

MEKONG DELTA RICE FARMERS: FROM GROWERS TO BREEDERS

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Abstract: Rice farmers are those who produce rice grains for society's need of consumption as thought through the long history of development. Many people do believe that grower is the only role of farmers in the variety-seed-grain supply chain while new rice varieties are created from scholar researchers and seeds are supplied by companies. Thousands of rice farmers in the Mekong Delta of Vietnam, who thanks to the CBDC project sponsored by SEARICE participated in on-farm training courses on "improvement of knowledge and skills of farmers in rice variety selection and seed production" held by MDI in collaboration with local departments and authorities, are able to produce qualified seeds for themselves and their communities. Moreover, many of them who are interested in rice breeding actively make various crosses of rice. Some farmer's varieties including HÐ1 and TM3 have been adopted widely for rice production in the Mekong Delta. All those are vivid manifestation of the so called "socialisation of variety-related activity" policy in Vietnam and have contributed to better rice production of the Delta in the last couple of years. Such results should be fostered through better national policies and regulations and local authority's supports.

Keywords: farmer breeder, rice farmer, seed production, socialisation of variety-related activity