

## UGM Supports Local Food Development

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Creative Economy Agency (Bekraf) in cooperation with Universitas Gadjah Mada hosted *Bekraf Creative Lab (BCL): Indonesia Culinary Conference & Creative Expo* on Wednesday (4/10) in Koesnadi Hardjasoemantri Cultural Centre at UGM. The event that was attended by hundreds of participants from across Indonesia is organised to develop the Indonesian culinary potential that can contribute to the national economy.

“Creative culinary industry contributes significantly to the total revenues from tourism, which is 30%. So, sustaining original and excellent culinary tradition of Indonesia needs to be done as an effort to support the national economy,” said Rector of UGM, Prof. Ir. Panut Mulyono, M.Eng., D.Eng., in his remarks opening the event.

He revealed Indonesia had long been known as a country which is culinary rich with local and traditional foods across the country. But the entrance of foreign franchises to Indonesia had challenged the traditional foods to have a stronger presence among the society. Therefore, he said, UGM continued to support the development of local culinary business in order that it can be competitive and contribute to people’s welfare.

“UGM as a university of the people in its role always tries to fight for the welfare for the Indonesian



people, among others by fighting for better markets of the local products,” he said.

UGM also supports the development of culinary raw ingredients from local farming in the effort to achieve food independence, hence not depending on imports.

“UGM Faculty of Agricultural Technology has made products and proved that the food is originally Indonesian that has good nutrition, so we need to develop them more,” said Panut.

The BCL event promoted *soto* (clear broth with meat and vegetables) and coffee as potential products to be developed. These products are expected to add to the series of foods from Indonesia that are already recognised internationally like the *rendang* (spicy beef) that has been into world top 50 foods according to CNN surveys.

Secretary of Creative Economy Agency, Mesdin Cornelis Simarmata, explained that development of Indonesian creative business needs to synergise the elements of value chain, which are creation, production, distribution, consumption, and conservation, also engaging related groups, such as academics, business, community, government, and the media.

“A pentahelix cooperation became important because we cannot do it all alone. This is why we are here on this campus to build a close relation with the university as one of the bases of future creative economy development,” said Cornelis.

After the speech, the event showcased 34 menus of excellence from Indonesian provinces. Other events were seminars that explore aspects related to *soto* as Indonesian original menu and its potential to be world gastronomy, as well as seminars that explore the potential of local coffee, also cooking class.

One event that attracted huge response was old time and modern foods from various regions. The Festival was closed with a declaration of a culinary business forum (Forkomkulindo) to bring together culinary industry players in the country.

“Hopefully, the Festival can benefit the Indonesian culinary development in the future,” said Sri Rahayoe, event chairperson.

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