

Focus on quality pepper

The Malaysian Pepper Board will come up with a strategic plan to increase output and income of growers and industry players by focusing on globally competitive products. >3

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KUCHING: The Malaysian Pepper Board (MPB) aims to expand pepper planting areas and encourage production of quality pepper-based products.

Its chairman, Tan Sri William Mawan Ikom, said quality was the board's focus, to attract buyers and create more demand in the global market.

MPB wants to produce more local products, such as its famous Sarasapice brand, which has made the pepper commodity in Malaysia internationally known for its quality.

"It is the board's objective to come up with strategic planning to increase production and income of the industry players by making our market competitive in the global stage to ensure sustainability.

"MPB will continue to support smallholders and industry players by organising more programmes to spur quality production and production.

"We will also rope in more pepper planters to increase planting acreage all over the country," Mawan said at the launching of MPB 10th anniversary celebration and Pesta Lada 2017 here.

He added that the uncertainty in price of pepper could not be avoided, as it was influenced by the supply and demand worldwide. In this regard, the board prioritised production of premium pepper and high-quality pepper-based products to attract the global market.

"Currently, price of pepper is stable at around RM17.10 per kg

Producing better pepper

Board wants to increase quantity and quality of spice to remain competitive



(From left) Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Seri Douglas Uggah, Plantation Industries and Commodities Minister Datuk Seri Mah Siew Kong and Mawan launching the Pesta Lada 2017. — Bernamapic

and RM25.33 per kg for black and white pepper respectively.

"Smallholders are advised to produce high quality pepper according to the standard set by MPB to take advantage of the low offer in the global market," he added.

Mawan hoped the Government would consider the board's

proposal to set up a social safety net mechanism to ease burden of planters if price of pepper drops below satisfactory level.

The three-day Pesta Lada 2017 at the Boulevard Shopping Mall is ongoing until tomorrow.

It features an array of activities including exhibitions, sales of various pepper-based products as

well as cooking competitions.

Top chefs from UCSI University and hotels such as Imperial and Riverside Majestic are also expected to take part in a cooking demonstration.

"This festival will be a good time for local farmers and smallholders to interact with officers from the relevant government departments

and agencies to acquire knowledge and information.

"The festival aims to encourage the use of local pepper products and reduce our dependence on foreign pepper industries. At the same time, this programme promotes the wide usage of pepper products to spur growth of its downstream sector in the country," Mawan said.