

Local rice variety Fa Yiu Tsai reintroduced by AFCD is available in market (with photos)

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) today (August 18) announced at a sharing session on the reintroduction of a local rice variety, Fa Yiu Tsai, that the variety is now available in the market.

Speaking at the sharing session, the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation, Dr Leung Siu-fai, said, "The AFCD has been committed to the selection and promotion of new crop varieties to farmers to diversify the local agricultural industry."

In view of the re-emergence of rice farming in recent years, the AFCD obtained the seeds of Fa Yiu Tsai from a seed bank in 2019. These seeds were sent to the seed bank by the authorities in the 1960s. The AFCD hopes local farmers can produce the quality rice variety and conserve local varieties with historical origin through cultivating the rice variety again.

The AFCD conducted cultivation trials at the Tai Lung Experimental Station of the department for seed saving of the variety, and co-operated with the Hong Kong Seed Technology and Education Center of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, which is funded by the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund, for genome sequencing. The growth and seed purity of Fa Yiu Tsai were found to be stable. It is suitable for local cultivation. The AFCD distributed seeds to local farmers for cultivation trials and provided technical support to them to promote cultivation of the local quality rice.

Dr Leung said that the AFCD hopes to create more opportunities for the local agricultural industry and facilitate its sustainable development by continuous introduction of new crop varieties.

After tasting, some rice experts said that Fa Yiu Tsai was grainy and hence took up sauces or condiments more readily, and best fitted Hong Kong cuisine.

The Vegetable Marketing Organization (VMO) has collaborated with a local rice supplier to promote Fa Yiu Tsai. Consumers can order Fa Yiu Tsai harvested earlier this year (in July) through the VMO's "Local Fresh" mobile application.

Enquiries about the sale of Fa Yiu Tsai can be made to the VMO at 2387 4164.

