

Malaysia's MOSTI anticipates growth in Seaweed & Ginger fertiliser market

09 August 2023 | News

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Malaysia's Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI) foresees significant economic benefits from the use of biotechnology, particularly in activities based on seaweed and ginger production. Most notably in the state of Sabah, which nurtures sustainable development.

MOSTI Deputy Minister, YB Datuk Arthur Joseph Kurup said the application of biotechnology is increasing among local industry players in Sabah. A bioeconomy product launch and Memorandum of Understanding exchange ceremony was held at the Sabah International Convention Center in conjunction with Hari Koperasi Negara 2023.

During the ceremony, Rhodomaxx Sdn Bhd, a Sabah bio-based company, launched "AlgaGrow", a bio-based fertiliser product derived sustainably from Sabah seaweed.

Meanwhile, the MoU exchange ceremony held between Bio-based Accelerator (BBA) company Tamara Nanoetech (M) Sdn Bhd (Tamara) and Koperasi Pembangunan Usaha Jaya Semporna Berhad (KOPUJAYA) marked their collaboration to set up a pilot farm for ginger cultivation in Tuaran, utilising ginger-specific nutrient input with modern farming techniques.

Datuk Arthur stated that innovative Malaysian bio-based companies like Rhodomaxx and Tamara play a key role in uplifting Sabah's farmers through modernisation of farming methods, developing economic opportunities for wealth creation, as well as solving global issues with local sustainable solutions. He stated that as the largest seaweed-producing state and third largest producer of ginger in Malaysia, Sabah plays a crucial role in contributing to the country's agricultural sector and bioeconomy.

Bioeconomy Corporation facilitates and supports Rhodomaxx and Tamara to capitalize on these abundant resources and leverage them to drive innovation and sustainable growth. Rhodomaxx invested RM1.5 million in research and product

development, including for seaweed-based derivatives like bioplastics and feed additives, with plans to raise it to RM12 million in the next three years.

Meanwhile, Tamara and KOPUJAYA's collaboration on the pilot farm in Tuaran will involve at least 40 farmers from the ginger industry to eventually produce at least 150 metric tonnes (MT) of ginger from Sabah. These companies demonstrate how innovative actions coupled with serious investments and strategic partnerships in the bio-based industry can advance the agriculture sector forward in Sabah," said Datuk Arthur, adding that these efforts align with the mission of National Biotechnology Policy 2.0 to unite and concentrate Malaysia's bio-based resources and activities for the advancement of economic prosperity, societal well-being, and sustainability in Malaysia.