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Cambodian Organic Agriculture Association

Welcome to CORAA's 2nd E-newsletter

26 June 2017

The premium pepper. The Cambodian pepper!



Beautiful peppers at Ms. Chenda's farm

"We use elephant poop to make compost." Ms Khay Chenda, the owner of Chamka Damnak, proudly told us her secrets to planting organic peppers while we were bouncing along the dirt road in Damnak

Chang Euv, Kep province.

When we finally reached Ms. Chenda's farm, we spotted rows of what looked like evenly spaced green towers. Not a lot; at most a few hundred. This was a telltale sign that we have found a good place, as small-volume production suggested tighter control over quality. Other than peppers, the farm is a 20-hectare heaven consisting of various fruits: mangoes, bananas and jack fruits.



Elephant poop used in organic fertilizer

“(We invested) more time, more money, but in the end, we have good health”, said Ms. Chenda. She decided to start an organic farming business when she found hundreds of Cambodian getting sick because of consuming food with chemicals. From the beginning of plantations to the finished

products, she aspired to give Cambodian food industry an example. “When I was doing this, I just hope the Buddha will pity me.” She smiled heartily.

Being organic makes Ms. Chenda’s peppers unique. All the peppers in this farm need to go through a complex procedure to get ready for sale: hand-picking, soaking, boiling, sun-drying, hand-picking again, and finally packaging. The workers touch the peppers, feel the temperature, and smell the scents. It’s almost like a sacred ritual practice. It is not mass production. In 2017, only 300 kg of peppers were produced. However, Ms. Chenda is expecting it to double in 2018.



Pictures of harvesting and hand-picking peppers

This is why despite working for 8 hours a day, each worker can only obtain 1 kilogram of peppers. This is also why countless foreign guests, restaurants from Europe, contacted Ms. Chenda again and again for her products. These are premium peppers. These are Cambodian peppers.

When asked about her experience with COrAA, Ms. Chenda confessed that she joined COrAA in 2015 and only attended the general assembly once. “But I do think COrAA has helped me in marketing as well as production” She said, “in fact, if there is an organic fertilizer company who is also a member of COrAA, I don’t mind trying if its quality and price are good.” Ms. Chenda's farm is now expecting to get certified by COrAA this August.

Wish to find out more about COrAA? You may read the following introduction and visit our Facebook page and website.

COrAA is a business association working for the promotion of organic agriculture in Cambodia. It unifies members who are active in organic farming, including farmer’s cooperatives and associations, NGOs, small enterprises and individuals. COrAA provides professional know-hows to its members engaging in organic farming. From planting to harvesting, COrAA gives valuable consultations to achieve progress in the long run. COrAA also empowers its members to expand their markets both locally and internationally by updating information in the organic industry timely. Lastly, COrAA acts as a platform for its members to communicate with each other and hence explore potential business opportunities.



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