

“Grisada” orders to expedite the measures to decrease the use of the 3 toxic chemicals

Bangkok, April 24, 2019 - The Minister of Agriculture has ordered related agencies to expedite the measures limiting the use of the 3 toxic chemicals.

After the five ministerial regulations, issued to limit the use of the 3 toxic chemicals which are Paraquat, Glyphosate, and Chlorpyrifos, have been announced in the Royal Thai Government Gazette, the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MOAC) will move forward the plan to implement the regulations as soon as possible. Furthermore, if Thailand is able to do organic farming the entire of the agricultural areas or 149 million Rai (around 58 million acres) by the end of 2020, it will stop using all 3 chemicals immediately.

Mr. Grisada Boonrach, Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives, stated that although the five ministerial regulations were announced on April 23, 2019, which will be enforced in 180 days after the announcement date, MOAC has already carried out the 6 measures, drafted by the Department of Agriculture (DOA) and been approved by the Hazardous Substances Committee, to limit the use of all 3 chemicals. As of today (April 24th, 2019), DOA begins to train 240 DOA's regional officers to become trainers. Moreover, on April 25th, 2019, the training will extend to 2,000 officers from the Department of Agricultural Extension, the Rubber Authority of Thailand, Office of the Cane and Sugar Board of Thailand. These officers will later provide training to 1.5 million farmers about the regulations between June and September 2019.

In addition, between June and July 2019, 50,000 farm sprayer operators will receive the aforementioned training at the Agricultural Research and Development Center, DOA and in June 2019, the Ministry of Interior will hold a nationwide video conference to train the 79,988 officers who are the village headmen, the subdistrict headmen (kamnan), and the Permanent Secretary of the Subdistrict Administrative Organization appointed to be authoritative officers for examining the use of the 3 chemicals within the local area of responsibility as indicated in the Hazardous Substance Act B.E. 2535.

According to the five ministerial regulations, Paraquat and Glyphosate are limited to use only for herbicide control in sugarcane, rubber, oil palm, cassava, corn, and fruits while Chlorpyrifos can use only to eliminate either insects in flower plants and field crops, or worms penetrating the stem in fruit trees. After the regulations come into enforce, the farmer who needed to use all 3 chemicals must show evidence, such as training certification, types of cultivated plants, and the amount of cultivated land to determine the appropriate amount of the chemicals used in agriculture and use as the proof of the purchasing.

In addition, Mr. Anan Suwannarat, the Permanent Secretary of MOAC and the Director – General of the DOA, was given order to monitor the amount of the 3 chemicals that held by both importers and locally sellers, and report back every 15 days of the stock levels, source of products, and sale volumes.

“Our goal is to accelerate the expansion of the safe agricultural areas by applying the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) standard or the organic standard to the entire 149 million Rai (around 58 million acres) by December 31st, 2020. In the meanwhile, DOA along with the academic and private sectors are studying and researching for alternative methods or chemicals to replace the 3 chemicals. Besides, the Committee of Operation of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives must report the progress to public every 3 months. If it is successful as planned, Thailand will prohibit the use of the 3 chemicals immediately” said Mr. Grisada.

Source: Thai News Agency (<https://tna.mcot.net/view/vo4Nyptsa>)

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