



Wan Omar tends to his quails at his farm in Sungai Besar. The former mechanic says quail farming business changed his life for the better. — Picture by Zuraneeza Zulkifli

Life-changing venture for ex-mechanic

SUNGAI BESAR — Most people would not know of a modest farming industry here generating produce that has become a national delicacy.

Quails, the small-sized poultry are widely bred and sold in Sungai Besar and has become a main source of revenue for some locals.

Local breeder, Wan Omar Wan Ibrahim, 28, who changed his profession from a mechanic, has not looked back since he entered the trade four years ago.

“I used to be a full-time mechanic repairing cars and I was happy doing that,” he said.

“However, when my father passed away, I became the sole provider for the family, which consists of my 55-year-old mother and 17-year-old brother. They depended

on me and that is why I decided to raise quails for extra income.”

“They are relatively simple creatures to take care of as I only need to feed them twice a day and ensure they are healthy to be sold.

“They would take six weeks to reach maturity and 50 days to reach full egg production. I am not worried of running out of baby quails as they hatch within eight days, using an incubator,” he said.

Omar said quails are a delicacy in Sungai Besar, more so during the festive season.

“A quail could cost between RM2 to RM3 depending on the quality and grade, but the demand is significantly higher during festive seasons, especially Hari Raya.

“On a normal month, I could make up to RM2,000, but during Ramadhan, it could go up to RM4,000 to RM6,000,” he said.

Before his quails venture, Omar had contemplated to move to Kuala Lumpur to search for employment but realised there was much he could do in his hometown.

“When your whole family depended on you to put food on the table, you start weighing your options.

“I even called a few friends who set up workshops in the city to ask if they had any openings. Lucky for me, a friend introduced me to quail farming and I never looked back since.

“I realised that I needed to make the best out of the situation I was in instead of running away to solve my problems,” he said.