Main characteristics/features

Khao Hom Mali Thung Kula Rong-Hai refers to a brown, milled paddy rice processed from the Khao Dawk Mali 105 and Kor Khor or RD 15 rice varieties, grown during the rainy season in the Thung Kula Rong-Hai area. This rice is characterised by its pale yellow colour, long, slim, transparent and shiny appearance and pleasant smell. When cooked, the rice smells like pandanus leaf. It has a velvety, spongy texture and tastes slightly sweet. Newly harvested KDML 105 and RD 15 rice grains have a creamy smooth texture when boiled.

Production and processing

The rice seeds used to produce Khao Hom Mali Thung Kula Rong-Hai must be grown in Thung Kula Rong-Hai. The whole of the production cycle must take place in the defined geographical area to ensure that it is conducted entirely under the geomorphological conditions specific to this area. Harvesting is governed by specific rules that cover the dates (from October to December), phenological stages and grain moisture to guarantee the hygiene and safety of the product and complete traceability of the rice in the region of origin and even, in many cases, to the original farmer. Khao Hom Mali Thung Kula Rong-Hai must be packaged within the area in which it is produced. Repackaging is not allowed in order to prevent any possible contamination or alteration of the product. Packages must be labelled with the weight, date of packaging, and name of the mill or cooperative.

Geographical area

The Thung Kula Rong-Hai Plain is a large plain in north-east Thailand, extending across five provinces, namely Roi Et, Mahasarakam, Surin, Yasothon and Srisaket. It was formerly named Thung Mah Long or Thung Pu Pa Lan.

Link between product and territory

Legend has it that the name ‘Thung Kula Rong-Hai’ [plain of the crying Kula] is derived from the Kula merchants who travelled through the region from their homeland. Cultivation of Hom Mali rice in Thung Kula Rong-Hai began in 1959. A local know-how has since been developed to obtain rice of a good physical quality, with long, slim, clear and strong grains. The cooked rice should be soft and fragrant. This practice gives Khao Hom Mali Thung Kula Rong-Hai its unique quality, distinctive from Hom Mali rice grown in other areas and recognised by traders and consumers both in the producing country itself and internationally. The slightly saline soil in northern Thailand, the coolness and dryness of the area, the specific rice varieties used, the climate and the soil nutrients cause the paddy to become stressed and produce 2-acetyl-1-pyrroline (2-A-1-P), the same aromatic substance which produces the fragrance in pandanus leaves.