

Laos, Mongolia agree to agriculture cooperation

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Rice farm near Vang Vieng, Laos (Photo: vonchilliman)

Laos and Mongolia last week inked an agreement for cooperation in agriculture during a visit to Laos by a delegation from Mongolia's Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Light Industry.

The agreement was signed in Vientiane on Friday by Minister of Agriculture and Forestry Sitaheng Rasphone and his Mongolian counterpart, Mr T. Badamjunai.

Mr Badamjunai led the Mongolian delegation on a visit to Laos from March 14-20, and a meeting between the two agriculture ministries was held last Monday.

During the meeting both sides recognised the importance of promoting comprehensive technical cooperation in the areas of food production, agriculture, livestock, veterinary care, forestry and light industry.

Both sides also exchanged views on the agriculture situation and other related matters in their respective countries.

During the meeting, the Lao side informed the Mongolian delegation of the rules and procedures for undertaking investments in Laos, and about the establishment of a Lao Joint Agriculture Working Group and Secretariat to provide coordination and support in implementing the cooperation agreement between the two ministries.

The meeting followed talks involving the private sectors from both sides.

Discussions resulted in the signing of the agreement, which paves the way for the development of concrete plans. Under a Memorandum of Understanding it was agreed the two sides would formulate joint collaborative projects involving both the public and private sectors.

The agreement also allows for regular meetings between the ministries at different levels to evaluate progress and agree on new areas of cooperation, the exchange of expertise between

technicians, experts and researchers in areas of mutual interest including the private sector, and fostering private sector involvement by both sides through a joint venture and a business programme.

Both ministries agreed to enable their respective private sectors to reach a concrete agreement on developing a joint venture in rice production and processing for export to Mongolia.

On the basis of Lao laws and associated binding agreements and availability of land, the Lao side will consider a request by Mongolia to seek agricultural land of up to 10,000 hectares to produce rice and other crops.

The use of such land would be in the form of a concession, contract farming or other agreement.

Laos will also consider Mongolia's request for up to 20 hectares of land for the purpose of establishing a “Mongolian Agriculture Cooperation Centre” in the Special Economic Zone in Savannakhet province.

Also under consideration is a proposal by Mongolia to develop sheep farming in Laos.

Mongolia would provide the necessary assistance to develop the industry and agreed to help Laos with veterinary care and breeding by providing two experts to work in the veterinary and animal husbandry centres under the Department of Livestock and Fishery.

**Source:** [Vientiane Times](#)

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