DOA Issued the Notification on Criteria, Methods, and Conditions for the Certification of Plants Developed Using Genome Editing Technology B.E. 2567 (2024)

Mr. Rapibhat Chandarasrivongs, Director-General of the Department of Agriculture (DOA), issued that the Notification of the Department of Agriculture on Criteria, Methods, and Conditions for Certification of Plants Developed Using Genome Editing Technology B.E. 2567 (2024) was officially published on August 9, 2024. This notification outlines the criteria, methods, and conditions for certifying plants developed using genome editing technology. The purpose is to support and promote the improvement of plant varieties and the development of new varieties to address the challenges of food security and climate change. The announcement will take effect the day after its publication in the Royal Gazette. Eligible plants must meet the following criteria: they are developed using genome editing technology, the final product contains genetic material from a donor organism that can naturally breed with the recipient organism, there is no transfer of genes from other organisms, and they are not classified as genetically modified organisms (GMOs). These plants are considered highly safe and environmentally friendly.

The Director-General also stated that this announcement aligns with the agricultural policy guidelines under the "IGNITE AGRICULTURE HUB," aimed at positioning Thailand as the world's agricultural and food hub. This policy is a key initiative of Prime Minister, Mr. Srettha Thavisin and Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Capt. Thammanat Prompao.

Genome Editing (GEd) technology, which involves the precise editing of an organism's genetic code or the correction of undesirable genes to achieve desirable traits, is recognized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Importantly, GEd technology does not involve the transfer of genes from other organisms and is not considered genetic modification or GMO. It is regarded as highly safe and environmentally friendly. Many countries, including Canada, the United States, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Japan, China, the United Kingdom, the Philippines, Kenya, Russia, and Australia, have invested in research and approved the use of GEd technology for trade and consumption, treating it like any other plant. Thailand sees a significant opportunity to use such technology to advance crop variety development, positioning the country as a seed hub. GEd technology is expected to triple farmers' incomes in four years.

The Director-General concluded that the policy driven by genome editing technology (GEd) is highly safe and environmentally friendly. This initiative will involve collaboration across all sectors, including government agencies, the private sector, educational institutions, entrepreneurs, and farmers, to drive the Thai agricultural sector towards becoming the "World's Agriculture and Food Hub." This will be done alongside improving the quality of life and well-being of Thai farmers under the principle of "Markets lead, Innovations drive, Incomes increase" which is a key policy of the Minister of Agriculture.

Source: https://www.doa.go.th/nitikan/?p=8784

Office of Agricultural Affairs, Washington DC
August 2024