

“Ayutthaya Team” Named Winner

of “Farmers Love Safety” TV Reality Show

Bangkok, Thailand – December 15, 2014 – The team of farmers from Ayutthaya Province finally emerged as the winner in the “Farmers Love Safety” edutainment TV reality show during the show's finale staged recently at the Farmer School in the Rice Department compound. The final episode will be aired at 17:30pm – 18:00pm on December 18, 2014. This TV contest was put on by Better Rice Initiative Asia (BRIA) under the German Food Partnership (GFP), BASF (Thai) Limited, and the Rice Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives.

The Ayutthaya team was picked as the winner by votes cast by the participants in the closing and award presentation ceremony, who had been invited from supporting government agencies and private companies, including Mr. Chanpithya Shimphelee, Director General of the Rice Department, who chaired this exciting event, and Dr. Apichart Pongsrihadulchai, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives. The Suphanburi team came second.

Both teams thought the TV show was a useful medium to bring knowledge to farmers. As trainers, they also learned new knowledge from the experts. They shared the acquired knowledge combined with their own experience to make farmers in their communities easily understand how to use crop protection products properly and safely.

“The knowledge the participating farmers have, personally, gained is more important as it will help raise yield, protect health and benefit the country. The prizes received should be regarded as a by-product,” Dr. Apichart Pongsrihadulchai told the two teams.

One of the main challenges in the Thai rice production still lies in the wrong use and over-use of crop protection products by farmers. The improper application of these inputs causes health and environmental risks. The show has been initiated to raise awareness on this issue. As part of the show concept, participating farmers conducted trainings within their communities. They managed to convince and reach out to many colleagues, including those who were initially hesitant to join the trainings. In this way, information first gathered during the TV show could be further deepened.

“Crop protection is one solution, apart from seed, fertilizer, cultivation, harvest and post-harvest technologies ‘Farmers Love Safety’ is the first campaign focusing on elementary knowledge, safe and responsible use of crop protection products. We are satisfied farmers are willing to adopt and further share the information imparted by their fellow farmers,” said Dr. Pakorn Suchare, Head of Crop Protection, BASF (Thai) Limited.

Mr. Suriyan Vichitlekarn, BRIA Regional Project Director, explained, “The TV series is one part of BRIA in Thailand, which emphasizes awareness raising for sustainable production. It is designed to entertain while educating farmers about responsible and judicious use of crop protection products. We will offer more in-depth and advanced knowledge essential to rice farmers in the following years with a variety of initiatives.”

The edutainment show “Farmers Love Safety” follows two teams of five key farmers from Suphanburi and Ayutthaya provinces competing to create awareness of safe and effective use of crop protection products in their communities. It is aired on the SMILE Farmers program on Farm Channel, which is popular among farmers, every Thursday, from 17:30 – 18:00 pm, from October 2 to December 18, 2014.

About GFP and BRIA

The German Food Partnership (GFP) is a public-private initiative aiming at the reduction of hunger and poverty in emerging and developing economies. Currently, the GFP is composed of more than 30 European medium-sized and multinational companies, associations and implementation agencies of German Development Cooperation. The GFP was founded in 2012 under the auspices of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). On behalf of BMZ, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is coordinating the activities of the GFP.

BRIA comes under the umbrella of the GFP. BRIA improves rice production and rice-based nutrition by adopting a holistic value chain approach. This should enhance the income situation of producers and the nutritional situation of poor households. Know-how and technology transfer and building up agricultural extension services should increase productivity levels in rice cultivation. BRIA is helping the participating countries to achieve their national development strategies in the agricultural and food sectors. It is currently being implemented in Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam and the Philippines.

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