

Empowering Difabled Group through Preserved Chilli

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Students of Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) conducted a community empowerment programme to the disabled people of Sidomulyo village in Bantul regency in the development of chillies that are made into ground chilli and preserved chilli called as “Macamu”.

These students, Aldo Dimas Surya Putranto, Arum Dwi Rahayu, Dania Rima Diasti, Ermi Saraswati, and Novita Eka Safitri, are from Agricultural Technology Faculty.

Novita said her team collaborated with the disabled group to provide a job opportunity for them who normally find it difficult to get one. The students give them training in making chillies into products of economic value.

Novita said there were 30 families with disabled family members in Sidomulyo that had long cultivated chilli using polybags to be sold to collectors or for personal use. But during harvesting, often the price jumped down due to large harvest quantities or decreasing demand whilst they had to pay for maintenance as well.



"When the price of chilli jumps down, these people are at losses. So, if they can develop the product more, they can have additional income," said Novita on Friday (10/6)

It turned out that the people welcomed this Student Creativity Programme for Empowerment of the difabled. The programme started in March when they were given urban farming training. Next came training in post-harvesting processing related to sorting, grading, cleaning, and storing; also diversification and sterilisation practice.

"In the beginning of the programme, the residents processed the ground and preserved chilli. If this succeeds, we will develop it into other processing based on market interest," she said.

Aldo added the residents were also given packaging training as well as organisational, financial management and marketing training. At the end of the month there will be regular monitoring and evaluation.

"We would cooperate with souvenir shops around Bantul for the marketing of these products," he added.

They hoped the Macamu chilli can make the income of the difabled remain stable because the product can be made any time, not depending on market price. They also expect the product can be the typical product of the Sidomulyo village.

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