
Mahathir: Develop mixed farming skills

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Some universities

offering degree courses

By WSNA YUSOP

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon: The Prime Minister has stressed the need to develop skills and expertise in mixed farming which can bring bigger benefit in the long-run.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said mixed farming and crop rotation must be done on a large-scale basis involving farms with considerable sizes.

"Our problem now is that we are not skillful in mixed farming," he said.

However, he noted that some local universities are now offering degree courses in mixed farm management.

"This is a good sign. I have contacted several institutions in England to help us with this new approach. Although it would be expensive, we will still consider it for the long-term benefit," he said.

Mahathir said this in his keynote address at the opening of a seminar on investment opportunities in the

agricultural sector organised by the Agriculture Ministry near here today

In his speech, he also stressed the importance of learning the crop-rotation skill **practised** by farmers in some foreign countries.

Unlike in Malaysia, the agricultural production overseas is more market-driven, he said, adding that: "We are also capable of producing quality fruits and vegetables."

He also urged the private sector to **commercialise** the findings of researches conducted by the Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute.

Mahathir also reminded food producers to make their products more attractive by **labelling** them properly and **categorising them** according to quality

He said local fruits in the markets are always dumped in baskets while imported fruits are packed nicely

He also proposed that the

private sector consider **rearing** cattle on palm-oil estate, similar to what the government is doing now through Felda.

To date, there **are** about 136,666 head of cattle in the

government-owned palm-oil estates, he said, adding that it is a very efficient way of recycling since cow-dung makes good manure.

►See also **SunBiz**, Pg 4