

# UMS markets fish food formulations

BP 22.11.2016 A16

By: Fiqah Roslan

**KOTA KINABALU:** In light of the recent Budget 2017 announcement which depicted lesser allocations for public universities, University Malaysia Sabah (UMS) signed a memorandum of sale with Adabi Consumer Industries Sdn. Bhd. (ACISB), to move its Saltwater Fish Food Formulations.

UMS vice chancellor, Professor Datuk Dr Mohd Harun Abdullah, said that the government had already mentioned long-term strategies for higher education funds to be within university autonomy, and marketing the formulations is one of the efforts taken by the university to generate its own income.

"In line with the long-term strategy of the university and the government, this is one of the efforts we are taking to work towards that autonomy.

"We take the budget cut as a challenge to generate our own income through our products, and I was informed that we will be producing another one in December in col-



Harun (left) and Adrian signing the memorandum of sale for the Saltwater Fish Food Formulations, Garoupa-1 and Garoupa-2.

laboration with our engineering faculty," said Harun.

He added that the fish food formulations, Garoupa-1 and Garoupa-2, would go for RM15,000 each one-off, and that there will be more to come.

Meanwhile, UMS Borneo Marine Research Institute director, Professor Dr Rossita Shapawi,

said that she is confident in Adabi given its reputation and history in the industry.

"All this while, I've been looking for an industry partner that is serious about this product. Many have approached me before, but I felt that they were not prepared, unlike Adabi.

"I'm quite confident in this com-

pany because it is established and has experience in mass production of food products, including its latest cat food release, called Powercat," she said.

Rossita, who developed the fish formulations, added that although it is a one-off sale memorandum, she hopes to be involved as part of the production team.

"Technically, I don't have to be involved anymore once they have bought my product, but I would like to be involved until they are able to stand on their own.

"Lab work and the work done in the industry are very different. My work is on a lab scale which is very small, so when it comes to factory facilities, I need to refine the formula to suit factory conditions.

"I want to be part of it. I want to be part of the product, because I developed the prototype. Some parts of the formula were done a long time ago, so it slowly came together and it was not an overnight effort.

"I spent a lot of time monitoring how fish responded to the formula and what happened to the fish internally. We studied everything on the

response of the fish, based on about three years of research," she said.

Rossita also shared that the main ingredient in the formula is fish itself, although she focused on replacing it with a more sustainable component.

"Marine creatures are typically carnivorous, which is why fish is the most suitable ingredient for these formulas.

"But when we talk about fish, we also consume the protein so the supply definitely does not meet the demand.

"The formulas are not going to be sustainable if it is based purely on fish, which is why the focus of my research was to replace the fish component with a more sustainable protein that is easily available and cheaper," she said.

However, Rossita said that there must be a safe amount for the fish to consume, as it has its own requirements.

If the dosage and components are altered too much, it could spell danger for the fish and stunt its growth, she said.

She added that through her

research, she had discovered alternative ingredients to reduce dependency on fish resources.

"I tried combining materials from within the country which can be obtained at a lower price while reducing our carbon footprint, and we don't have to depend on imported products either.

"Some of the substitutes are like vegetable oil or palm oil and by-products from the poultry industry. However, these components have its unique blending as it must be measured delicately to suit the fish," said Rossita.

At the industry level, Rossita added that profit and pricing are very important, as well as the halal status.

She gave assurance that the formulations are made entirely of halal ingredients, which is among the aspects she wished to highlight about the product, in addition to its green technology element.

Also present at the memorandum signing were ACISB president, Adrian Roslan, and ACISB head of research and development, Hisamudin Abd Wahid.