

Chinese Hybrid Rice to Be Popularized Worldwide



In fields of gold: Yuan Longping walks among his hybrid crops.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations has put hybrid rice development and production at the top of its list of solutions to food shortages in developing countries. It plans to popularize hybrid rice on five billion *mu* (15 *mu*=1 hectare) of land, increasing the global yield by 500 million tons.

Rice is widely planted in over 120 countries and regions as one of their main crops. Over half of the world's population depends on rice, but the average output per *mu* is only around 200 kg worldwide.

Food security has become a deep concern around the globe, but China is ahead of the game, doing research on

rice since the 1960s. Yuan Longping, aka "father of hybrid rice," succeeded in developing three-line hybrid rice in 1974 and later two-line and super hybrid rice. His technologies helped China to increase its yields by 300 billion kg over a two-decade period, and achieve self-sufficiency by the mid-1980s.

Recently about 40 countries and regions in Southeast Asia, South Asia, South America, Africa and North America have introduced and researched hybrid rice, bringing them incredible growth on yield. In the Philippines, for example, hybrid rice produced over three tons per hectare compared with other rice strains.