

5.5 Promotion of regional rice brand development

One of the more interesting effects of the modern service center model is that it can help connect production services with local branding. This matters particularly in developed provinces, where agricultural competitiveness increasingly depends on quality recognition, traceability, and regional identity rather than on bulk volume alone. Rice branding is not separate from production organization. It depends on it.

Mashan's case is revealing here. The supplied materials report that the center's registered "Xinfeng" rice brand won the Silver Award in the 2024 "Zhejiang Good Rice" competition (Figure 4). On its own, this is not a scientific production indicator. But in an applied production study, it is meaningful because it shows that service capacity, processing, and branding can be linked. A center that can raise seedlings, coordinate operations, dry grain, store it safely, and process it locally has a much stronger basis for stable branded production than a provider limited to one field-operation link.

This is where modern agricultural service centers begin to resemble local industry-chain hubs rather than narrow service contractors. Their role expands from "helping farmers finish work" to "helping local rice become a differentiated product." That shift is especially important in places like Zhejiang, where agriculture must increasingly earn value through reliability, quality, and regional reputation.

Postharvest Service Process Flow in Modern Agricultural Service Centers

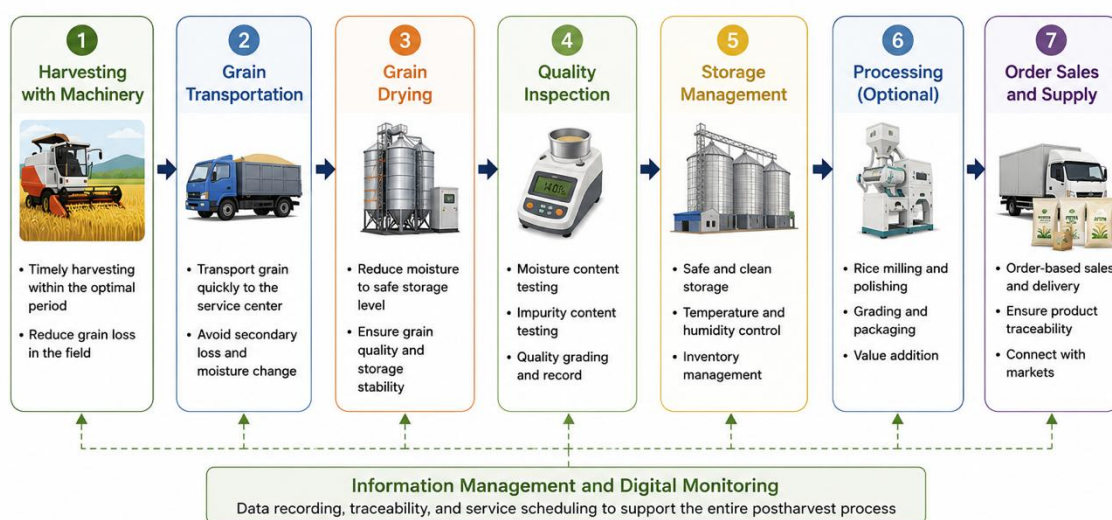


Figure 4 Postharvest service process flow in modern agricultural service centers

6 Case Analysis of Socialized Agricultural Services in Mashan Agricultural Service Center

Before discussing the individual cases, one methodological limitation should be stated clearly. The following four cases are based mainly on two internal project briefs supplied with the manuscript materials and related field descriptions. These are operational management materials rather than independently audited datasets. They are therefore used here as descriptive evidence of how the center functions in practice, not as a basis for strict causal inference.

6.1 Case of centralized seedling supply for surrounding farmers

The centralized seedling supply case captures the center's role at the earliest and often most fragile stage of rice production. Mashan's seedling cultivation center reportedly supplies more than 200,000 trays of standardized early- and late-rice seedlings each year for nearby farmers and service-linked operations. This volume suggests that seedling cultivation is not a small side activity. It is one of the center's core gateways into the local rice production system.