

CTN's "Morning News Update" TV Show Features a Discussion on How Farmers Can Improve their Yields on Small Plots of Land through SRI

On the 20th of April, 2011, Mr. Yi Kim Than, CEDAC Field Program Director, appeared on CTN's live TV show *Morning News Update* to discuss CEDAC's experience in promoting the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) in Cambodia over the last ten years.

During the show, Mr. Yi Kim Than expressed the experience CEDAC has observed with farmers producing higher yields, among other benefits, as a result of application of some of the SRI principles to their small plots of land. CEDAC strongly supports SRI, which is a set of alternative crop management principles that benefit small landholding farmers through increased productivity of rice cultivation and reduced input levels for seed, water, synthetic fertilizers, pesticides and labor. The crop management principles include: (1) selecting only good seeds for sowing; (2) sowing seeds on the nursery bed (similar to a vegetable bed); (3) uprooting seedlings carefully and transplanting them immediately after uprooting; (4) transplanting only good seedlings; (5) transplanting younger seedlings (younger than 15 days is ideal); (6) transplanting the seedling roots shallowly; (7) transplanting only one or two good seedlings per planting hill; (8) transplanting with equal distance between seedlings; (9) weeding the rice field early and regularly; (10) managing water by keeping the soil moist during transplanting and rice growing; (11) using compost or forest humus; (12) planting green manure before transplanting or after harvesting; (13) mulching the soil between the planting hills by using organic matter; (14) selecting the best seeds for the next crop by handpicking seeds at harvest from only those rice plants with many tillers many longer panicles with many grains.

Mr. Yi Kim Than stressed that farmers can choose to implement one, a few or all of the abovementioned techniques. From CEDAC's experiences, farmers have been able to increase their yields from 2 tons per hectare from application of traditional practices to 3 or 4 tons of per hectare through application of some of the SRI principles.

Finally, Mr. Kim Than suggested that Cambodian farmers pay much attention to their rice seed selection and begin compost saving by planting fresh vegetables like string beans.

For more information on System of Rice Intensification and the benefits of application to small plots of land, please visit <http://www.cedac.org.kh/SRI.asp>

