

GAP STATUS IN VIETNAM

Ha Minh Trung
Vietnam Gardening Association (VACVINA)
15 Thanh Cong – Ba Dinh – Hanoi, Vietnam

ABSTRACT

Agriculture in Vietnam has made several important achievements during the course of the country's economic "renovation," the most outstanding of which is the high growth rate of its food production. This resulted in the creation of opportunities for diversifying agricultural production. However, these changes also generated some problems in agriculture and rural development, the most significant of which is the low competitiveness of agricultural goods, especially vegetables and fruits. The government as well as other non-governmental organizations like the VACVINA are actively seeking solutions to these problems. They believe that the promotion and use of good agricultural practices (GAP) is the way to go, and that international cooperation with member countries of FFTC will jumpstart this initiative.

Key words: good agricultural practices, Vietnam

INTRODUCTION

The "renovation" of Vietnam's agriculture and rural economy brought about several achievements in various fields such as improved production, transformed economic structures and improved farmers' incomes. However, agricultural production still has a lot of shortcomings and limitations. One of the important solutions identified to address the problems is the use of good agricultural practices (GAPs) to improve the quality of agricultural products.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND SHORTCOMINGS

The most outstanding achievement in the renovation period, especially in the first five years of the 21st century was comprehensive development of agriculture, as manifested by the following: food production achieved a high growth rate; food for the market was achieved fast; rice monoculture was abolished as crop cultivation was diversified; and animal husbandry development was rapid and comprehensive.

Achievements

Tables 1-6 show the performance of some of Vietnam's agricultural commodities.

These agricultural achievements were considered a breakthrough for the transition from self-subsidy to good production.

Shortcomings

The biggest shortcoming of agricultural production is limited competitiveness of agricultural goods in domestic and the world market, as manifested by the low quality of goods; high cost of production; few categories of commodities; limited safety of foodstuff; and inappropriate model or consumer standards. For example, the market share of long, fragrant and delicious exported rice is still poor. Vegetables and fruits could not compete in the domestic and world markets because their quality and safety are still low.

Moreover, farmers still have low knowledge and skills to satisfy the requirements of production. Another problem is the poor infrastructure in rural areas.

IMPROVING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF AGRICULTURAL GOODS

The Vietnamese government has issued the following ministerial and state documents that provide for improving the competitiveness of agricultural goods:

- Decision No. 225/1999/QĐ-TTĐ (December 1999) on agricultural crops, domestic



Table 1. Agricultural profile

Total natural profile (1,000 ha)	32,924.061
Forestry land (1,000 ha)	9,345.346
Annual planting area (1,000 ha)	11,575,429
Irrigated area (1,000 ha)	7,590
Total population (persons)	76,323,173
Urban	18,076,823
Rural	58,246,350
Male	37,469,117
Female	38,854,056
Household (1,000)	12,588
Rural labor (1,000)	25,302

Table 2. Rice production in 2000

Sown area (1,000 ha)	7,666.3
Yield (Quintal/ha)	42.4
Gross output (1,000 tons)	32,52.5
Average production (kg/capita/year)	462.2
Crop season:	
Winter-spring:	December-May
Autumn:	July-September
Monsoon:	June-November

Table 3. Vegetable production in 2000

Sown area (ha)	445,000
Yield (Quintal/ha)	135
Gross output (1,000 tons)	6,007
Average production (kg/capita/year)	75
Kinds of vegetable:	78-80 species
Main vegetables:	25-30 species
Crop season:	
Winter-spring:	October-March
Spring-summer:	April-July

Table 4. Production of some main fruit trees in 2000

Growing area (ha)	456,140
Yield (Quintal/ha)	59
Gross output (1,000 tons)	2,702.267
Average production (kg/capita/year)	35.5
Main fruits	11 species: orange, lime, mandarin, banana, pineapple, mango, litchi, longan, rambutan, grape, and dragon fruit

Table 5. Export figures of some main products in 2000

Product	Quantity (1,000 tons)	Value (million US\$)	Importing country
Husked rice	3,476.7	667.35	48
Coffee	733.94	501.45	49
Rubber	273.4	166.02	44
Tea	55.66	69.61	45
Fruits and vegetables		213.56	48
Frozen meat	7.56	21.72	

Table 6. Agricultural production in 2004

Food crops (1,000 tons)	39.322
Coffee (tons)	834,600
Rubber (tons)	400,100
Fruits and vegetables (1,000 tons)	13,875
Pork meat (1,000 tons)	2,500
Export value (million US\$)	4,284

Table 7. Efforts in introducing and testing GAPs in Vietnam

Activity	Implementing Body
Farmer training on GAPs	- Association of production and marketing of safe fruits in Tien River in Mekong Delta Region - Vietnam Gardening Association (VACVINA)
Using EUREGAP standards for monitoring the production of dragon fruits	- Southern Research Institute for Fruit Trees (SOFRI)

- animal and forestry trees for 2000-2005
- Decision No. 43/1999/QD-TTG (10 March 1999) on tea production plan for 1999-2000 and 2005-2010
- Decision No. 182/1999/QD-TT (3 September 1999) on the development of vegetables, fruit crops, flowers and decorative plants for 1999-2010
- Vietnam Standards TCVN (2003)
- Decision No. 86/2001/QD-BNN-KHCN (23 August 2001) on the standards of agricultural goods
- Instruction No. 386/HD-KNKL (29 March 2003) on the quality standards of agricultural crops and fertilizers
- Law on plant protection and plant quarantine (2001)

- Development of the procedures for cultivation technology and integrated pest management of main agricultural crops (rice, tea, coffee, peanut, pineapple)
- A number of efforts have been done to introduce GAPs in fruit crop production as shown in Table 7.

PROBLEMS AND PROPOSALS FOR GAP IMPLEMENTATION

Problems

Among the problems related to implementing GAPs in Vietnam are the following: farmers lack of understanding of what GAPs are; their farm sizes are small and scattered; and the fact that



national sanitary and phytosanitary standards and instructions for integrated pest management and integrated crop management for vegetables and fruit crops are lacking.

Proposal

To overcome the said problems, member-countries of the Food and Fertilizer Technology Center of the Asian and Pacific Region (FFTC) should have a closer international cooperation in promoting GAP technologies. This cooperation will help Vietnam to acquire information and experiences on GAPs; organize training of trainers' courses on GAP for technicians, extension workers and farmer-stakeholders; and establish GAP demonstration farms for fruit and vegetable production in the VAC system.

REFERENCES

- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). 2005. Good agricultural practices (GAP). p. 1.
- EUOPAM. 1998. Guideline for good agricultural practice (GAP) of medicinal and aromatic plants, EUOPAM, August 1998. pp 1-7.
- EUREPGAP. 2004. Control points and compliance criteria fruit and vegetable, January 2004.
- MARD. 2002. Statistic information of agriculture and rural development, 1996-2000. MARD. Hanoi: Agriculture Publishing House. pp. 7-79, 91-309.
- _____. 2005. Report on activities done in 2004 and 2005 work plan. MARD. Hanoi. pp. 1-3.
- SOFRI. 2005. Results of studies on science and technology of vegetables, fruit trees and flower in 2003-2004. SOFRI. Hanoi: Agriculture Publishing House. pp 519-531.
- Tran Kha Thi, Tran Ngoc Hung. 2004. Cultivation practice of clean vegetables (safe vegetables) Hanoi: Agriculture Publishing House. pp. 8-16.

