

**Government Wants To Boost Farmers' Income Via Greenhouse Farming**  
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**From Nurul Hanis Izmir**

GEORGETOWN, Feb 23 (Bernama) -- The government wants to help raise the income of farmers through greenhouse farming with the use of advanced and innovative technologies, said Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, Tan Sri Nor Mohamed Yakcop.

He said even with a limited land area, the use of proper scientific methods could reap high returns for farmers.

"By adapting expertise from advanced countries such as Japan, we will be able to harvest agriculture produce and products of the same quality as enjoyed by the advanced countries," he said, following a working visit to the Greenhouse Project here today organised by the Northern Corridor Implementation Authority (NCIA).

The project had been allocated RM85 million. A total of 25 units of greenhouses would be built with their operations expected to start this June.

Apart from Japan, the greenhouse project has received the support of France, Nor Mohamed said.

Under the project, a 65.2 hectare land area in Ara Kuda will be planted with rock melon, Japanese pumpkin, peas and salad leaves among others.

These vegetables had been chosen based on the high demand for them both in the local and export markets, besides the high prices they can fetch.

Apart from catering to the domestic markets, the agriculture produce would be also exported to Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan and Dubai.

NCIA Chief Executive, Datuk Redza Rafiq said the programme is also expected to offer 80 employment opportunities to 30 contract farmers with each contractor standing to gain RM5,000 in monthly income.

The greenhouse project is the first such project being undertaken in the Northern Corridor Economic Region with the agriculture sector set to be among key areas that will help establish the northern region as a modern food production zone.

"Indirectly, it will raise the standard of living particularly for farmers in the region," he said.

The NCIA has also received the support of a private sector company, JPB Asia Pacific, on the project.

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