

# PM: Rear other livestock, too

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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia needs to venture into commercial farming of other livestock for food self-sufficiency, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

The Prime Minister said Malaysia should depart from traditional commercial farming and instead venture into rearing of deer, rabbit and other crossbreed livestock.

"We have the technology and opportunities for commercial livestock farming so that we can produce more food not only for local supply but for export as well," he said when launching the Veterinary Services Department centenary celebrations here.

He said Malaysia had plans to co-operate with Indonesia and Thailand in commercial livestock farming.

"If we do not have enough land for commercial farming, we can invest in the other two countries by offering our technology. We can have joint ventures with them," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said

the farming sector would continue to play an important role.

He reminded local farmers to modernise their methods to enable them to compete in the open market.

"Competitiveness is the best weapon in an open market. This means farmers should be more daring to accept new technologies and willing to make more investments," he said.

Veterinary Services director-general Tan Sri Dr Ahmad Mustaffa Babjee said the department had notched a number of successes including eradication and control of animal diseases and increased animal production.

Dr Ahmad Mustaffa also said the animal industry had turned into a billion-ringgit business.

Later, Dr Mahathir launched commemorative stamps of the department's centenary celebration as well as a book entitled *History, Development and Prospects of the Animal Industry and Veterinary Services in Malaysia*.