



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

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Media Statement

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CAP IS CONCERNED THAT KERIAN FARMERS LIVELIHOOD WILL BE AFFECTED DUE TO POOR SOIL CONDITION

The Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) urged the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry to study and take necessary action to resolve the problem of poor soil condition in the paddy fields in Kerian District, Perak. The soil here is liquefied, soft and mucky.

CAP is concerned that if the poor soil problem is not tackled immediately it may affect the income and livelihood of the farmers in this area and undermine the country's agriculture sector in the future.

CAP's survey found that several paddy-growing areas in the Kerian district were seriously affected and had resulted in farmers facing difficulty to harvest their crop.

CAP views that the poor soil condition is not necessarily due to high frequency of rainfall but it is also likely to be affected by excessive use of pesticides and chemical fertilisers, the practice of direct seeding, the use of heavy machinery and imperfect and ineffective irrigation and drainage systems.

Overuse of highly toxic pesticides and chemical fertilisers may affect soil fertility and soil to become soft. This problem coupled with the direct seeding method that the farmers practise renders the paddy fields to be constantly waterlogged and never dry.

In addition, the use of heavy machinery for harvesting and ploughing also contribute to the problem of poor soil condition in the district. At the same time, the irrigation and drainage system that is not perfect and fail to function effectively have resulted in several paddy fields in the district to be always waterlogged.

CAP hopes that paddy fields under the Kerian/Sungai Manik Integrated Agriculture Development Area are given due attention by the Ministry as it is one of the major granary areas in Malaysia.

CAP proposes that modern technology that can affect the agriculture sector is reviewed and replaced with safer traditional practices that are environment friendly and do not affect the activities and livelihood of farmers.

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President

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