



The Good News

Cordillera heirloom rice reaches US market

[By Artemio A. Dumlao](#) (philstar.com) Updated August 09, 2009 12:00 AM

BAGUIO CITY , Philippines – Heirloom rice from the world famous rice terraces of Kalinga, Ifugao and Mountain Province will be exported to the US market this year.

Maria Victoria Garcia, executive director of Rice Inc., a partner non-government organization (NGO) of Eight Wonder Inc., said the processing of 25 tons of heirloom rice from the region for export starts later this month.

Initial heirloom rice export commitment from Kalinga is 12 tons; Ifugao, eight tons; and Mountain Province, six tons, said Robert Domoguen, spokesman of the agriculture department here.

Eight Wonder Inc. is a US-based development NGO involved in the promotion and marketing of the Cordillera region's heirloom rice in the foreign market.

Eulito Bautista of the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice), Gaston Cael of the Department of Agriculture-Cordillera Autonomous Region, Abraham Akilit of the National Irrigation Administration-Cordillera Autonomous Region, farmer representatives and local government technicians finalized the schedule of rice processing and delivery to PhilRice for fumigation and storage.

Heirloom rice processing schedules are as follows: Kalinga, Aug. 17-21; Mountain Province, Aug. 24-28; and Ifugao, Aug. 31-Sept. 4.

Part of the processing schedule is the delivery, installation and turn-over by Eight Wonder Inc. of its model rice mill prototype, which was assembled by PhilRice with inputs from the farmers and other stakeholders.

It is estimated that for the heirloom rice export industry to be profitable and sustainable, it must develop into a 200-ton annual export capacity, said Domoguen.

“This will require extensive organizational support, organic-based technology development, and intensive rehabilitation of the rice terraces,” he added.