



**LAPORAN LIPUTAN MEDIA HARIAN
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UKKMOA

UNIT KOMUNIKASI KORPORAT
KEMENTERIAN PERTANIAN DAN INDUSTRI MAKANAN
(UNTUK EDARAN DALAMAN MOA, JABATAN DAN AGENSI SAHAJA)

Enough food supplies for all in Johor



JOHOR BARU: Johor government has assured enough supply of food during the movement control order (MCO) due to Covid-19 pandemic.

State agriculture, agro-based and rural development committee chairman Datuk Samsolbari Jamali said consumers need not worry about food supply during the MCO.

"I want to stress that food supply such as vegetables, fish, chicken and meat will be available throughout the state.

"The public should not worry as Johor is the main supplier for vegetables, fruits, chicken, eggs and meat in the country," he said in a statement here.

Samsolbari also pointed out that fish supplies in Johor was enough to meet demand as fish breeding was ongoing and fishermen were going out to sea to fish.

He added that so far there were no fish-dumping cases by fishermen in Johor as claimed by some quarters.

He said, however, that there were some logistics issues over seafood movement due to MCO.

He urged suppliers to contact the Fisheries Development Authority of Malaysia (LKIM) to get relevant documents to resolve this issue.

"Until March 25, state Agriculture Department issued 212 confirmation of food chain activity letters and notices of operation of food supply chain premises.



"Johor hopes individuals involved will apply for the confirmation letter to make it easier for them in conducting agricultural activities," he added.

Samsolbari said the public could also get agricultural products at Pasar Tani Kekal which were operating as usual during the MCO.

"Under Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (Fama), we have 27 Agrobazaar Kedai Rakyat (AKR) and nine Agrobazaar Rakyat (ABR) throughout Johor," he added.

He said most Felda areas were still under control with oil palm harvesting going on as usual.

Samsolbari said the closure of a factory in Felda Adela due to Covid-19 had been overcome with oil palm being sent to another factory in Felda Semenchu to be processed.

"In areas affected by the pandemic, Felda has taken full responsibility for the welfare of settlers' families who were quarantined." Felda is monitoring the situation at their D'MART Felda shops to ensure enough supplies throughout MCO period.

"Each settler has also been given a RM500 limit per month to buy necessities at D'MART," he said.

Over concerns that farmers in the state were expected to suffer losses of up to RM1.5mil during the MCO due to poor sales and closure of markets, he said the Agriculture Department will work with Fama to find ways to boost sales for those affected.

He said the Malaysian Pineapple Industry Board (LPNM) was handling the large supply of pineapples produced by farmers in the state.

"Due to low demand and difficulty in marketing, LPNM has put in place measures for some 600,000 pineapples harvested and ensure these do not go to waste.

He said the measures included sending excess supply to other states.

TARIKH	MEDIA	RUANGAN	MUKA SURAT
2/4/2020	MALAY MAIL	ONLINE	

Think City proposes healthy food vouchers or rations, better food security amid Covid-19



KUALA LUMPUR, April 1 — The Malaysian government should take steps to reduce the country's reliance on imports for food, and should at the same time ensure Malaysians are able to keep a healthy diet with rations or vouchers for healthy food, urban regeneration outfit Think City has suggested.

In analysing the potential impact and risks of the Covid-19 pandemic on Malaysia, Think City pinpointed food security as a key area that the country's policymakers should look into.

Think City highlighted the challenge of ensuring access to stable, sufficient and healthy food supply at affordable prices, before listing out four risks and four mitigation strategies that can be applied.

One of the risks highlighted by Think City was the long-term health effects if there is "limited access" to fresh, nutritious food, coupled with increased consumption of processed, unhealthy foods, noting that this could lead to micronutrient deficiency and diet-related non-communicable diseases like diabetes.

The Malaysian government could respond to this by formulating "health-based food rationing or voucher scheme, for example redeemable for fruits and vegetables", Think City suggested as part of its March 27 32-page guide titled "Covid-19 Crisis: Preserving Lives and Livelihoods — A Guide for Malaysian Policymakers".



Think City said another risk is that there could be food shortages if Malaysians continue to hoard food, with estimates of 20 to 25 per cent increase in demand at stores amid changing consumer behaviour during the movement control order.

It cited as example the recent shortage of Gardenia bread loaves despite the company's factories operating at full and maximum production capacity. After having asked customers to only buy what they normally need, Gardenia later said it had increased its production even further at all its factories that operate round the clock to meet demand.

Think City also outlined the twin risks of possible disruption to local food production and disruption to food imports.

It said local production could be affected as livestock especially poultry is heavily dependent on imported animal feed, while food packaging shortages and regulations could cause bottlenecks, and ill employees could result in an estimated 30 per cent of staff loss at a time in the worst-case scenario.

As for imports, Think City said there could be a rise in import prices of food products such as wheat and beef that could affect consumption, while tighter border controls could affect the supply of fresh produce and also result in increased food waste.

In response to the various food risks that could affect Malaysia's food security, Think City also suggested these three measures to Malaysia's policymakers, including the development of a list of essential food items and strategically securing food supplies in anticipation of a continuation of the current situation for the next 12 to 18 months.

Think City said Malaysia could also create a centralised food planning and logistics system using currently unutilised warehouses and also employing people who recently lost their jobs, besides also planning to diversify and increase local food production for longer-term consumption while also reducing reliance on imports.

TARIKH	MEDIA	RUANGAN	MUKA SURAT
2/4/2020	DAILY EKSPRES	ONLINE	

Need for Sabah to procure own essentials: Junz



KOTA KINABALU: There is a need for Sabah to procure her own essentials, said State Agriculture and Food Industry Minister Datuk Junz Wong (pic).

"In times of crisis like this, Putrajaya needs to delegate to Sabah as we can better manage ourselves. I relayed this to my federal counterpart, Datuk Seri Dr Ronald Kiandee, for consideration," said Wong after highlighting the plight of Sabahans to the Federal Government's attention via a teleconference on Monday.

The teleconference was the first nationwide meeting chaired by newly-appointed Kiandee.

Wong also raised the need for Sabah to be able to resume Fama Pasar Tani operations nationwide, adding that the Pasar Tani will be operated under

strict procedures to avoid the spread of Covid-19, while at the same time maintain food security and sustain the food supply chain.

"The Pasar Tani will function as a centre for produce to be sold by farmers and purchased by consumers, especially in Tawau, Lahad Datu, Kinabatangan, Keningau, Ranau, Tuaran, Putatan, Tenom and Kota Marudu, etc," he said.

"We have to look at food security and continuity holistically. Small-time farmers and breeders produce and sell their produce periodically. If they are forced to close shop and do not survive this cycle, there won't be a second cycle because many of them won't be able to restart.

"So we need to plan ahead by helping farmers and breeders in case the Movement Control Order (MCO) is extended."

Wong said his ministry has the list of farmers and breeders who can work with Fama to collect and sell these produce.

"Produce throughout Sabah can then be picked up, placed at the Pasar Tani and then marketed to end consumers. These exercises will drastically reduce unnecessary movements as we are using only Fama's outfit under strict Covid-19 precaution supervision," he said.

He reiterated the need for Sabah to procure her own essentials and noted that Kiandee has taken the idea in good light.

"Through experience, buying face masks for example, we were made to wait a long time as some face masks are still stuck in the peninsula due to logistics problems. At the same time, the same face masks ordered directly from China have arrived," he said.

"So I see the need for Sabah to manage her own stockpile of essentials like rice, fertiliser and animal feed, especially during the MCO. These essentials are vital to ensure continuous production of vegetables and animals that we eat as food eventually," he said.

Junz also noted that during the meeting, it was agreed that traditional fishermen should be allowed to resume daily activities, as the federal Minister will liaise with the National Security Council to not restrict traditional fishermen activity during the MCO period.

He assured Sabahans that his ministry will be working closely with the federal to assist farmers, planters and breeders.

"Rest assured, myself and Kiandee will work together to help keep businesses afloat, especially those in the agriculture sector. We are committed to ensure the continuity of food supply chain for Sabahans."

"There is no need to panic. We have sufficient food and we are planning ahead," he said.

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Long-term food self-sufficiency plan needed – LDP

KOTA KINABALU: Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) deputy secretary David Ong has called on the government to think of a long-term food self-sufficiency plan to buffer from volatile world food markets supply and create job opportunities for those impacted by the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) crisis.

According to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry, he said Malaysia would have enough rice to last up to 2.5 months after Vietnam suspended its exports of rice amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Malaysia is highly dependent on import for food supplies. If major exporting countries like China, Vietnam, Thailand suspend agriculture trade with Malaysia due to coronavirus crisis, it will put our country in a very vulnerable

position".

Therefore, Ong said the government should come out with an urgent plan and policy to lower food import dependency and target Malaysia to become a food self-sufficiency nation in the long term.

"Malaysia produces 71 percent of the rice we need to be self-sufficient, fruits 66 percent, vegetables 40 percent and ruminants 29 percent.

"Moving forward, we must put food security on high priority to be resilient.

"The government must further ensure distribution of farm produce is accessible to local communities especially to those who are vulnerable and in isolation at an affordable price".

According to Malaysian Institute of Economic Research (MIER)

about 2.4 million jobs are expected to be lost in the impending economic and labour crisis created by the Covid-19 pandemic in the country.

"Many have lost their jobs due to coronavirus crisis, one way to help the unemployed is to recruit them and quickly retrain them to do agricultural work.

"The government should team up with private sectors, NGOs or agricultural industry experts to educate, and run farming skill courses so many can venture into agriculture".

"The government must protect agriculture industry, provide incentive or subsidy for new players and nurture homegrown production to become self-sufficient and not just leave food supplies to the mercy of global markets," Ong said.