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SMALLHOLDERS ASKED TO DIVERSIFY

JOHOR BAHRU, Sept 24 (Bernama) -- Farmers and smallholders were today urged to diversify their crops in response to the government's call to increase food production in the country.

National Association of Smallholders (Nash) president Datuk Ahmad Arshad said the farmers had concentrated on rubber and palm oil all this while.

"We want them to extend their cultivation to vegetables and flowers and to rear livestock besides continuing with their downstream activities," he told Bernama, here.

He was asked to comment on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir's statement on Wednesday that his next vision was for Malaysia to develop its agricultural sector to become a major food producer and exporter.

Ahmad said Nash welcomed the country's new vision as the agricultural sector was far behind the other sectors in terms of development.

"I believe that the two million-odd smallholders can contribute effectively to developing the agricultural sector if they are prepared to change their attitude and work hard at farming," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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