

TO BUILD A PROPER STRUCTURE OF PEANUT EXPORT

by ĐỖ QUỐC DŨNG

It is essential to build a proper structure of peanut export in addition to abundant sources of peanut materials with a view to beefing Vietnam's peanut product export.

Previously, the country's peanut products are mainly peanut and peanut oil. Due to their short preservation, we have to change the export structure including many different items.

With the planned peanut growing area of 600,000 hectares by 2010, the output will be 1,800,000 tonnes and 5% of which are exported in form of shell peanut and 1,260,000 tonnes in form of kernel. The sector is required to use 60% of the materials to produce groundnut for export; 25% for refined peanut oil and other different processed items including fried peanut and peanut butter.

Over the last years, the export of shell peanut has been increasing. Many countries are involving in selling abroad their shell peanut in great quantity, especially for our neighboring countries such as China, India, Thailand... However, Vietnam has not yet exported shell peanut while it has a lot of favorable conditions. This is

our restriction. So the sector will market its shell peanut in the international market with first class and second class items in order to expand its export markets.

In the meantime, peanut kernel is still a major export product. In addition to the first and second class item, companies have to process the third and fourth class items for export.

The processing of other products including peanut oil, peanut butter, fried peanut, salted peanut... should be enhanced because these items can be preserved in the long time and exported to distant countries without fear of their changed quality like raw peanut kernel.

To renew and diversify product category is very important to product consumption because every product has its own life cycle. After a period of development, their value will decline and they need be renewed. If not, they may be unsaleable, and the turnover will be reduced. As such once their consumption shows signs of recession and stagnation, they have to be reformed. The planning of product reform should be conducted

in details. Therefore, the sector have to focus its development on some competitive items on the market like peanut kernel and refined peanut oil; and reduce exporting ineffective items like raw peanut oil.

In the meantime, export companies should pay attention to reforming packages, for example using pet bottles with various design, size and content in accordance with consumers' preference and specific markets.

In addition, export companies should improve their competitive advantages with high quality products (long preservation, transportation in a long distance) like fried peanuts.

Roasted peanut is a kind of ready-to-eat food. There are two methods of processing: peanut is roasted in oil or in hot air. Roasted peanut kept in airtight aluminum package can be preserved in a minimum period of six months. These products used to be exported to Eastern European countries.

Roasted peanut is processed from raw kernel and spiced powder (sugar, salt, coconut juice). Roasted peanut is much consumed in local markets and exported to Russia and Europe.

Peanut butter is a kind of common food in many countries including the U.S., Thailand and Western Europe.

In short, to build a proper structure of peanut export as mentioned above surely helps boost export of Vietnamese peanut and develop the food processing industry and combine agriculture with agroproduct processing industry. At the same time it will create more job opportunities and increase income for farmers and laborers. ■

