



Six departments under MOAC clarified the “CPTPP” concerns



The hot topic of “the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)”, makes many people in doubt. In this matter 6 departments under Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MOAC) share their opinions on the topic of joining Convention of the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants 1991 (UPOV 1991) under CPTPP.

The news source of the Subcommittee studying the impact on agriculture and plant varieties under CPTPP commission revealed to “Thansettakit” on if Thailand should join CPTPP. Various departments related to agriculture were invited to provide information to the subcommittee. UPOV 1991 is one of the conditions of CPTPP agreement which Thailand needs to comply. All concerned authorities shared their opinions in the meeting. Rice Department informed that Thailand has more than 20,000 varieties of rice but only 100 species have been studied and developed, which is very small proportion.

Thailand does not have sufficient fund to support research and development on integrity and bio diversity. The Rice Department representative thought that it is not necessary for Thailand to join UPOV 1991. Thailand has a number of rice varieties to study on. There is no need to conduct research on foreign rice species.

On the other hand, if Thailand joined UPOV 1991, Thailand will lose our advantage. This will allow member countries within UPOV 1991 to be able to bring Thai rice species for their own research and development. Also raises concerns among Thai farmers whether the cost of rice seeds would be higher.

Department of Agriculture Extension also shared its comment on joining UPOV 1991 under CPTPP. It would be good in terms of agricultural extension and development. However, Thailand is not ready to join UPOV 1991 now. It’s could cause more damage than having advantage.

Department of Livestock Development informed that if Thailand joined CPTPP, in terms of livestock, it would bring very little benefits to Thailand. In parts of livestock product, could be

increased which will adversely affect domestic production. Chemical contaminated products could be imported. There are also concerns on other intellectual properties.

National Bureau of Agricultural Commodity and Food Standards (ACFS) provided its concerns on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS), which are both a barrier and a trade facilitation measures. SPS regulation in CPTPP are higher standards than World Trade Organization (WTO) regulations especially in a part of transparency requirements on each process and dispute settlement mechanism. Thailand might need to adjust ourselves in accordance with this CPTPP agreement if we enter this agreement due to this is more comprehensive than WTO regulations and more stringent than any other agreement which Thailand used to sign.

In addition, Thailand already has cooperation and trade agreement with most CPTPP member countries. Although, Thailand does not participate in CPTPP agreement but Thailand is already able to trade with most of its CPTPP member countries. Hence, there is no need or any special interest for Thailand to join the agreement.

Office of Agricultural Economics provided information about regained actions, benefits, and guidelines to handle the impact of joining CPTPP. MOAC are highly concerned over adverse effects on which must be carefully considered.

Lastly, Department of Agriculture (DOA) commented that joining UPOV 1991 is a sensitive issue. It could widely affect Thai some information provided was not accurate. DOA has been determined to present fact, concern and proposals of Thailand would join UPOV 1991 under CPTPP agreement. DOA provided information based on objective evidence for further consideration and decision to join CPTPP at policy level.

The news source of the subcommittee studying the impact on agriculture and plant varieties said that joining CPTPP will lead to country development. But if Thailand is not ready, it will hurt the country severely. Thus, short-term and long-term consideration must be taken in order to have decent measures to address any problems that may occur in the future, if Thailand decide to open dialog to join the agreement in 2021.

Source

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