

05/04/2001

## Revitalising farming sector

Jothi Jeyasingam

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - The Government has outlined a four-plus-one thrust to revitalise the agriculture sector and increase its contribution to wealth creation and economic growth.

Agriculture Minister Datuk Mohd Effendi Norwawi said emphasis will be placed on food production through greater participation of the private sector in modern and large-scale farming.

The ministry will focus on attracting private sector investments by providing enabling factors to encourage participation, sourcing for technology transfer, devising effective communication strategies and increasing overall competitiveness.

To attract investment, the ministry will hold nationwide roadshows beginning in Sarawak on April 27, and hopes to form strategic alliances with companies through its new business development centre to be launched in May.

The ministry seeks to create a conducive investment climate by giving incentives like tax exemptions, encouraging the use of abandoned lands, and providing insurance schemes.

He said technology transfer, research and development programmes will be carried out to boost the output of the various commodities, besides strategic collaborations with the private sector.

In coming up with effective communication strategies, he said the ministry will highlight success stories of collaborations and source for takers through investment seminars.

He said agriculture is to be the third engine of growth after manufacturing and services, as stated in the Third Outline Perspective Plan (OPP3) tabled by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in Parliament yesterday.