

1 **Investigation of Cadmium Content in Rice in**  
2 **Heilongjiang Province and Health Risk**  
3 **Assessment**

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## 22 Abstract

23 We investigated the cadmium content in soils and rice in Cha Hayang, Wuchang,  
24 Fangzheng, Xiangshui, and Jiansanjiang areas of Heilongjiang Province, and  
25 characterized the effect of rice intake on human health. The samples were analyzed by  
26 ICP-MS, and the cadmium transfer in soil-rice system was modeled by the Nemero  
27 comprehensive pollution index method. The health risk assessment model was used to  
28 study the status of cadmium pollution in rice and its health risk assessment for adults  
29 and children. The results showed that the average contents of cadmium in rice were  
30 0.003 (Cha Hayang), 0.016 (Wuchang), 0.006 (Fangzheng), 0.006 (Xiangshui), and  
31 0.005 (Jiansanjiang) mg kg<sup>-1</sup>. The prediction model developed in this study, including  
32 the total heavy metals and pH value of the soil, effectively described the transfer of  
33 cadmium in the soil-rice system of Wuchang, Chahayang and Xiangshui paddy fields  
34 (with R<sup>2</sup> between 0.256 and 0.468). The pollution index of the study area was less than  
35 1. The comprehensive pollution index was 0.037<1, suggesting no pollution, and the  
36 comprehensive pollution index was between 0.059 and 0.158. The health risk index of  
37 carcinogenic heavy metal cadmium to adults and children in Cyang and JianSanjiang  
38 areas was lower than that recommended by USEPA ( $1 \times 10^{-4}$ ), suggesting no risk of  
39 cancer. However, the mean values in Wuchang, Fang Zheng and Xiangshui were higher  
40 than the maximum acceptable risk recommended by USEPA, suggesting a risk of  
41 cancer.

42 Key words: soil; rice; cadmium; modeling; pollution characteristics; health risk;

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## 44 Introduction

45 As a country with a large population, agriculture in China is of primary importance.  
46 Most people in the country use rice as their staple food [7]. With the development of  
47 industrialization, the pollution of soil with heavy metals, especially cadmium, is  
48 particularly prominent. Scholars have done a lot of research on the potential risks of  
49 heavy metals to human health. However, this research concentrated mostly on mining  
50 areas [8,9], sewage irrigation [10,11] and waste treatment plants [12,13], with the  
51 research subjects focusing on dust reduction [14,15], corn [16,17], vegetables [18,19],  
52 drinking water [20,21], rice [22,23], etc. These studies have carried out in-depth  
53 research on the accumulation characteristics, physicochemical properties, occurrence  
54 forms and physiological and biochemical effects of contamination by heavy metals,  
55 laying a foundation for further research on accumulation of heavy metals in crops and  
56 their impact on human health. However, most of these studies were the pot experiments  
57 conducted under controlled conditions; there are only few studies on the accumulation  
58 characteristics of heavy metals in rice grown in the natural environment[24].

59 In this paper, we study the content of cadmium in soil and rice as well as a risk of  
60 harm to human health. We chose Heilong Jiang province as the big grain-producing area  
61 to collect soil and rice for detection of cadmium pollution situation. We selected five  
62 areas to assess cadmium intake by the population via eating rice. We also conducted  
63 risk assessment regarding potential health effects. By analyzing the pollution situation,  
64 we can emphasize sustainable development that pays attention not only to the gross  
65 national product, but also to environmental protection and human health.

## 66 **Foreword**

67 Cadmium was discovered together with zinc. It is a heavy metal with many  
68 industrial uses. In nature, cadmium exists in the form of various compounds. Cadmium  
69 is not an essential element for humans. It has strong toxicity, non-biodegradability and  
70 durability. It is absorbed by crops from soil and accumulated in plant tissues, which  
71 reduces the quality of agricultural products and may cause harm to the human body  
72 through the food chain [1]. Excessive intake of cadmium has toxic effects on liver,  
73 kidney, bones and other organs, and is especially harmful to children's health.

74 There are three main ways in which cadmium enters human body: breathing, skin  
75 contact and dietary intake. Compared with the respiratory and skin contact pathways,  
76 dietary intake is the main route for heavy metal intake due to factors such as large  
77 amount of food intake, complex diet, and potentially high cadmium levels in some food  
78 [2-4]. Long-term consumption of contaminated grains can cause chronic poisoning by  
79 heavy metals [5,6]. In recent years, with the increase in public health risk awareness,  
80 research on the status of heavy metal pollution in crops and its health risks has been  
81 intensive.

## 82 **Research method**

### 83 **Overview of the study area**

84 Heilongjiang Province is located in the rice-growing area with the northernmost latitude.  
85 It has large temperature difference between day and night, fertile soil, excellent water  
86 quality and low pollution. It is conducive to the development of rice production.  
87 Heilongjiang rice production is now entering a new era of high quality, high efficiency

88 and professionalism. Due to stable production, excellent rice quality and high  
89 commodity rate, Heilongjiang rice has become an important high-quality glutinous rice  
90 production base in China, and its products are shipped to all parts of the country. In  
91 2015, rice planting area in Heilongjiang Province accounted for 17.0% of the country's  
92 rice planting area, and represented 69.25% of the rice planting area in the three  
93 northeastern provinces. Rice production in Heilongjiang accounts for 16.3% of the  
94 national rice production, and 67.6% of the rice production in the three northeastern  
95 provinces, playing an important role in the rice market.

## 96 **Sample source**

97 The rice and corresponding soil samples used in this study were from the rice  
98 producing areas in Heilongjiang province, including 22 from Chahayang  
99 ([123°56'E-124°20'E, 48°05'N-48°30'N](#)) region, 22 from Wuchang ([126°33'E-128°14'E,](#)  
100 [44°04'N-45°26'N](#)) region, 22 from Fangzheng ([128°13'E-129°33'E, 45°32'N-46°09'N](#))  
101 region, 22 from Xiangshui ([128°07'E-130°00'E, 44°27'N-48°30'N](#)) region, and 22 from  
102 Jiansanjiang ([132°31'E-134°22'E, 46°45'N-48°28'N](#)) region.

## 103 **Sample testing**

104 The determination of the content of Cd in rice samples was carried out according to  
105 the method specified in Chinese National Standard GB 5009.286-2016 "Determination  
106 of Multi-Elements in Foods".

## 107 **Risk assessment of heavy metal pollution in rice grains**

108 The limit of Cd in rice grains was based on the limits of 8 elements including lead,  
109 chromium, cadmium, mercury, selenium, arsenic, copper and zinc in grain (including

110 cereals, beans and potatoes) and products (NY861-2004). The single factor pollution  
 111 index method and the Nemero comprehensive pollution index method were used to  
 112 evaluate the heavy metal content in crops [25].

113 Single factor pollution index:

$$114 \quad P_{Cd} = \frac{C_{Cd}}{S_{Cd}} \quad (1)$$

115 In the formula, Pcd is the comprehensive pollution index of heavy metals in crop  
 116 grains; Ccd is the average value of single metal pollution index of heavy metals, and  
 117 Scd is the maximum value of one-way pollution index of heavy metal Cd.

118 Nemero Integrated Pollution Index:

$$119 \quad P = \sqrt{\frac{\bar{P}_{Cd}^2 + P_{Cdmax}^2}{2}} \quad (2)$$

120 In the formula, P is the comprehensive pollution index of heavy metals in crop  
 121 grains;  $\bar{P}$  is the average value of single metal pollution index of heavy metals, and  
 122  $P_{Cdmax}$  is the maximum value of one-way pollution index of heavy metal Cd.

## 123 Rice health risk assessment

124 In order to evaluate the health risks of rice in the diet of adults and children in the  
 125 study area, the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) recommended health  
 126 risk assessment model was used [26]. The model used in this study was the carcinogenic  
 127 risk model.

128 Average daily intake of pollutants through crops (ADD):

$$129 \quad ADD = \frac{C_{Cd} \times I \times EF \times ED}{BW \times AT} \quad (3)$$

130 Where *ADD* is the average daily intake of pollutants in crops [mg·(kg·d)<sup>-1</sup>];  $C_{Cd}$

131 is the content of heavy metal Cd in crops ( $\text{mg}\cdot\text{kg}^{-1}$ );  $I$  is the daily human body intake  
132 of crops ( $\text{kg}\cdot\text{d}^{-1}$ );  $EF$  is the frequency of exposure ( $\text{d}\cdot\text{a}^{-1}$ );  $ED$  is the exposure time  
133 (a);  $BW$  is the recipient body weight (kg);  $AT$  is the life expectancy (d). The names and  
134 values of various parameters are shown in Table 1.

135 Carcinogenic risk assessment

$$136 \quad \quad \quad RI = ADD \times SF \quad \quad \quad (4)$$

137 In the formula,  $RI$  is the carcinogenic risk of human exposure to heavy metal  
138 Cd;  $SF$  is the carcinogenic strength coefficient [ $(\text{kg}\cdot\text{d})\cdot\text{mg}^{-1}$ ]. When  $RI < 1 \times 10^{-6}$ , the  
139 risk is not obvious; when  $1 \times 10^{-6} < RI < 1 \times 10^{-4}$ , the risk is in the acceptable range; when  
140  $RI > 1 \times 10^{-4}$ , it means there is a significant health risk.

## 141 Results and analysis

### 142 Contents of cadmium in soil and rice in Heilongjiang region

143 The cadmium content in 110 soil samples collected is shown in Table 2-4, between  
144 0.061~0.225mg/kg, the average value was 0.122 mg/kg, and the coefficient of variation  
145 was 0.280% <11%. Within the range of the coefficient of variation allowed, and  
146 according to the Chinese national standard GB 15618-2018 (soil environmental quality -  
147 agricultural land risk control standards), the cadmium content in the soil in the five  
148 regions did not exceed the acceptable range. Hence, the risk of cadmium pollution in  
149 agricultural land in the study area was low. The content of cadmium in the soil was in  
150 the order: Chahayang> Xiangshui> Wuchang> Fangzheng> Jiansanjiang.

151 The content of cadmium in brown rice and polished rice in 110 rice samples  
152 collected was between 0.0003-0.0610 mg/kg and  $3.96 \times 10^{-6}$  to 0.056, with the average

153 values of 0.007 mg/kg and 0.004 mg/kg, respectively. The coefficients of variation were  
154 1.470% (brown rice) and 2.009% (polished rice), both within the range allowed by  
155 GBT27404-2008 "Laboratory Quality Control Specification Food Physical and  
156 Chemical Testing".In addition, according to GB 2762-2017 "Food Safety National  
157 Standards for Contaminants in Foods" the standard content of cadmium is below 0.2  
158 mg/kg. None of the 110 samples of rice samples determined in this experiment  
159 exceeded this limit. The content of cadmium in brown rice ranged in the order:  
160 Chahayang> Xiangshui> Fangzheng> Jiansanjiang> Wuchang. The order of cadmium  
161 content in polished rice was consistent with that in brown rice.

162 The average value of cadmium in soil in this study was 0.122 mg/kg, which does  
163 not exceed the limit specified in the China's soil environmental quality standard. It is  
164 higher than the content of cadmium in soil of Heilongjiang area (0.096mg/kg) reported  
165 in 2012[31]. The content of cadmium in the soil of Wuchang area was 0.124, which was  
166 lower than the cadmium content in the soil of Harbin area reported by Wang (2011) [32].  
167 The cadmium content was much higher in Chahayang than the other four regions, but  
168 the cadmium content in the soil was not much different in the five regions.

169 Studies have shown that the absorption and accumulation of heavy metals in rice is  
170 greatly affected by genetic background, cultivar type and heavy metal interaction [33]  
171 (Lin 2018). The varieties with high Se accumulation showed a tendency to inhibit the  
172 accumulation of heavy metal Cd [34] (Li 2003). In addition, some studies found that the  
173 cadmium content in rice was decreased by the optimal zinc content in soil [35] ( Zhang  
174 2015).

175 The single rice variety (rice flower) and soil background in Wuchang area are the  
176 main factors leading to the difference between Wuchang and other regions. The  
177 cadmium content in rice in the two areas of Jianshuanjiang is also different by the  
178 cadmium content in paddy soil. In the process of absorption and accumulation of heavy  
179 metals, rice is not only affected by heavy metal content in soil, but also affected by  
180 other factors. Such as rice varieties, soil microbial content, precipitation, air quality and  
181 so on.

### 182 **Analysis of the significance of differences between different regions**

183 The variance analysis of five areas of polished rice, brown rice and soil was carried  
184 out by SPSS statistics 12.0. The results are shown in the figure below.

185 It can be seen from Fig. 1 (a) that the content of cadmium in soils in Wuchang,  
186 Chahayang and Jiansanjiang was significantly different. In addition, there was a  
187 significant difference in the content of cadmium in soils in Chahayang and Fangzheng  
188 areas and also in soils in Fangzheng and Xiangshui areas and between Xiangshui and  
189 Jiansanjiang. The differences between Wuchang and Fangzheng and between  
190 Chahayang and Xiangshui were not significant.

191 It can be seen from Fig. 1 (b) that the content of cadmium in brown rice was  
192 significantly different between Wuchang and Chahayang, Fangzheng, Xiangshui, and  
193 Jiansanjiang as well as between Chahayang and Fangzheng, Xiangshui and Jiansanjiang.  
194 There was no significant difference between Xiangshui and Jiansanjiang in the content  
195 of cadmium in brown rice.

196 It can be seen from Fig. 1 (c). There were significant differences in the content of

197 cadmium in polished rice between Chahayang and Wuchang, Fangzheng, Xiangshui,  
198 and Jiansanjiang. The differences in cadmium content in polished rice between  
199 Wuchang and Fangzheng, Xiangshui and Jiansanjiang were not significant.

200 In summary, the differences in cadmium content in soil, brown rice and polished  
201 rice in the study area were not consistent. The rice varieties have an effect on the  
202 absorption and accumulation of cadmium by rice, and some agricultural factors such as  
203 pesticides, fertilization and irrigation may also greatly affect absorption of cadmium by  
204 rice. Some studies have shown that natural conditions such as precipitation and CO<sub>2</sub>  
205 concentration [36] also have an impact on absorption and accumulation of cadmium in  
206 rice.

### 207 **Soil-rice system migration model of Cd element**

208 The absorption and accumulation of heavy metals in rice is not only affected by the  
209 total metal content in the soil, but also by the physical, chemical and biological  
210 properties of the soil. Many researchers have studied the factors affecting the absorption  
211 of metal elements in rice, including soil pH [37,38], organic matter [39,40], redox  
212 potential [41], salinity [42], and phosphorus content [43]. Soil pH is an important factor  
213 in controlling heavy metal absorption [44,45]. Table 5 shows the physical and chemical  
214 properties of soils in the study area.

215 The present paper studied the factors affecting absorption of cadmium in the  
216 “soil-rice system” and proposed the best fitting model for predicting the content of  
217 cadmium in rice. A multivariate regression model of arsenic content in rice was  
218 established by using soil pH and organic matter. The multiple regression equation was

219 shown in Table 6. There was a significant negative correlation between the content of  
220 cadmium in rice and the concentration of cadmium in soil ( $P < 0.05$ ). The content of  
221 cadmium in Chahayang rice was positively correlated with soil pH ( $P < 0.05$ ), and it was  
222 significantly related to soil cadmium concentration The negative correlation ( $P < 0.05$ );  
223 the content of cadmium in Xiangshui rice was significantly positively correlated with  
224 the concentration of cadmium in soil ( $P < 0.05$ ). The partial coefficient between cadmium  
225 content and soil pH in Jiansanjiang rice was not significant. Therefore, the best  
226 prediction model for the Jiansanjiang area was based on the concentration of cadmium  
227 in soil.

228 The content of cadmium in rice in Chahayang, Wuchang and Xiangshui areas  
229 could be predicted well by the concentration of cadmium in soil. The pH value of soil  
230 could predict the content of arsenic in rice in Chahayang area. However, in the  
231 established regression model, the content of cadmium in rice in Fangzheng and  
232 Jiansanjiang areas was not significantly correlated with soil cadmium content, pH and  
233 organic matter. Therefore, the prediction models of these two regions have yet to be  
234 worked out. Dudka [46] et al. (1996) reported that the relationship between heavy  
235 metals in rice and soil could be described by three models: linear (constant distribution  
236 model), plateau model (saturated) and Langmuir model. The metal adsorption also  
237 followed a linear model in the range of low metal concentrations in the soil.

238 In the present study, soil samples collected from paddy fields contained relatively  
239 low levels of cadmium. By fitting and comparing the three models, it was found that the  
240 linear model was the best fitting model. Therefore, the linear model is used for fitting.

241 The R<sup>2</sup> value of the fitted model was between 0.256 and 0.468 (Table 5). The D-W  
242 index was close to 2, the autocorrelation of the independent variables was not obvious,  
243 and the model design was good . Dudka et al.[46] reported R<sup>2</sup> values of 0.94 and 0.92  
244 for the correlation between, respectively, Cd and Zn contents in barley grains and Cd  
245 and Zn contents in soil. McBride [47] found similar correlation coefficients. In the  
246 present study, the correlation coefficient was lower than the correlation coefficients  
247 (<0.9) of the previous studies. These above-mentioned studies were carried out in pots  
248 or small experimental field; so, the soil properties changed little, if at all, during the  
249 modeling process. Hence, the model established under these conditions had a higher  
250 degree of fit. In the present study, the rice and soil samples were collected under natural  
251 field conditions. Paddy soils are a complex system. In addition to the variability in total  
252 metal content and pH value of soil, other soil properties may also affect the availability  
253 of heavy metals, potentially weakening the model fit between metal accumulation by  
254 rice and the soil metal content and pH.

## 255 **Evaluation of cadmium pollution in rice grains and health** 256 **risk assessment of intake**

257 According to formulae (1) and (2), the results of heavy metal pollution assessment  
258 in the study area were obtained (Tables 7-8). The single factor pollution index evaluation  
259 was less than 1 (Table 7), indicating that the five areas of the study were not polluted by  
260 Cd (the proportion of pollution-free soil in each region was 100%). The comprehensive  
261 rice pollution index in the study area was 0.153 (Table 8), which was non-polluting; the  
262 comprehensive pollution index of each region was in the order Chahayang>

263 Fangzheng> Xiangshui> Jiansanjiang> Wuchang.

264 Due to the different geographical locations, and the differences in economic  
265 development level and industrial structure distribution, there are expected differences in  
266 the content of Cd in rice in different regions. The areas studied in this paper represent  
267 the geographically-protected rice products in Heilongjiang Province. The results  
268 reported in this paper did not exceed the values specified in the health risk index, and  
269 100% of rice in the five regions was non-contaminated. This is despite extensive  
270 economic development in the five regions studied in recent years, including the  
271 construction of farm towns, usage of pesticides and fertilizers, agricultural irrigation,  
272 and automobile exhaust gases, representing the main sources of heavy metals.

273 According to the results of heavy metal carcinogenic risk assessment (Table 9), the  
274 average intake (ADD) of Cd in adults and children was lower than the reference  
275 exposure dose (RfD). Hence, the individual health risk index was less than 1, indicating  
276 the amounts of daily intake of cadmium would not be considered a health risk to  
277 humans. The order of rice intake influencing the health risks to adults and children was  
278 Chahayang> Fangzheng> Xiangshui> Jiansanjiang> Wuchang. Comparing the results of  
279 individual pollution assessment of rice in the study area, the evaluation results of  
280 Wuchang, Jiansanjiang and Chahayang were completely consistent. The pollution index  
281 of Wuchang was the smallest of all areas, indicating Wuchang was not affected by Cd.

282 The average Cd carcinogenic risk index of adults in different regions of each  
283 region was Wuchang  $0.34 \times 10^{-4}$ , Chahayang  $5.61 \times 10^{-4}$ , Fangzheng  $1.08 \times 10^{-4}$ ,  
284 Xiangshui  $1.26 \times 10^{-4}$ , Jiansanjiang  $0.56 \times 10^{-4}$ ; the average health risk index of children

285 was Wuchang  $0.52 \times 10^{-4}$ , Chahayang  $8.69 \times 10^{-4}$ , Fangzheng  $1.67 \times 10^{-4}$ , Xiangshui  
286  $1.95 \times 10^{-4}$ , Jiansanjiang  $0.87 \times 10^{-4}$ . The risk index values of Chahayang, Fangzheng and  
287 Xiangshui were higher than the USEPA recommendation. The maximum acceptable  
288 level was  $1 \times 10^{-4}$ , and there is a risk of cancer; The risk index values of both Wuchang  
289 and Jiansanjiang were lower than the maximum acceptable level recommended by  
290 USEPA ( $1 \times 10^{-4}$ ). The health risk of Fangzheng and Xiangshui was on the edge of the  
291 acceptable risk range for humans, and the risk of cancer was low.

292 There was a certain deviation between the Cd carcinogenic risk index values and  
293 the evaluation results of rice single factor pollution in the study area. In the single factor  
294 pollution assessment, the pollution index of the Fangzheng area was higher than that of  
295 Xiangshui, and the opposite was true in the cancer risk assessment, which is mainly  
296 related to the original level of heavy metals. Cadmium is a harmful element upon  
297 accumulation. It has obvious toxic effects on human nervous and reproductive systems,  
298 and is a heavy metal element with a high carcinogenic risk.

## 299 Discussion

300 According to the "National Soil Pollution Status Survey Bulletin" published by the  
301 Ministry of Environmental Protection of China and the Ministry of Land and Resources  
302 of China, out of the total soil area surveyed in the country (6.3 million km<sup>2</sup>) 16.1%  
303 (1.08 million km<sup>2</sup>) had pollution exceeding the acceptable standards. On May 28, 2016,  
304 the "Soil Pollution Prevention and Control Action Plan" issued by the State Council of  
305 China clearly requires the provision of soil environmental management for agricultural  
306 land based on soil pollution prevention, investigation and monitoring, classification

307 management, supervision and management, etc., to prevent pollution, control  
308 agricultural use, and guarantee the quality and safety of agricultural products.

309 This paper theoretically evaluated the heavy metal content in the  
310 geographically-protected products of the five major rice-producing areas in  
311 Heilongjiang Province, and analyzed the health risks brought about by eating local rice,  
312 which has practical significance. According to the research results (Table 4), the average  
313 content of cadmium in rice in the study area was in the order of Chahayang>  
314 Xiangshui> Fangzheng> Jiansanjiang> Wuchang. The content of cadmium in rice in  
315 Chahayang area was the highest in the study area. The average cadmium content did not  
316 exceed the national food hygiene standard limit, and was much lower than the cadmium  
317 content in rice in Hunan Province [35] and Taihu Lake, Jiangsu Province [34]. Given  
318 that the rice produced in the study area is China National Geographic Protection Mark  
319 rice, the production area is located in the Songnen Plain and Sanjiang Plain in Northeast  
320 China, and is little affected by human activities (urban, mining and metallurgical  
321 activities). Therefore, the cadmium in rice in the study area was within the  
322 non-pollution standard (with the compliance rate of 100%). However, the difference  
323 between the content of cadmium across China and in the study area was not consistent.  
324 This is because the rice varieties planted in the study area were different, and the  
325 pesticides applied, irrigation water quality and rainfall were also inconsistent. The  
326 extent to which rice absorbs and accumulates cadmium from the soil would be expected  
327 to differ among various regions, influencing the modeling of soil-rice systems in  
328 different regions. The modeling results were shown in Table 6. There were significant

329 differences in the cadmium content in rice and soil in Wuchang, Chahayang and  
330 Xiangshui areas. The cadmium content in rice in Fangzheng and Jiansanjiang areas was  
331 greatly affected by other factors, and the model fit was low. The better-fitting model  
332 remains to be determined.

333 The average daily intake (ADD) of cadmium in adults and children in the study  
334 area was lower than the reference exposure dose (RfD). The cancer risk index in  
335 Wuchang and Jiansanjiang was within the maximum acceptable risk level recommended  
336 by USEPA. The carcinogenic risk index of both Fangzheng and Xiangshui was close to  
337 the maximum acceptable risk level recommended by USEPA, with the cancer risk still  
338 being low. However, the carcinogenic risk index in Chahayang was much higher than  
339 the maximum acceptable level recommended by USEPA, suggesting a high risk of  
340 causing cancer, which was similar to the results of cancer risk assessment in Zhejiang  
341 Province [34] and Zhejiang area [48]. According to the research results (Tables 5-7), the  
342 cadmium pollution existed in the Chahayang area, and the corresponding carcinogenic  
343 risk exceeded the acceptable level for humans, which should be paid attention to by the  
344 relevant departments.

345 Due to the international nature of the experimental parameters and the regional  
346 nature of the study area, as well as the differences in human quality status under  
347 different living conditions, the results of this study have certain limitations and  
348 one-sidedness. In addition, since the impact of rice varieties is not considered in the  
349 research process, in the subsequent research, the migration in the “soil-plant-human  
350 body” system should be established on the basis of comprehensive consideration of

351 various current impact factors. Experimental studies on transformation, and  
352 bioavailability, with a view to providing data references for soil conservation and food  
353 security in agricultural land.

## 354 Conclusion

355 (1) The average content of cadmium in brown rice in the study area was (in  
356 mg·kg<sup>-1</sup>) 0.003 (Wuchang), 0.016 (Chahayang), 0.006 (Fangzheng), 0.006 (Xiangshui),  
357 and 0.005 (Jiansanjiang). The cadmium content in brown rice in the five regions did not  
358 exceed the cadmium content specified in the National Food Hygiene Standard of China.  
359 The difference in cadmium content between brown rice, polished rice and soil was  
360 inconsistent. The prediction models developed in this study, including the total cadmium  
361 content and pH of the soils, could significantly describe the transfer of cadmium in the  
362 soil-rice system of Chahayang, Wuchang and Xiangtian paddy fields, with R<sup>2</sup> values  
363 ranging from 0.256 to 0.468.

364 (2) The pollution index of the entire study area was less than 1. The  
365 comprehensive pollution index was 0.037 < 1, which belongs to the non-polluting  
366 category. The comprehensive pollution index of each region was in the order of  
367 Chahayang > Fangzheng > Xiangshui > Jiansanjiang > Wuchang, and ranged between  
368 0.059 and 0.158. The average daily intake of cancer-causing cadmium (ADD) for adults  
369 and children was lower than the reference dose (RfD). The average risk of carcinogenic  
370 heavy metal Cd for adults and children's in Chahayang, Fangzheng and Xiangshui was  
371 higher than the maximum acceptable risk level of 1×10<sup>-4</sup> recommended by USEPA,  
372 suggesting a real cancer risk. The average values of Wuchang and Jiansanjiang were

373 lower than the maximum acceptable risk level of  $1 \times 10^{-4}$  recommended by USEPA,  
 374 suggesting there was no risk of causing cancer.

## 375 **Abbreviation Description**

376 ICP-MS—Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry

377 USEPA—United States Environmental Protection Agency

378 SD—Standard deviation

379 Cd—Cadmium

## 380 **Declarations**

### 381 **Ethical Approval and Consent to participate**

382 Not applicable

### 383 **Consent for publication**

384 All authors agree to publish this paper

### 385 **Competing interests**

386 Not applicable

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## 391 **Availability of data and materials**

392 It is hereby declared that the source of this experimental material is reliable and the  
 393 measurement data is accurate.

## 394 **Authors' contributions**

395 Dongmei Cao contributed to the conception of the study;

396 Chang Zhang contributed significantly to analysis and manuscript preparation;

397 Chang Zhang performed the data analyses and wrote the manuscript;

398 Dongjie Zhang and Dongmei Cao helped perform the analysis and complete the  
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