

**Farmers Need New Technology To Dominate World Market - Najib
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SERDANG, Nov 22 (Bernama) -- Farmers in the country must make changes by using new technology and innovations to raise production and move towards dominating part of the global food supply chain, said Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

The Prime Minister said he believed Malaysia was capable of playing a major role in global agriculture if the changes could be achieved as had been done by several countries including Holland.

"Holland is about the same size as the state of Pahang but could become the second largest producer of food, flowers and agricultural produce in the world.

"It's not because of the size of the country, but because they are skilled in using technology, are innovative and capable of dominating the global food chain," he said when opening the Malaysian Agricultural, Horticultural and Agro-Tourism (MAHA) Exhibition 2014, at the Malaysian Agricultural Expo Park Serdang (Maeps), here Saturday.

Also present were the prime minister's wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor and Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob.

MAHA 2014, with the theme 'Agrotechnology - Catalyst for Transformation', will be held for 11 days beginning Nov 20 to 30 and is participated by 1,000 entrepreneurs in the agrofood, horticulture and agro-tourism industries from within and outside the countries.

Najib said the theme chosen was most suited to the present situation as the use of technology and innovation was key in facing the challenge to global food supply security.

"The world is most sensitive on issues of food supply security with the world leaders emphasising on the importance of each country focusing on formulating policies that would ensure that every country has adequate food supply," he said.

According to him, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations (UN) had reported that by the year 2050, the world population would increase to 9.6 billion compared with 7.2 billion currently, and if global food production could not be increased to 60 per cent of the total produced currently, the world would be facing starvation.

Furthermore, Najib did not want the young generation to perceive the agricultural sector as something that was dirty and yielding low income because the reality was that the sector had the potentials to churn out lucrative returns if production could be extended to supply the global market.

"The younger generation now prefer to work in the supermarkets or fast food restaurants

compared to farming because they can work in air-conditioned environment. This perception must be changed.

"I hope more people will be successful in the field of agriculture and open up new opportunities to the others," he added.

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