



สำนักงานที่ปรึกษาการเกษตรต่างประเทศ  
ประจำกรุงวอชิงตัน ดี.ซี.

Office of Agricultural Affairs - Royal Thai Embassy - Washington DC

## USDA Gives Green Light to All Varieties of Thai Pomelo



*Director-General of the Department of Agriculture informed the good news that USDA has given green light to all varieties of Thai pomelos for import into the US. Thai pomelos possessing good taste and colorful appearance are expected to satisfy American taste buds.*

Mr. Rapibhat Chandarasriwongs, Director-General (DG) of the Department of Agriculture (DOA), revealed that Mrs. Mananya Thaiseth, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives, fully supported the Pre-clearance Program. The export procedures are facilitated by inspection in Thailand prior to export by inspectors of the destination country.

On June 22, 2022, the DG had a meeting with Mr. Marc Gilkey, South Asia-Pacific Regional Manager and Dr. John Falco, the representative of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) - USDA (US Department of Agriculture) in Thailand. The issues discussed involved an agricultural cooperation between Thailand and the US and Preclearance Program for irradiation of Thai fruits. The DG requested an APHIS inspector be dispatched to Thailand to conduct dose mapping for pomelo.



APHIS-USDA responded by assigning, Mr. William J. Allen (Foreign Program Specialist), as the inspector to carry out dose mapping for pest elimination in pomelos for export to the US. The activity was conducted between April 17 and May 18, 2023. Mr. William J. Allen reported the progress to the DG in the April 28, 2023 meeting.

On May 23, 2023 USDA authorized pomelos as the 8<sup>th</sup> fruit from Thailand for export to the US following the 7 fruits previously permitted which are mangoes, mangosteen, rambutan, longan, lychee, pineapple and dragon fruit. All varieties of pomelos are allowed for export and believed to attract consumers with their good taste and colorful appearance. Thai pomelos are exported to 30 countries. Major importing countries are China and Malaysia. In 2022, Thailand exported 1.68 million tons of pomelos, accounted for 45.55 million baht.



Mr. Panya Pooksun, Director of the Plant Protection Research and Development Office, informed that Thailand has over 30 varieties of pomelos, including *“Tubtim Siam”*, a variety which possesses thin shell, soft flesh, dark pink or dark red like ruby color with few seeds and sweet taste without bitterness. *“Khao Tang Kwa”* variety offers white and juicy flesh, thin shell and super sweet taste. *“Thong Dee”* has smooth skin, pink flesh, juicy flesh and sweet taste. Each variety has its own unique taste and color which are different from other countries. Thai pomelos are believed to satisfy all consumers’ needs. Pomelos have long shelf life suitable for transport by sea freight to reduce shipping cost and increase competitiveness.



In June 2023, the first shipment of Thai pomelos will be exported to the US. DG Rapibhat will jointly inspect and seal the first container for export by air freight. This will be the demonstration lot to strengthen confidence of all parties concerned including growers, export and import entrepreneurs and USDA. DOA is the one and only National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO) for Thailand according to the International Plant Protection Convention.

Fresh pomelos for export to the US must be obtained from GAP (Good Agricultural Practice) certified orchards and packed by GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) certified packing houses. Prior to export, pomelos shall be cleansed and free from pests and fungi as per DOA requirements. Exporters must be registered with DOA under the Preclearance Program. Pomelos are subjected to irradiation at 400 Grays to eliminate fruit flies at Klong 5 Irradiation Center, Thailand Institute of Nuclear Technology (Public Organization). DOA inspectors and APHIS inspectors stationed in Thailand will jointly inspect all shipments prior to export. Phytosanitary certificates will be issued to accompany the shipments.



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Exporters interested in exporting fresh irradiated pomelos to the US under the Preclearance Program should contact Plant Protection Research and Development Office, DOA, Tel. 0-2579-3496 and 0-2940-6670 ext. 142.

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