



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

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Media Statement

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CAP RAISES CONCERN AS RICE YIELD DECLINES

The Penang Consumers' Association (CAP) urges the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (KPKM) to take immediate action to overcome the problems faced by paddy farmers in Kemubu Agricultural Development Board (KADA) to boost their income and the country's rice production.

Besides infrastructure being one of the causes of the decline in rice yields in KADA, the depletion of rice paddy land due to the implementation of development projects and other problems such as the threat of floods, droughts, pest attacks, as well as loose rice paddy soil are also contributory factors.

Although the rice yield in the area exceeded the national average yield of 4.1 metric tons per hectare, KADA still lags behind Selangor's state yield of 4.32 metric tons; the Muda Agricultural Development Authority (MADA), 4.24 metric tons; and Penang, 5.05 metric tons per hectare.

The imperfect irrigation system and ineffective functioning of it have caused several paddy fields in KADA to face imminent threat. Many rice plants are stunted in growth and destroyed due to episodes of drought and floods. In May 2023, 7,800 hectares of rice crops in this area were affected due to the hot weather in Kelantan. And in December of the same year, KADA suffered a RM17 million loss due to the destruction of rice plants inundated by flood waters.

In 2022, due to problems with the drainage system, 1,000 hectares of paddy land, became loose and KADA lost 4,200 metric tons of rice. This incident is of great concern to CAP and if it is not dealt with immediately, more paddy land will not be able to be cultivated and will be abandoned.

Therefore, in order to save the future source of income and livelihood of 7,648 paddy farmers and maintain the 25,149 hectares of paddy fields in KADA, CAP hopes that KPKM will take immediate action on the causes of the problems. CAP also urges the departments and agencies involved to pay serious attention to the effects of pesticides and the usage of heavy machinery that could threaten the environment and affect paddy fields.

CAP believes that if the problems continue, not only will the KADA paddy farmers experience hardship, but the food supply for the people and the country's agricultural sector will also be affected.

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