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CHINESSE CHAMBER-AGRICULTURE

CHINESE CHAMBERS PREPARE MEMO TO SEEK IMPROVED AGRICULTURE INCENTIVES

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 14 (Bernama) -- A memorandum seeking for better incentives for the agriculture sector is being initiated by the Association of Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry Malaysia and the Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Kuala Lumpur & Selangor.

The associations will holding a brainstorming session and survey among agriculture practitioners to decide on the various incentives to be suggested through the memorandum.

The memorandum is likely to be ready for submission to the ministry of agriculture and National Economic Consultative Council (NECC) by early next year, said chairman for the agriculture committee, Kerk Loong Sing, at a press conference here today.

He said the current incentives available were not adequate to spur further growth for the country's agriculture sector.

"In the past this is the area (agriculture) we have ignored. So this is the area we must pay attention to in future," he said.

Kerk also said existing agriculture incentives needed to be improved in order to achieve Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's vision to turn the country into a food producer.

Currently, Malaysia's imported food bill stood at RM10 billion annually, he said.

Kerk, who is also leading the brainstorming session, said the sessions will be held on Oct 23 and Oct 24 in Genting Highlands involving some 20 agriculture practitioners.

Among areas that would be focused on will include that of smallholders of vegetables, fruits, livestock, aquaculture and flowers.

He said smallholders faced the most challenges including land problems, financing, marketing and distribution and labour.

Kerk said the memorandum would also include some foreign views on developing the sector. -- BERNAMA

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