

Unofficial Translation

End! 3 Hazardous Chemicals in Thailand

Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives instructed to expedite the implementation of the plan to limit the use of 3 hazardous chemicals after the announcement of the 5 Ministerial Notifications in the Government Gazette. The intention is to move forward without having to wait for their effectiveness before the end of the year 2020. If agricultural production in 149 million Rai across the country can be modified to be organic and safe, using of all 3 substances must be stopped immediately.

Mr. Grisada Boonrach, Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives, revealed to "Thansettakij Multimedia" that the 5 Ministerial Notifications concerning the use of 3 chemicals, namely, Paraquat, Glyphosate and Chlorpyrifos, were announced in the Government Gazette on 23 April 2019, which will be effective 180 days after the announcement date. Nevertheless, the Ministry has already implemented the action plans for restricting the use of all 3 chemicals based on the 6 measures elaborated by the Department of Agriculture and approved by the Hazardous Substances Committee. As been reported, today (24 April) will start the training of 240 regional officials of the Department of Agriculture.

On April 25, 2,000 staffs from the Department of Agricultural Extension, the Rubber Authority of Thailand, and the Office of the Cane and Sugar Board of Thailand will be trained for the trainers to educate 1,500,000 farmers during June to September 2019. The training for 50,000 sprayers will be held between June to July 2019 at the Agricultural Research and Development Centers of the Department of Agriculture. In addition, the 79,988 competent officers, namely the village headman and the district administrative organizations appointed in according to the Hazardous Substance Act of B.E. 2535 to inspect the use of 3 substances within the local area of responsibility will be trained throughout the country through video conference of the Ministry of Interior's network during June 2019.

According to the Ministerial Notifications, Paraquat and Glyphosate are allowed to use for eradicating weeds in sugarcane, rubber, oil palm, cassava, corn and fruit trees only. Chlorpyrifos is allowed to eliminate insects in flowering plants and field crops, and to eliminate stemborer in fruit trees. After the regulation enters into force, farmers who desired to use all 3 chemicals must show evidence that they had already passed such training and also inform the type of plant and planting area in order to determine the amount of proper chemicals to be purchased.

In addition, Minister instructed Mr. Anan Suwannarat, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry as the Chairman of the Sub-Committee to Drive the Restrictive Use of 3 Chemicals and the Director-General of the Department of Agriculture, the Secretary of the Sub-Committee to accelerate the survey from both importers and distributors to quantify the current amount of 3 chemicals. Next, they have to report the quantity acquired, its source and distribution of all 3 chemicals in every 15 days.

"The important thing to do is to accelerate the expansion of safe agriculture in according to GAP standards and/or organic agriculture to reach 149 million Rai by December 31, 2020. At present, the Department of Agriculture in collaboration with academic and private sectors is conducting study and research to seek methods or other substances to replace the 3 chemicals. The Sub-Committee is obliged to make a public report in every 3 months. If possible, as has been implemented throughout the country, the use of 3 chemicals will immediately be prohibited. " Grisada said.

Source : Thansettakij newspaper on 24 April 2019