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Cotswolds-style farms will also be big tourist draw

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ALOR STAR, Wed. - The proposed experimental modern farm project in Kedah will be a major revenue earner for the State as it will also be a tourist attraction.

Menteri Besar Tan Sri Sanusi Junid who described the project as "beautiful and useful," said it would be the start of better things for the farmers.

"It will expose Malaysian farmers to modern farming methods and how they can be used to increase productivity," he said after the State Exco meeting at Wisma Darulaman today.

Expressing his gratitude to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for selecting Kedah, Sanusi said the State Government had identified several sites in Padang Terap, Kubang Pasu, Sik and Baling for the project.

"We have identified several sites in the four districts ... the land belongs to the State Government. I would like to say beforehand that the people should not be unduly worried about land acquisition for the farm," he said.

It was reported that Dr Mahathir, impressed by farming villages in the Cotswolds, England, wanted similar farms introduced in Malaysia.

He wanted modern farming techniques to replace the uneconomical single-crop farming methods widely practised by Malaysian farmers.

Dr Mahathir also announced that the Government was looking for a suitable plot of land, about 4,000ha, in Kedah to set up an experimental farm with the assistance of experts from the Cotswold Agricultural College.

He had said the Government wanted to transform farms in the country into large, modern concerns.

Dr Mahathir said farming methods in England were so advanced that an 8,000-acre farm could be managed by only eight workers.

Meanwhile, State Agriculture Committee chairman Ahmad Lebai Sudin said two experts from the college had visited Kedah and studied the proposed sites.

He said the experts were expected to decide on the most suitable site by December.

"Among the things they examined were the localities, soil conditions and the most suitable crops which could be planted here," he said.

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