

## Foundation to Deliver 6,800 Tons of Rice to 355,000 People

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation  
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The foundation has applied from the Taiwan government to deliver 6,800 tonnes of high-quality rice to 350,000 people in the Philippines, Indonesia, South Africa and Lesotho. The first shipments, totaling 620 tons, will leave the west Taiwan port of Taichung and reach their destinations in May.

Each year the Agriculture & Food Agency under the Council of Agriculture donates a portion of the country's rice harvest as foreign aid. This year the foundation applied for and received a quota of 6,800 tons of this rice to distribute to the poor and victims of natural disasters in the four countries; some are long-term recipients of the foundation's help. In each country, it has a large and active volunteers, who will be responsible for its collection and distribution. Of this, 5,000 tons will go to feed 250,000 needy citizens in Indonesia, 1,500 to the Philippines Social Welfare Department for 70,000 people and 320 for 5,000 AIDS orphans in South Africa and 30,000 residents of Lesotho.

On the morning of April 28, volunteers and officials from the agency went to the port of Taichung to inspect the first shipment before departure. This consisted of 500 tons for the Philippines and 120 tons for South Africa, to be carried on ships of the Evergreen line for delivery in May.



The rice for South Africa will be carried on the heads of women on mountain roads back to their homes. For this reason, the foundation asked the processing factory to prepare bags of 10 kilograms each for delivery to that country. The rice for the Philippines is in bags of 20 kilograms.

The agency sent specialists to check the quality of the rice. From each of the two containers, they removed bags of rice with the Tzu Chi logo and checked the weight. Then they used a special knife to remove a sample of the rice, to check that it met the standards for quality and freshness. Hsu Liangji, deputy chief of the agency's grain production division, gave his verdict after the inspection: "according to the national standard, we checked the rice, taking grains from each 100 grams and doing an analysis. Our conclusion is that the rice met the national standard," he said.

Chen Hsinyou is a volunteer with many years of experience of distributing rice. He commented: "We readily accept the words of Master Cheng Yen, that what we give to other people is what we most like ourselves and would give to our nearest and dearest. We hope to gather the love of everyone and give it to the Philippines and other places."

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Having passed the quality and weight standards, the rice will be shipped by the Evergreen ship. It will arrive in the Philippines in early May and in South Africa in late May. Then local volunteers will begin to spread the love of Taiwan to many people.