

Growers in two Vietnamese farming districts have spent around VND810 billion (US\$38.6 million) in recent years to ramp up dragon fruit planting, website *Saigon-gpdaily.com.vn* reported. 

The story reported an extra 2,700ha of the crop had been planted since 2011 in the districts of Chau Tanh, Long An province and Cho Gao, Tien Giang province.

Chau Tanh People's Committee chairman Truong Van Biet told the publication his district only had 1,000ha of dragon fruit in 2010 with plans to increase the surface area to 1,500ha by 2015. This goal has already been considerably surpassed with 2,200ha of dragon fruit now growing in the area.

Cho Gao leaders set a more ambitious target of growing from 2,000ha in 2010 to 4,500-5,000ha by 2015, and have made good progress with 3,500ha now dedicated to the crop.

Van Biet told the website that farmers had abandoned rice and vegetable cultivation in favor of dragon fruit over the last two years, due to its good prices and the activation of power supply to grow the fruit.

The story reported the average price for a white-fleshed dragon fruit was around VND15,000-20,000 (US\$0.71-0.95) per kilogram, and sometimes reach VND30,000 (US\$1.42).

For the highly sought after red-fleshed variety, prices generally range from VND30,000-40,000 (US\$1.42-1.90) per kilogram, and can hit up to VND60,000 (US\$2.85).

At the farm level, this can bring in up to around US\$19,000 per hectare of white-fleshed dragon fruit, and sometimes up to US\$47,600 per hectare of the red-fleshed fruit, the story reported.

The story reported that if prices hold firm, farmers could cover costs and start to see their first profits from plantings after two years.

However, this rapid growth has come with its challenges. Long An Department of Agriculture and Rural Development director Le Minh Duc said high profits had enticed growers into cultivating dragon fruit in unsuitable areas with water and power supply difficulties.

Vietnam currently ships most of its dragon fruit to China, while the government has also

assisted growers to improve growing and postharvest techniques as it aims for access to the U.S., Japanese and South Korean markets.

Related story: [Vietnam: dragon fruit development gets full focus](#)

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