

## **Publication of Guidebooks on Promoting Agro-Food Export to Southeast Asian Region**

Dr. Jeongbin Im

Professor, Seoul National University, Korea

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) announced on April 28 that in association with Korea Agro-Fisheries & Food Trade Corporation (aT), it published a series of guidebooks on export to Southeast Asian countries, which are recently recording a sharp growth trend of agro-fishery and food exports and expected to evolve into a huge export market alongside China.

The ASEAN market is projected to become one of Korea's major agro-fisheries and food export destinations; export to the market rose approximately eight times over the last 10 years. Export of Korean agro-food to the ASEAN region has been greatly increased from \$0.17 billion in 2003 to \$1.31 billion in 2013. In addition, the consumers of ASEAN countries show high acceptance of imported food as the young population represents more than 50% of their total population. Through analysis it was revealed that there is a high probability of their buying Korean agro-fishery and food products. Thanks to the ongoing popularity of hallyu (Korean wave).

The guidebooks include various information required for export of agro-fishery and food, such as food culture, food market trends, condition for export of Korean food, distribution channels, promising export items and import customs information of each country. In particular, the guidebook provides practical and most recent information gained from a survey on awareness and satisfaction with Korean agro-fishery and food products conducted among local food buyers and consumers in the Southeast Asian countries. The information is expected to be useful when farms and exporters select export items and establish export strategies. The results of the survey show that consumers gave high scores to the excellent quality of Korean agro-fishery and food products, and buyers of Korean food expressed high satisfaction with its quality, packaging and sanitation. On the contrary, the survey also revealed that Korean products have low price competitiveness and it is also difficult to extend the distribution of Korean products due to lack of distribution infrastructure. Despite their geographical vicinity, the Southeast Asian countries have different food cultures, distribution structures, import conditions and sanitation systems, and this makes it necessary to secure information on each of them.

The guidebook series was prepared in cooperation with various related authorities, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy, and Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries. MAFRA also plans to publish more guidebooks on other new emerging export destinations. The guidebooks can be downloaded at the aT website ([www.kati.net](http://www.kati.net)).

Date submitted: July 15, 2014

Reviewed, edited and uploaded: July 16, 2014