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Aman Agropreneurs to franchise Meat Shop outlets

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AMAN Agropreneurs Sdn Bhd, the operators of Kedah Halal Food Hub (KHFH), will franchise 100 of its Meat Shop outlets throughout the country by next year, managing director Datuk Shazryl Eskay said.

"The outlets will be managed fully by KHFH. Managers of the outlets have to only look into the sales aspect and the day-to-day running of the shop," he said.

From the company's daily sales projection, an outlet manager can see net profits of up to RM1,000, said Shazryl.

Aman Agropreneurs will procure financing for the outlets and see to the repayment of the loans as well as supply the stock and train the staff.

The company's sophisticated online stock monitoring system, meanwhile, will provide the main office with daily information of the various outlets' accounts and stock supply.

"We are not shutting down the businesses of small-time traders. We are asking them to participate in the franchise," he told a group of journalists at the KHFH in Kompleks Paya Pahlawan, Kedah.

"The Meat Shop will be equipped with air-conditioners and built-in chillers and freezers for fresh and frozen meat, while at the same time provide a clean environment," he said.

The franchise system also falls in line with the State Government's Kedah Maju 2010 Action Plan of achieving developed status by 2010.

Aman Agropreneurs will be setting up the first Meat Shop in Alor Star next month in time for the Ramadhan fasting month.

The shop, a joint venture between Aman Agropreneurs and the Kedah Government, will be followed by 30 other shops in Kedah, Penang, Perak and Kuala Lumpur.

Besides fresh and frozen halal meat, the specialty store will also sell other products which are used in the preparation of local dishes.

Shazryl said the shop will also have "korban" and "akikah" packages.

Modelled after butcher shops in the US, Australia and New Zealand, the Meat Shop will also have 30 chiller trucks which will move around housing estates in Kedah selling its products directly to its consumers.

The RM25 million complex in Paya Pahlawan was built in 1997. However, it was abandoned for three-and-a-half years.

Last year, Shazryl and his wife, Aman Agropreneurs executive director To' Puan Ramzah Kassim, was approached by the State Government to take over the management of the complex.

Famed with owning the largest cattle farm in Naka, which is 45 minutes from Alor Star, the couple spent about RM1 million to commission the once white elephant into a facility which aims to capture the global halal food market, currently estimated at RM200 billion.

In 2005, the global halal market is estimated to be US\$445 billion (US\$1 = RM3.80) and reach US\$578 billion by 2010.

The Asean market alone, with a Muslim population of 261 million, will command about US\$46 billion of the global halal food market in 2005 and about US\$50 billion by 2010.

"Paya Pahlawan, although equipped with the best facilities, was a failure before because there was no constant supply of cattle," the businessman-cum-farmer said.

The couple has since then acquired a 30 per cent stake in two abattoirs in India for a total of RM10 million, and has joint ventures with farms in

Myanmar, Thailand and Australia thus securing the supply of halal meat and cattle, and indirectly controlling the prices of these products.

The abattoirs in India produce 30 per cent of the supply of buffalo meat for the country, while the farms in Myanmar, Thailand and Australia deliver 70,000 heads of live animals.

"In a sense, we have a glut here so we can control the price," he said adding that should anything happen the company has a stockpile of one months' meat supply for the country.

Shazryl, the recipient of last year's Most Innovative Agropreneur award from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, said the 14.4ha complex stores the largest abattoir and cold storage facilities in Malaysia.

"The cold storage, which has six sets of freezers, can hold up to 1,500 tonnes of frozen meat at one time while the abattoir can slaughter up to 500 cattles per eight-hour shift," Shazryl said.

On the company's future plans, Shazryl said Aman Agropreneurs will start exporting frozen local flavours such as karipap, pau, satay, barbeque meat, burger, nuggets and sausage especially to Muslim countries.