

'Produce own animal feed'



Quality products: Ahmad Shabery (centre) being briefed by chemist Nur Faizal Abdul Rahim (second from left) on the animal feed produced at the Charoen Pokhpand plant. — Bernama

Shabery: About time we grew maize

By ZAZALI MUSA
zaza@thestar.com.my

PASIR GUDANG: Malaysia will be able to save billions of ringgit in annual foreign exchange if the country is able to produce its own animal feed from maize for the livestock industry.

The country spent RM8.2bil last year importing maize compared to RM7.5bil in 2014, said Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek.

He added the livestock industry required about three million tonnes of maize annually which came from Argentina, Brazil and the United States.

Ahmad Shabery said Malaysia would need about 400,000ha of land to cultivate corn on large scale farming like what Thailand and the Philippines are doing now.

He added that the two countries were self-sufficient in term of producing animal feed with Thailand producing 80% maize while the Philippines at 90%.

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The weakening ringgit will force us to fork out more money to import the animal feed and that will cause prices of chicken to go up.

Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek

and that will cause prices of chicken to go up," said Ahmad Shabery at a press conference after visiting the RM120mil Charoen Pokhpand plant producing animal feed at the Tanjung Langsat industrial estate near here yesterday.

He added that the ministry would hold discussion with state governments to allocate state-owned land for the large scale corn farming as there were idle land especially in Sabah and Sarawak.

He said the ministry would also direct the relevant agencies under the ministry to start planning for the project.