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Vietnam's first 'AGRITECHNICA ASIA Live': an international success

Almost 4,000 attendees; 80 companies with machinery demonstrations and displays from tillage and sowing to harvesting and grain handling; 22-hectare trial and demonstration plots – conferences on mechanisation – official opening by Minister of Agriculture – 24-26 August in Mekong Delta, Vietnam

Held in Can Tho, Vietnam, last week, AGRITECHNICA ASIA Live, a 20-hectare outdoor event combining field demonstrations, exhibition and conference program, successfully concluded, attracting almost 4,000 farmers, traders, scientists and politicians. Demonstrating solutions suitable for the local farming needs in Southeast Asia, the second edition of AGRITECHNICA ASIA Live, 24-26 August, was hosted jointly by Vietnam's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and Can Tho City Peoples' Committee. Organisers were DLG (German Agricultural Society) and VNU Exhibitions Asia Pacific, along with the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI).

At the opening ceremony attended by high-ranking representatives from Vietnam, Thailand and abroad, the Minister of Agriculture of Vietnam, Le Minh Hoan, emphasised that the AGRITECHNICA ASIA Live event plays a key role in practical demonstrations of new, available technologies and solutions. These deliver sustainability benefits to farms. "Vietnam aims to reach a minimum rate of 70 percent of mechanisation in crop production by 2030 and the income of a farmer will be around 120 million VND [5,140 USD] per year by 2030," the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Le Minh Hoan said. "It is necessary to boost mechanisation in agricultural production, apply smart and environmentally friendly technologies towards digitalisation and automation to increase labour productivity, as it is an inevitable solution for efficient agricultural production and sustainable development," he added.

Located in the Mekong Delta, the fields of Cuu Long Delta Rice Research Institute and the exhibition area in Can Tho City offered an ideal venue for AGRITECHNICA ASIA Live to present not only technical agricultural equipment and trial plots that demonstrate crop solutions but also the processing of agricultural and food products, including livestock, aquaculture as well as fruit and vegetables. More than 80 agencies and companies, including research institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGO) such as the Vietnam Academy of Agricultural Sciences and the German Agency for International Cooperation and companies such as Bayer, Binh Dien Fertiliser, APV, Kubota and Yanmar presented solutions on the field and on outdoor stands

The German Federal Ministry for Food and Agriculture (BMEL) had designed an information lounge that was popular with visitors due to its interactive format that enabled easy exchange between German technology providers and specialists from Vietnam and neighbouring countries.

For many of the exhibitors, Vietnam currently is a needs-driven market with ready buyers of technology that can deliver higher yields while saving on resources.

“Since AGRITECHNICA ASIA Live was held in Vietnam this year, this location was great as it is one of our strategic markets in the whole Southeast Asian region. Our demonstrations of the efficient irrigation systems for saving water while achieving higher yields, resulted in many new ideas coming from our discussions with decision-makers and farmers,” commented Mr. Klaus Ferk, Sales Director Asia, Australia and New Zealand at Röhren- und Pumpenwerk Bauer.

Field demonstrations

The live events covered machinery demonstrations and cultivation practices, like laser-controlled land levelling, mechanised direct seeding and transplanting, rice cluster farming with precision seeding, drones for fertiliser and pesticide application as well as for reduced postharvest lodging from reduced lodging risk and improved grain quality. In parallel, trial plots presented rice and local seed varieties along with crop protection solutions. The practical demonstration format allowed farmers quick and effective access to applicable modern technologies that support the aim of sustainable farming.

The company Bayer presented its “Much More Rice” solutions to help Vietnamese farmers enhance their rice performance, the quality, and profitability while addressing long-term challenges posed by pests, diseases, weeds and unfavourable environmental conditions. “At Bayer, we believe human ingenuity can shape the future of agriculture. For more than 150 years, we've used science and imagination to advance health and nutrition. And together, we can achieve so much more. Bayer Vietnam is proud to showcase our innovations for a variety of crops, aiming to help Vietnamese farmers produce more with less in the fight against climate change,” says Mr. Ha Chu, Country Lead Vietnam of Bayer Crop Science.

Workshops on rice production and mechanisation in Asia

A series of workshops hosted by MARD and IRRI were held at AGRITECHNICA ASIA Live forming a practical part of MARD’s strategy to promote scale-appropriate mechanisation, cultivation and product processing that support sustainability.

IRRI’s well-attended CORIGAP Science and Lessons Learned Seminars presented the findings from on-going research from the Swiss -funded project “Closing Rice Yield Gaps in Asia with Reduced Environmental Footprint “. Project partners from Vietnam, China, Indonesia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand presented their results for “good agricultural practices” in rice production, postharvest loss reduction, and sustainable production practices, including reducing environmental footprints, assessing biodiversity in rice landscapes and pathways for the agro ecological transition to sustainable agri-food systems.

Since its inception 10 years ago, the project has reached more than 783,000 households in the six countries through cooperation with national programs. “Already in 2019, the CORIGAP team was collaborating with DLG, VNU and the Myanmar Ministry of Agriculture to pilot the first AGRITECHNICA ASIA Live held in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar. This has been a fantastic opportunity once again, especially after all the COVID-induced limitations of the last years, for disseminating the lessons learned to various stakeholders, including policy makers and for cross-country learning and exchange,” said Martin Gummert, IRRI-CORIGAP coordinator.

Upcoming agricultural machinery events

The global agricultural community will meet at AGRITECHNICA 2023 on 12-18 November 2023, Hanover, Germany.

The next **AGRITECHNICA ASIA & HORTI ASIA** will be held on 22-24 May 2024, BITEC, Bangkok

Note to editors:

Vietnam's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) has several experts who are available for interviews with editors to discuss the Vietnamese market and the opportunities it represents for international companies. Editors should contact the DLG to organise a personal interview.

Background information: The market in Vietnam

With a GDP contribution of around 18 percent and 39 percent of Vietnam's 100 million inhabitants employed in agriculture, agricultural production is a key economic sector in Vietnam, Favoured by the tropical climate, fertile soils, abundant water supply and rich biodiversity, Vietnamese farmers have increased agricultural production with year-on-year growth rates of over 3.5 percent over the past two decades. Revenues in agricultural exports have increased over the past two decades from USD 4.2 billion in 2004 to USD 41.3 billion in 2019, making Vietnam the second largest exporter in Southeast Asia. Rice is the most dominant crop, providing livelihoods to two-thirds of the rural labour force. With over 40 million tons produced annually, Vietnam is the world's second largest rice exporter. In order to further increase yields and their exportability as well as produce more sustainably, the government is promoting the mechanisation of the sector within its development plan, which should continue to drive demand for agricultural equipment and machinery.

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