



LAPORAN LIPUTAN MEDIA HARIAN
ISNIN 20 FEBRUARI 2023

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UKK MAFS

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

TARIKH	MEDIA	RUANGAN	MUKA SURAT
20/2/2023	UTUSAN MALAYSIA	DALAM NEGERI	7

Subsidi ayam, telur ditarik balik?

Oleh **FAHMI FAIZ**
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PETALING JAYA: Penternak ayam penelur percaya kerajaan tidak akan meneruskan pemberi subsidi kepada mereka dalam usaha menstabilkan pengeluaran bekalan tersebut.

Satu sumber mewakili sebuah ladang pengeluar telur di Lembah Klang mendedahkan, perkara itu semakin jelas apabila borang permohonan tuntutan subsidi dalam bentuk Google Form dalam laman web Jabatan Perkhidmatan Veterinar (JPV) sudah tiada.

Kata sumber, tindakan kerajaan yang tidak menetapkan dasar sama ada mahu meneruskan subsidi atau tidak, mengundang padah kerana ia menjejaskan operasi pengeluaran telur harian di ladang.

“Sepatutnya, kami mengeluarkan 600,000 sehingga 650,000 biji telur setiap hari. Tapi sebab tidak mampu menampung kos operasi terutama makanan ayam, kini kami cuma mampu menghasilkan 450,000 sehingga 500,000 biji saja telur sehari, menyusut hampir 30 peratus. Ini bukan saja di ladang kami, malah ladang-ladang syarikat lain pun sama,” katanya.

Bagaimanapun, setakat ini, kerajaan belum mengeluarkan kenyataan rasmi berhubung perkara itu.

Katanya, ‘kehilangan’ borang Google atau Google Form yang penternak perlu isi untuk permohonan subsidi itu disedari pada awal bukan ini ketika mereka mahu menghantar permohonan menuntut subsidi.

“Masalahnya, Google Form itu sudah tiada lagi, itulah ramai penternak bising, ada atau tidak subsidi. Kalau ada subsidi, cakaplah ada,” kata sumber di sini, semalam.

Kelmarin, Menteri Pertanian dan Keterjaminan Makanan (MAFS), Datuk Seri Mohamad Sabu berkata, kerajaan akan mengkaji semula keperluan pemberian subsidi kepada penternak ayam dan telur menjelang pertengahan tahun ini.

Beliau berkata, ini kerana sehingga kini, subsidi yang diberikan kepada penternak tersebut sudah mencecah RM1.8 bilion dan dijangka melebihi RM2 bilion menjelang Jun ini.

“Subsidi ini kita berikan sehingga Jun dan menjelang bulan itu kita akan buat kajian sama ada hendak diteruskan subsidi atau ada cara yang lain yang perlu dibuat,” katanya.

20/2/2023

UTUSAN
MALAYSIADALAM
NEGERI

10

Telur 50 sen sebiji selamanya?

Oleh FAHMI FAIZ

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PETALING JAYA: Harga telur ayam dijangka tidak akan turun di bawah 50 sen sebiji selamanya akibat masalah operasi di ladang-ladang telur yang berpunca daripada kegagalan polisi kerajaan dalam memastikan isu kekurangan bekalan diatasi.

Sumber industri yang dihubungi *Utusan Malaysia* mendedahkan, berdasarkan libat urus dengan Kementerian serta agensi yang terlibat, ada beberapa ladang telur di Malaysia sekarang ini berlumba-lumba memohon permit mengimport telur dari negara lain.

Menurutnya, permohonan mengimport telur itu dibuat kerana syarikat-syarikat tersebut mempunyai ladang telur di Vietnam dan mereka terdorong untuk membawa masuk telur dari ladang tersebut ke Malaysia susulan polisi kerajaan yang sebelum ini bersetuju membawa masuk telur import dari India.

Kata sumber, dengan kemasukan telur import, ditambah pula isu harga anak ayam serta dedak yang tinggi, pihak industri menjangkakan harga telur akan kekal pada kadar 50 sen sebiji dan



NEGARA dijangka bergantung kepada telur import jika kerajaan masih gagal menetapkan satu polisi yang jitu untuk membantu industri ternakan ayam berkembang.

tidak akan turun lagi.

"Selepas ini, harga telur secara purata akan kekal 50 sen sebiji di seluruh negara dan lama-kelamaan ia akan jadi normal. Rakyat pun sudah muak dengan harga telur yang tak turun-turun walaupun dah macam-macam dibuat.

"Akhirnya rakyat akan pakat reda dan beli saja. Maksudnya, harga telur memang sukar atau

katanya.

Dalam pada itu, sumber itu berkata, berdasarkan maklumat yang diterima, Kementerian Pertanian dan Keterjaminan Makanan dan Jabatan Perkhidmatan Veterinar (JPV) masih belum membuat ketetapan sama ada akan meneruskan subsidi ataupun mengapungkan harga ayam dan telur bagi menstabilkan industri.

"Namun, oleh kerana kawalan harga ayam dan telur masih diteruskan, jadi kita mohon agar subsidi juga diteruskan," katanya.

Sumber berkata, pihak industri sudah mencadangkan supaya kawalan harga ditamatkan 31 Disember tahun lepas. tetapi tidak diluluskan.

"Kita cadangkan supaya diteruskan subsidi secara dikurangkan sedikit demi sedikit, sampailah subsidi ditarik balik dan harga ayam dan telur dipungkan," katanya.

Sumber menambah, kerajaan sepatutnya mempunyai polisi yang jitu dan tidak berubah-ubah, kerana ia akan menjejaskan keyakinan para penternak sama ada mahu meluaskan saiz operasi atau sekadar bertahan dengan kapasiti pengeluaran sedia ada.

Headline	Perak `export` pork to KL-Sel, to ease shortage in supply		
MediaTitle	China Press		
Date	20 Feb 2023	Color	Black/white
Section	Nation	Circulation	127,822
Page No	A18	Readership	383,466
Language	Chinese	ArticleSize	204 cm ²
Journalist	N/A	AdValue	RM 2,701
Frequency	Daily	PR Value	RM 8,104



民、赖瑞林及马杰顺。泓谦（中），左起为钟志海、方志民、大马杂货商理事赠送纪念品给陈

（吉隆坡19日讯）农业及粮食安全部副部长陈泓谦指出，为舒缓雪隆猪肉短缺问题，霹雳州兽医局已同意，让健康的生猪有条件跨州输出至雪隆一带。

他说，该部上周三召见檳城、霹雳与雪州兽医局，还有生猪行业业者会谈，商议猪肉短缺的解决方案。

他说，最终霹雳州同意有条件开放让健康生猪跨州，雪州兽医局也同意霹雳州的健康生猪，运往雪州万挠的屠宰场，使雪隆区能维持稳定的猪肉供应。

“预料霹雳州兽医局将在下周发出正式通告。”

他也坦言，猪肉课题甚麻烦，尤其是农粮部必须严格把关，在有条件开放跨州后，非洲猪瘟不会从霹雳州传至雪隆一带。

“农粮部一方面要确保猪肉供应不会中断，另一方面也要确保其安全性。”

他昨晚出席马来西亚杂货商总会2023年新春联欢晚宴，这么指出。

舒緩豬肉短缺

霹生豬輸出雪隆

陈泓谦说，凡出现非洲猪瘟病例的州属，如当年人们遭遇新冠肺炎疫情一样，都会被禁止跨州。

此外，他也承诺会协助中总代表，安排与农业及食品安全部长莫哈末沙布会面，以针对粮食问题交流与讨论。

出席者包括马来西亚杂货商总会总会长方志民、马来西亚中华总商会（中总）总会长丹斯里卢成全、武吉免登国会议员方贵伦、洗都警区主任马永来助理总监、吉隆坡中华大会堂会长拿督斯里蔡志权、拉曼大学学院董事拿督斯里姚长禄、马来西亚杂货商总会署理会长兼森美兰杂货商公会会长钟志海、总务兼霹雳杂货行会长马杰顺、副会长兼马六甲杂货零售商公会会长赖瑞林、法律顾问陈柏雄律师及拿督许峻智律师等。

Headline	Deputy minister : Finance ministry agreed compensating to pig farm operators		
MediaTitle	Kwong Wah Yit Poh		
Date	20 Feb 2023	Color	Black/white
Section	Nation	Circulation	59,667
Page No	A1,A3	Readership	179,000
Language	Chinese	ArticleSize	370 cm ²
Journalist	N/A	AdValue	RM 1,738
Frequency	Daily	PR Value	RM 5,214



受非洲猪瘟影响槟猪农

副
农
长
：

财部同意赔偿

◆ A3版

Headline	Deputy minister : Finance ministry agreed compensating to pig farm operators		
MediaTitle	Kwong Wah Yit Poh		
Date	20 Feb 2023	Color	Black/white
Section	Nation	Circulation	59,667
Page No	A1,A3	Readership	179,000
Language	Chinese	ArticleSize	370 cm ²
Journalist	N/A	AdValue	RM 1,738
Frequency	Daily	PR Value	RM 5,214



兽医局官员向陈泓禧、曹观友及州议员汇报情况。

副农长:针对槟猪农诉求 财政部已同意赔偿 惟尚未发正式公函

(威南 19 日讯) 农业及粮食安全部副部长陈泓禧表示, 针对受非洲猪瘟疫情影响的槟州猪农提出赔偿诉求, 他已多次和财政部进行讨论, 而财政部基本上已同意, 只是尚未发出正式公函。

他希望猪农们耐心等待, 相信近期会有相关宣布。针对北马猪瘟疫情趋缓, 猪农要求放宽猪只管制条例, 陈泓禧表示由于涉及政策, 他将会把相关诉求带上部门会议讨论, 希望近期会有所决定。

他说, 现阶段还是保持原有的政策以应对非洲猪瘟, 他坦言这决定并不容易, 但必须要平衡各方, 确保粮食安全、消费者利益、业者的经济效益, 都不受影响。

陈泓禧周日联同槟州首长曹观友巡视城北平安村养猪场和与猪农对话, 以及巡视威南华都村非洲猪瘟行动中心后, 在记者会上这么说。

曹观友表示, 州内的非洲猪瘟发生至今, 有关猪农提出的诉求和解决方案等政策都涉及中央权限, 因此希望农业部有明确发出正式文告, 采说明一切。

他说, 州政府的权限是协助农场转换土地用途事宜, 不过这也必须考虑多方面因素, 而这事宜也需等待猪瘟疫情解决后才处理。

他说, 经过与业者代表针对非洲猪瘟疫情和未来方向等课题对话后, 副部长已获知并将带上部门讨论。

Headline	Deputy MAFS Minister: Perak live pigs allowed to be transported to Selangor, Kuala Lumpur		
MediaTitle	Nanyang Siang Pau		
Date	20 Feb 2023	Color	Black/white
Section	National	Circulation	27,667
Page No	A1	Readership	83,000
Language	Chinese	ArticleSize	127 cm ²
Journalist	N/A	AdValue	RM 962
Frequency	Daily	PR Value	RM 2,886



副农长：跨州解决供应短缺 霹生猪准运雪隆

(吉隆坡 19 日讯) 农业及粮食安全部副部长陈泓谦指出，为解决雪隆猪肉供应短缺问题，霹雳州兽医局已同意，让健康的生猪有条件跨州输入到雪隆区。

他说，该部上周三召见檳城、霹雳与雪州兽医局，还有生猪行业业者会谈，商议解决猪肉短缺的方案。

“最终霹雳州同意有条件放宽让健康生猪跨州，雪州兽医局也同意让该生猪运往雪州万挠屠宰场，借此缓和雪隆区猪肉的供应量。”

他昨晚出席马来西亚杂货商总会 2023 年新春联欢晚宴时表示，霹雳州

兽医局预计下周将发出正式通告。

严格把关防染猪瘟

他直言，猪肉课题甚麻烦，尤其是农业部必须严格把关，在有条件开放跨州后，非洲猪瘟不会从霹州传染到雪隆区。

“农业部一方面要确保猪肉供应不中断，另一方面也要确保安全。”

他说，凡出现非洲猪瘟病例的州属，如人们遭冠病疫情肆虐一样，都会被禁止跨州。

他也承诺会协助中总代表，安排与农业及食品安全部长莫哈末沙布会面，以针对粮食问题进行交流与讨论。

Headline	Chan urges pig farm operator wait patiently over compensation		
MediaTitle	Guang Ming Daily		
Date	20 Feb 2023	Color	Black/white
Section	News	Circulation	49,712
Page No	A6	Readership	149,136
Language	Chinese	ArticleSize	243 cm ²
Journalist	N/A	AdValue	RM 2,798
Frequency	Daily	PR Value	RM 8,395



允儘快賠償毀豬農場

陳泓縑促耐心等待

(威南19日讯)农业及粮食安全部副部长陈泓縑指出,该部已经和财政部进行多次商讨,并承诺将尽快完成发放赔款程序给因非洲猪瘟而必须销毁猪只的养猪场。

陈泓縑表示,赔款事项已经有定案,因此,他促请业者耐心等待,让该部和财政部做出正式宣布。

陈泓縑今日在槟州首席部长曹观友陪同下,到威北平安村巡视猪农场后在威南华都村聆听兽医局汇报后召开记者会说,根据现有政策,感染非洲猪瘟的农场必须在80天后才能恢复操作,在这之前,即使

农场内看似健康的猪只都必须销毁,不允许移动。

他表示,一些农友不能接受农场猪只呈阳的事实,质问当局为何不允许健康猪只移动?事实上,兽医局要销毁的不是猪只,而是非洲猪瘟病毒,确保瘟疫尽快结束。

1只猪染猪瘟封锁全农场

“根据现有的政策,一旦感染猪瘟的农场,不论任何理由都不允许移动“还健康”的猪只,全部一律销毁。”

针对威北农场指一个月没再出现新感染病例,农友要求当局尽快“解封”,陈泓縑表



■曹观友(左起)、陈泓縑及赛拉峇努巡视威北一间猪农场。

示,兽医局和农友的考虑角度不同,因为非洲猪瘟传染速度快,即使农场只有一只猪被感染,当局视整间农场皆被感染而封锁,不再有健康猪在这座农场出现。

另外,针对威北猪农要求晋入地方性流行病阶段,他坦言,这项要求目前仍然无法兑

现,因为病症并非涉及一个州属,而是全马各地。

“如果要进入地方性流行病阶段,必须从政策上做出改变,而我们部门在考量整体情况后,目前仍然依照原有的方针,去应对这病毒。”

(CSH/GN)

20/2/2023

HARIA
METRO

LOKAL

19

Najis haiwan ternakan punca Sungai Lereh berwarna hitam, busuk

Melaka: Pencemaran najis haiwan ternakan dipercayai menjadi punca Sungai Lereh di sini, bertukar warna menjadi hitam dan busuk.

Ahli Dewan Undangan Klebang, Datuk Lim Ban Hong yang meninjau sungai berkenaan semalam berkata, pihaknya sudah memaklumkan kepada Jabatan

Alam Sekitar Jabatan Alam Sekitar (Jas) negeri Melaka untuk melakukan siasatan susulan rungutan penduduk berhampiran.

Katanya, pihak JAS sudah mengambil spesimen air dan laporan awal mendapati pencemaran berpunca kawasan penternakan kambing dan lembu serta petak

sangkan ikan berdekatan. "Jas akan bekerjasama dengan Jabatan Perkhidmatan Veterinar (JPV) untuk menyiasat lebih lanjut sama ada sistem kumbahan atau pengerdalian kolam

Jas dan JPV akan siasat sama ada sistem kumbahan diguna ikut spesifikasi ditetapkan

takungan di kawasan kadang terbabit bagi mengenal pasti ia mengikut spesifikasi ditetapkan.

"Penduduk di sekitar kawasan Sungai Lereh juga mendakwa pencemaran sungai ber-

kenaan turut berlaku hampir setiap tiga bulan," katanya ketika ditemui selepas mesra rasmikan Drive Thru Recycling Centre (DTRC) Taman Bukit Rambai yang turut dihadiri Pengarah SWCorp Melaka Khairuladha Ab Mutalib di sini, semalam.

Lim turut menyeru Jas membuat pemantauan secara berkala di kawasan pantai.

ra berkala di sepanjang sungai berkenaan kerana terdapat aktiviti pertanian yang memerlukan sumber air bersih dari sungai itu.

Kelmarin, tular di aplikasi WhatsApp mengenai pence- maran di Sungai Lereh yang menyebabkan air sungai bertukar kehitaman dan berakhir di kawasan pantai.

Animal droppings polluting river in Melaka

By RSN MURALI
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MELAKA: Livestock waste is the main culprit behind the contamination of Sungai Lereh here, says a state executive councillor.

Melaka housing, local government and environment committee chairman Datuk Zaidi Attan said an initial investigation by the state Environment Department (DOE) found that cow and goat droppings from a nearby farm had polluted the river.

"We have notified the relevant authorities to carry out a further probe into the matter and take serious action against those responsible," he said yesterday.

Earlier, Klebang assemblyman Datuk Lim Ban Hong said the DOE made the findings after taking samples from the river following complaints from the public.

The department will work closely with the state's Veterinary Services Department to determine if the animal waste had been released into the river according to the standard operating procedure, he added.

"The DOE will further investigate whether the livestock waste or the operation of the retention pond in the farming site conforms to specifications," he said.

Lim said Sungai Lereh pollution was not new to residents, who claimed that it happens a few times a year.

He said he had requested the DOE to conduct regular monitoring along the river because there were agricultural activities in the area, which require a clean water source.

Recently, residents living nearby complained about a stench from the river due to pollution.

One of them, who stays at a high-rise building, also shared pictures that showed the severity of the contamination.



Darkish canal:

Sungai Lereh waterway has changed into a dark colour due to the pollution.

— Picture taken by a resident, Andrea Geni Finta

20/2/2023

BERITA
HARIAN

NASIONAL

20

Sisa kumbahan ternakan cemari Sungai Lereh

JAS diminta pantau aktiviti ternak lembu, kambing elak jejas sistem pengairan

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Melaka: Pencemaran Sungai Lereh yang berlaku kelmarin dipercayai berpunca daripada pem-buangan sisa kumbahan aktiviti penternakan lembu dan kambing.

Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri (ADUN) Kelebang, Dartik Lim Ban Hong, berkata ia hasil siasatan awal Jabatan Alam Sekitar (JAS) Melaka yang mengambil sampel air sungai berkenaan, selepas menerima aduan daripada penduduk setempat.

Menurutnya, JAS akan bekerjasama dengan Jabatan Perkhidmatan Veterinar (JPV) untuk menyiasat lebih lanjut sama ada sistem kumbahan atau pengendalian kolam takungan di kawasan kandang terabit bagi mengenal pasti ia mengikut spesifikasi ditetapkan atau tidak.

"Penduduk di sekitar kawasan Sungai Lereh juga mendakwa per-



Ban Hong meninjau keadaan air Sungai Lereh yang bertukar-kehitan akibat pencemaran. (Foto Nazri Abu Bakar/BH)

Air bertukar hitam

Menurutnya, beliau sudah meminta JAS dan pihak berkaitan untuk memantau isu terabit kerana sungai berperanan penting dalam laluan justeru pematanaan menjaga aktiviti pertanian sekali mengalah ia berulang.

Kelmarin, tular di aplikasi

WhatsApp mengenai pencema-



Pencemaran Sungai Lereh yang berlaku semalam dipercayai berpunca daripada pembuangan sisa kumbahan aktiviti penternakan lembu dan kambing. (Foto BERNAMA)

mendapati air kehitaman semalam kini sedikit pulih dengan penduduk juga memaklumkan kejadian terakhir kira-kira tiga bulan lalu justeru pematanaan berkata oleh JAS penting untuk mengelak ia berulang.

Kelmarin, tular di aplikasi WhatsApp mengenai pencemaran di Sungai Lereh yang menyebabkan air sungai bertukar warna kehitaman dan berakhir di kawasan pantau.

Penduduk Hairi Md Nor, 73, berkata dia yang tinggal berhampiran sungai berkenaan tidak tahan dengan bau busuk yang mengganggu mereka.

Sabah Fisheries Dept issues red tide warning

Public advised not to consume shellfish from Kota Kinabalu and Tuaran waters

KOTA KINABALU: The Sabah Fisheries Department has advised the public not to consume shellfish from Kota Kinabalu and Tuaran waters after a red tide was detected near Sepanggar Island last Friday that could last up to a week.

Department director Azhar Kassim said its Biosecurity Department found *pyrodinium bahamense* and *margalefidinium polykrikoides* cells in one litre of samples that exceeded dangerous levels.

"The cells spread fast and have reached Sutura Harbour and the Jesselton Jetty waters, Likas Bay and Gaya islands with the highest reading being near the Sabah International Convention Centre."

A red tide is composed of harmful blooms or

algae that could be fatal to marine life and lead to human intoxication or death, Bernama reported.

Azhar said densities of more than 2,000 *margalefidinium polykrikoides* cells per litre pose a danger to fish as they can latch onto the gills and suffocate the animal.

"The *pyrodinium bahamense* is dangerous when it exceeds 800 cells per litre.

"They can live inside shellfish and cause severe food poisoning. Symptoms include headaches, nausea and excruciating stomach pain," he said, adding that those who have ingested shellfish and are experiencing these symptoms are advised to seek immediate medical attention.

The Labuan Fisheries Department has reminded people on the duty-free island to avoid consuming shellfish from mainland Sabah with immediate effect.

Its director Faizal Ibrahim Suhaili said this follows the detection of the red tide phenomenon near Sepanggar waters.

"We will strictly monitor the inflow of shellfish from Sabah at our ferry terminals, to

prevent cases of paralytic shellfish poisoning.

"As the Sabah Fisheries Department has issued a red tide warning, it will apply to Labuan as well."

Faizal said people who eat red tide contaminated seafood could get paralytic shellfish poisoning, which could be life threatening, adding that symptoms, which include a tingling, or burning sensation, numbness, drowsiness and respiratory paralysis can manifest within two hours of consumption.

"Red tide blooms can last for anywhere from just a few days to a few months and conditions can change daily due to wind and wave conditions, onshore winds normally bring it closer to the shore and offshore winds drive it out to sea.

"Do not eat molluscs - clams or oysters - taken from red tide waters, as they contain toxins that can cause severe food poisoning."

In April 2015, Labuan reported two cases of paralytic shellfish poisoning, involving fishermen from Kampung Sungai Miri, following a red tide in the waters off the island.

Headline	Sabah fisheries dept warns public not to consume shellfish due to red tide near Sepanggar		
MediaTitle	Borneo Post (Kuching)		
Date	20 Feb 2023	Color	Black/white
Section	Home	Circulation	60,767
Page No	2	Readership	182,301
Language	English	ArticleSize	198 cm ²
Journalist	Bernama	AdValue	RM 1,350
Frequency	Daily (EM)	PR Value	RM 4,050



Sabah

Sabah fisheries dept warns public not to consume shellfish due to red tide near Sepanggar Island

KOTA KINABALU: The Sabah Fisheries Department (SFD) has advised the public not to consume shellfish from Kota Kinabalu and Tuaran waters after a red tide was detected near Sepanggar Island on Friday that could last up to a week.

SFD director Azhar Kassim said their Biosecurity Department found pyrodinium bahamense and margalefidinium polykrikoides cells in one litre of samples to exceed dangerous levels.

"The cells spread fast and have reached Sutera Harbour and the Jesselton Jetty waters, Likas Bay and Gaya islands with the highest reading being near the Sabah International Convention Centre," he said when contacted yesterday.

A red tide is composed of harmful blooms or algae that could cause mass mortalities of marine life and lead to human intoxication or even death.

Azhar said more than 2,000 margalefidinium polykrikoides cells in a litre poses danger to fish by latching on their gills and suffocating them.

"It's the pyrodinium bahamense that is dangerous when it exceeds 800 cells per litre. They can live inside shellfish and cause severe food poisoning.

Symptoms include headache, nausea and excruciating stomach pain," he said, adding that those who have ingested shellfish and are experiencing these symptoms are advised to seek immediate medical attention.

Meanwhile, the Labuan Fisheries Department has reminded the people on the island to avoid consuming shellfish from mainland Sabah

with immediate effect.

Its director Faizal Ibrahim Suhaili said the department will strictly monitor the inflow of shellfish from Sabah at Labuan ferry terminals to prevent cases of paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP).

"As the SFD has issued a warning of red tide, this applies in Labuan as well, as Labuan waters is linked to Sabah waters," he told Bernama.

He said paralytic shellfish poisoning is a syndrome that people could develop if they eat seafood contaminated by red tide.

PSP can be life threatening and often shows itself within two hours of consumption and symptoms include tingling; a burning sensation; numbness; drowsiness and respiratory paralysis.

"Red tide blooms can last days, weeks, or months and can also change daily due to wind conditions and water currents... onshore winds normally bring it near the shore and offshore winds drive it out to sea.

"Do not eat molluscs (clams or oysters) taken from red tide waters, as they contain toxins that cause food poisoning," he said.

Labuan in April 2015 had reported two cases of paralytic shellfish poisoning involving two local fishermen from Kampung Sungai Miri.

Red tide is named after the reddish colour that toxic plankton produces and certain marine creatures that feed on the contaminated plankton had caused deaths in Sabah in the early 1980s. — Bernama

CLIMATE CHANGE

VEGGIE PRICES RISING DUE TO HEAVY RAINS

However, Fama expects prices to drop within a month or two

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THE country's continuous wet weather has contributed to the increase in vegetable prices, said farmers' associations and consumer rights groups.

Kuala Langat Area Farmers Organisation chairman Dr Abdul Razak Khasbullah said the change in climate and uncertain weather had badly affected farmers' vegetable production.

"However, the demand keeps increasing, leading to the increase in price."

He said natural disasters caused by climate change, such as floods, had highly impacted farmers' production costs due to farm services and maintenance.

Razak said this included the input cost such as seed, fertiliser and agrochemical items used to help in production, which had affected farmers' profit and working capital.

"It would take at least around six months for a farm to reach a full cycle and produce vegetables when it is hit by the flood.

"This is also the reason why many farmers gave up and we have to outsource the production."

Previously, the *New Straits Times* (NST) reported that prices of several vegetables had skyrocketed by more than 160 per cent.

Based on a list provided by the Consumers Association of Penang, the price of lady's fingers had gone up from RM6 per kilogramme last month to RM16 this month.

Similarly, long beans had doubled in price from RM6 per kg to RM12, tomatoes from RM4.50 per kg to RM10 and eggplants from RM7 per kg to RM12.

At the same time, the price comparison done by the NST yesterday on a local market in Kuala Lumpur and Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry's price-checker website also revealed that several prices of vegetables had nearly doubled this month.

This included red chilli prices,

which had gone up from RM12 per kg to RM22, tomatoes from RM6 to RM9.80 and eggplants from RM11 to RM19.67.

However, Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (Fama) had said the prices of vegetables were likely to see a drop within the next month or two following numerous efforts taken by the agency.

Its chairman, Datuk Mohd Fasih Mohd Fakeh, said the prices of vegetables were expected to stabilise soon.

He said Fama was working with the Agriculture and Food Industries Ministry on the matter.

Following this, Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations secretary-general Datuk Dr Paul Selvaraj said it was important for Malaysia to stabilise its food production to reduce the cost of essential food such as vegetables.

He added that the government's underinvestment in agriculture had also contributed to the increase in vegetable prices.

"Only 12 per cent of our agricultural land is used for food production, while the remaining is used for cash crops. Hence, this is why our food production is not sufficient and we need to import.

"(And) when there is an issue with the source country, whether it is a conflict or climate change, the production will go down and supply will be limited.

"Therefore, we need to increase our food production so our self-sufficiency rate (also) increases."

He added that monopoly practices and price distortion along the supply chain were also among the reasons for the increase in vegetable prices.

"This is why in terms of the policy, we need to focus on food production and a free market supply chain to stabilise the prices and reduce food import.

"Hence, we need to look at agriculture as a critical part of our community wellbeing because food is essential and this is where policy, regulation and removal of all kinds of barriers are crucial to ensure good food production."