://www.thansettakij.com/business/trade-agriculture/549370>

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