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Adidas Kaweh petting a goat reared at **Ladang Care** in Chenderiang, near Tapah, yesterday. Pic by Muhaizan Yahya

Ladang Care teaches Orang Asli sustainable farming

CHENDERIANG: What started out as a shop selling herbs and handicraft in Kampar for a non-governmental organisation has branched out to farming to empower the Orang Asli community here.

Located on a 6ha old durian orchard, Ladang Care had trained more than 1,200 Orang Asli families since its inception in 2004.

Malaysian Care executive director Wong Young Soon said initially, the organisation helped the Orang Asli

by offering micro-financing and providing clean water supply and education to their children.

"Ladang Care is a training and research centre that teaches the community sustainable farming," he told the *New Straits Times*.

Wong said most of the Orang Asli planted cash crops, such as rubber and oil palm.

"With the uncertain prices of cash crops, they can supplement their income by planting other crops

and rearing animals."

Wong said the farm, bordered by Sungai Buhot and Sungai Cincin, was divided into zones.

"We have a goat pen where we rear 15 goats, mostly for training the Orang Asli, and a fish farm," he said, adding that Napier grass was cultivated for the goats.

Herbs, such as galangal and *misai kucing*, were cultivated while bees producing *kelulut* honey were also reared.

Participant Adidas Kaweh said through Ladang Care, he had learnt how to do business.

"I was taught how to save through Koperasi Sengoi Pribumi Perak Bhd," said the 36-year-old father of two.

Aside from teaching the community how to farm holistically, Adidas said they were also taught how to mix different species of rubber trees.

"The organisation teaches us how to fish rather than give us the fish."

Wong said the farm was in the midst of expanding, with two hostels under construction. Once completed, each could accommodate up to 50 people.

The organisation managed to raise RM1.8 million and needs another RM500,000.

For more information, visit malaysiancare.org or contact Joyce Thong at 03-90582102 ext 501/502 or send an email to joyce@malaysiancare.org.