

## Economy » Agriculture and Mining

# PHL ships 15MT heirloom rice to California

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[Philippines](#) is shipping 15 metric tons of heirloom rice from the Cordilleras to the United States before the year is out, the Department of Agriculture (DA) said Monday, citing the shipments can help maintain the rice terraces as World [Heritage site](#).

The shipment left the Manila International Container Terminal on Saturday, and is expected to reach California after 23 days.

The shipment includes 10 tons 'mina-angan' variety from Banaue and 'hungduan' from Ifugao, and 5 tons 'ulikan' variety from Pasil and Lubuagan in Kalinga. The initial shipment is valued at P870,000.

The shipment – consolidated by Rice Terraces Farmers Cooperative (RTFC) in cooperation with US-based non-government organization Rice Inc. – will be received by Eighth Wonder Inc. in California.

"This will help sustain the status of rice terraces as a world [heritage](#) treasure," said Marilyn Sta. Catalina, director of DA Regional Field Unit-Cordillera Administrative Region.

"These grains represent the best in the Cordilleras, notably the industry and ingenuity of its people, as they are organically grown, and manually harvested and pounded to perfection," she added.

The shipment is part of the 27.6 MT that the Philippines will export to the US this year.

Now undergoing organic fumigation in the Philippine Rice Institute laboratory in Nueva Ecija – in line with US sanitary and phytosanitary requisites – is the remaining volume, according to the Agriculture Department.

The department is encouraging farmers in the north to preserve ways of traditional rice farming and grow indigenous varieties for export, because the Philippines is not competitive in selling ordinary rice abroad, compared with Southeast Asian neighbors. Thus, the focus is on premium rice varieties.

As part of preparations for this endeavor, the department gave the Ifugao provincial government P20 million in grant to rehabilitate damaged portions of the Batad rice terraces. – **VS, GMA News**

<http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/327769/economy/agricultureandmining/phl-ships-15mt-heirloom-rice-to-california>