

The practical value of the case lies in standardization. Seedling uniformity influences transplanting quality, later crop establishment, and management stability through the growing season. When seedlings are centrally produced, households no longer need to prepare nursery materials separately, and the timing of seedling availability becomes easier to match with machine transplanting. The project materials also note that technical guidance linked to the center reportedly improved seedling establishment rates for surrounding farmers by around 20%, which reinforces the point that the service is not merely material supply. It combines service products with agronomic support.

This case shows why service centers matter even before field operations begin. In many discussions of modernization, attention goes first to transplanting or harvesting machines. But in practice, the service quality of later links often depends on whether the earliest link was standardized well enough to support them.

### **6.2 Case of emergency agricultural machinery dispatch during typhoon season**

The emergency dispatch case is perhaps the strongest demonstration of Mashan's regional role. According to the project materials, during the overlap of the "double rush" period and typhoon weather, the center mobilized more than 20 harvester operations, completed emergency harvesting of early rice on more than 12,000 mu, and then carried out more than 14,000 tons of drying afterward. These figures show not only operational scale, but operational sequencing.

Analytically, the key point is that harvest rescue and drying rescue occurred together. A harvester without drying support would only provide partial relief. Wet grain rescued from a field can still deteriorate rapidly if postharvest treatment is delayed. The Mashan case therefore illustrates a central feature of the modern service-center model: emergency response depends on linking field capacity with postharvest capacity.

This case also has a wider social meaning. In abnormal weather, the center functions partly like a quasi-public rural infrastructure node. It helps farmers reduce losses that individual households would struggle to prevent on their own. In a climate context where extreme events may become more frequent or more disruptive, this kind of regional protective role may become one of the most important justifications for service-center investment.

### **6.3 Case of grain drying and storage service expansion**

Mashan's drying expansion case shows how a service center evolves beyond basic machinery support. According to the project materials, the center added eight dryers, increased single-batch drying capacity to 400 tons, raised annual drying capacity from 10,000 tons to 18,000 tons, and added a 750-ton indoor metal grain warehouse as well as a 50-ton rice processing line.

This is important because it marks the difference between partial mechanization and integrated service. A center that can harvest but not dry remains incomplete in a rice production setting. The Mashan expansion suggests that the operators recognized this and chose to strengthen the postharvest part of the chain. The expansion also helps explain how the center could respond to emergency harvest demand during bad weather. Without larger drying and storage capacity, emergency dispatch would have had much less value.

From a development perspective, this case suggests a typical upgrading path for rural service centers. They may begin around machinery operation, but long-term effectiveness pushes them toward postharvest control, storage, and processing. In rice systems, where quality and loss control matter greatly after harvest, this transition is logical and necessary.

### **6.4 Case of rice brand-oriented operation and market expansion**

The final case extends the analysis from production support to market development. The internal materials state that Mashan promoted the "Xinfeng" rice brand through standardized production management, processing, and local marketing, and that the brand won the Silver Award in the 2024 "Zhejiang Good Rice" competition.

The significance of this case lies in what it reveals about the center's operational horizon. The modern agricultural service center is not confined to completing field tasks. It can also help stabilize the conditions needed for quality differentiation in the market. Brand-oriented operation depends on more than advertising. It requires some