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Participants attending the talk on MyGAP and myOrganic Certification Schemes.

88 farms in Sabah with myGAP certification

Tawau: Institute of Science and Management (ISM), Tawau, collaborated with the Department of Agriculture for the first time in organizing a public talk on MyGAP & MyOrganic Certification Scheme here recently.

It was conducted by Nazih Fikriandi Kaliwon, an Agriculture Officer from the Department of Agriculture's Extension Section in Tuaran.

According to the organizing chairperson, H. Carol Ahkui, the main purpose of this talk was to promote sustainable and good agricultural practices among the public, especially farmers.

"It is also to spread awareness of food safety as many of our food today are heavily contaminated with pesticides. It is a basic right of customers to know where their source of food comes from," she said.

Apart from that, she said it was also to complement the 'Sustainable Farming' subject for ISM's students of Diploma in Agribusiness Management.

Meanwhile, during his talk, Nazih explained the benefits of good agricultural practice, which include producing healthy and quality food, reducing the negative impacts to the environment, assuring worker's health and welfare, and increasing agriculture yield.

"All of these thus allow farmers to compete in the local and international market. As of November 2017, there are 88 farms in Sabah, which have been accredited with the MyGAP certification, and 19 farms with the myOrganic certification.

"Nine of the farms are based in Tawau," he added.

Nazih said that In order to fulfil demand for healthy food production, the Department of Agriculture urged the local conventional farmers to change to either organic farming or apply the good agricultural practices.

The implementation of standards in the agriculture activity, such as the Malaysian Good Agriculture Practices (myGAP) and myOrganic has resulted in improved quality of food products and provided consumers with a better choice of products.

The talk has also attracted students and teachers from SMK Jalan Apas, Tawau.

According to its teacher, Sjaola Bin Jahha, the talk has definitely benefited his students, as it was also a part of their syllabus.

They appreciate the experience and in-depth practical knowledge delivered by a practicing agriculture officer.

ISM hopes that such collaboration with Department of Agriculture will continue as an effort to educate more people about sustainable agriculture and continue reaching out to as many farmers as possible.