

## 10,000 milking cows needed to meet local demand

**JOHOR BARU:** Malaysia needs an additional 10,000 dairy cattle to meet the demand for locally produced milk and to lessen dependence on imported milk.

Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek said his ministry was undertaking steps to meet the demand within the next two or three years.

He said Malaysia now had

between 20,000 and 30,000 dairy cows, which is not enough to sustain the demand for the product that has been increasing at 5% yearly.

“Currently, the national requirement for liquid milk is about 50 million litres per year and from the figure, 34 million litres were produced in Malaysia and the rest were imported from Australia and New Zealand.

“To lessen our dependence on imported milk, we need more than 10,000 more dairy cows,” he told reporters after visiting Allied Dairy Sdn Bhd processing factory at Larkin Industrial area here yesterday.

Ahmad Shabery said the ministry would allocate RM200mil for developing various infrastructure, including the construction of cages to increase the number of cows.

He said the Government had also introduced the Cluster Dairy project in 2011 to increase the output of local milk and to lessen dependence on imported dairy.

He said the programme was under the National Key Economic Areas (NKEA) agriculture sector, where three local milk producers have been appointed, which are Allied Dairy in Johor, Evergreen Livestock Sdn Bhd (Sabah) and

ADMC Dairy Farm Sdn Bhd (Kedah).

“Under the programme, the appointed companies received aid such as dairy cattle, milk tanks and solar water heaters, where the milk that has been produced will be bought back by the companies for processing,” he said.

Ahmad Shabery said the export value for milk and dairy products in 2013 stood at about RM957mil while import value was at RM3.27bil.