

Higher learning institutions to help develop agri sector

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KOTA KINABALU: The State government will continue to support the involvement of higher education institutions to develop the agriculture sector.

“Activities such as shared modern technology and research are effective in contributing to the development of skilled human resources and the agriculture industry in Sabah,” said Deputy Chief Minister cum Agriculture and Food Industries Minister Datuk Seri Yahya Hussin. In the past, the agriculture industry was considered as a low productivity and traditional sector. However, the sector, he said, was now one of the huge contributors to the gross domestic product.

Therefore, he urged the industry to continue collaborating with higher education institutes to develop the sector.

“The Ministry also encourages more graduates to venture into the field of agriculture entrepreneurship as part of the effort to develop the industry,” he said when launching the Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Industry Centre of Excellence (ICoE) as well as the ICoE conference at Pan Pacific Sutera Harbour here, Monday.

UMS Vice-Chancellor Professor Datuk Dr Mohd Harun Abdullah, meanwhile, said agriculture is one of the university’s focuses as it is one of the catalysts of the nation’s economy.

Besides that, the sustainability of the sector also ensures food sufficiency in the country, depending less on imported products.

“UMS will be signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (Fama) on Dec 4 in conjunction with Fama’s 50th anniversary,” he added.



Yahya (fourth from left) and Harun (centre) during the presentation of certificate.

Harun hoped the ICoE will help increase the marketability of public university graduates, specifically those from UMS.

“The training provided at the centre does not only focus on theory but practical as well. Therefore, graduates must make full use of the opportunity given to them in mastering both the knowledge and skills,” he said, hoping that the development of the centre will help to reduce unemployment among graduates.