

China develops new rice strain to avoid pollution

China has developed a new kind of rice free from cadmium pollution.

The project led by Yuan Longping, known as China's "Father of Hybrid Rice," passed examination and evaluation by a panel from the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences and the Ministry of Agriculture on Friday.

Trial plantation of the new breed, low-cadmium Indica rice, was arranged in a township in Xiangtan County, central China's Hunan Province, in soil with 1.5 mg/kg of cadmium.

Sampling showed the cadmium in two samples at 0.06 mg/kg and 0.07 mg/kg, much lower than the national standard of 0.2 mg/kg.

Zhao Bingran, with Hunan provincial hybrid rice research center, said the low-cadmium rice was developed by genome editing and hybridization, without any exogenous gene.

Rice gene that absorbs cadmium is subtracted to get the new breed, said Yuan.

"The technology, a major breakthrough, costs low," he said.

Bai Lianyang, Party chief of Hunan provincial academy of agricultural sciences, said the new development would probably put an end to rice contaminated with cadmium.

In 2013, rice produced in Hunan Province was found to contain excessive levels of cadmium, a carcinogenic industrial chemical, which was largely believed to be caused by water and soil pollution.