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## Cambodia's banana boom

Banana exports have skyrocketed in the first nine months of 2020 with demand from China driving the boost



**C**ambodia is on track to more than double its banana exports in 2020 as orders from China continue to rise.

According to a report from the Phnom Penh Post, Veng Sakhon, Malaysia's minister of agriculture, forestry and fisheries said the country had exported 235,171 tonnes of fresh yellow bananas through the first nine months of the year, a 225.69 per cent increase year-on-year.

Ngin Chhay, the director-general of the ministry's general directorate of agriculture, told the Post increasing access to China has played an important role and had driven investment.

"As I see it, the volume of yellow banana exports will continue to increase in the future as orders from China pile up and

more companies expand their cultivation areas," Chhay said.

In July three more companies received approval to export to China and Chhay said production area had increased 10,000ha in the past 12 months.

According to a report from Xinhua, some within the industry predict Cambodia could export more than 300,000 tonnes of bananas to China this year compared to 130,000 tonnes in 2019.

Chen Qisheng, general manager of China Certification and Inspection Group (CCIC)-Cambodia, which provides pre-shipment inspection, certification and traceability services for exporters targeting China frequently visits Cambodian plantations and said China's appetite is growing.

"Today, the number of Cambodian banana planting enterprises that have been approved to export to China has increased to 15, with a planting area of more than 24,000ha, and they are still expanding," Chen said.

"Cambodian bananas are sweet and soft, and are very popular among Chinese consumers," Chen said. "Chinese market has become an important driving force for the development of Cambodia's banana industry."

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