

Aquaculture profitable if done correctly – BMRI

KOTA KINABALU: Fish farming can be a lucrative business with the right science, knowledge and training to boost productivity and efficiency in small-scale or commercial aquaculture setups.

Experts at the Borneo Marine Research Institute (BMRI) of University Malaysia Sabah (UMS) said aquaculture can be profitable if done properly.

“But to achieve success, aspiring fish farmers and growers need fish-farming knowledge on methods, techniques, equipment and adopt technologies to improve productivity and profitability,” said BMRI Director, Prof Dr Rossita Shapawi.

To support fish growers and

local entrepreneurs, the university provides aquaculture workshops for aspiring fish farmers through the UMS Rakan Akuakultur programme headed by the BMRI.

Meeting reporters at an aquaculture workshop yesterday, Prof Rossita said the training course provides participants with theoretical knowledge and hands-on practical training to assist small-scale enterprises to boost productivity and grow their business further.

“We help local communities grow their start-ups into successful businesses through training, dialogue and stock enhancement of fisheries resources which improves the aquaculture knowledge within the industry,” Dr Rossita said.

In turn, she said Rakan Akuakultur UMS enhances industry, community and academic partnership, which helps the institute better understand the problems faced by the industry, limitations and help the BMRI provide

better research outcomes and recommendations to benefit the fish farming community.

At least 30 participants joined yesterday’s workshop and engagement session, which provided a series of lectures, field-visits and hands-on practical training throughout the programme. Apart from workshops at campus, Dr Rossita said the Institute also organises training courses while doing field-visits to villages of fish-farming communities in rural areas.

“It is hoped that closer cooperation between scientists and fish farmers can promote knowledge-based fish farming approaches which will encourage small-scale enterprises to overcome problems, improve productivity, efficiency, cut losses and improve profitability of their enterprises,” she added.

According to Dr Rossita, the Institute offers workshops to widen aquaculture knowledge and expertise to local entrepreneurs, coastal and rural communities, youth

groups and individuals interested to start aquaculture business.

“We decided to provide training courses, as our projects under the Niche Research Grant Scheme (NRGS) module will be ending next year,” she said, noting Institute has 7 projects under its wing which includes: aquaponics, sea cucumber aquaculture, mussel cultivation, Harvesting and post-harvest technologies, aquaculture waste management and community-based aquaculture.