

Agriculture Decreasing, Attention Needed to Farmers

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Farmer profession has been abandoned by young generation because the income generated by farming is considered as not profitable. The government price of rice is felt as not benefiting the farmer. Hence, crop price and access to land management need to be considered well to increase the farmer's welfare.

This emerged in a seminar on Tuesday (15/8) at Faculty of Agricultural Technology UGM. Speakers include Chairman of Food and Agriculture Commission in National Research Agency, Dr. Ir. Haryono, M.Sc., Managing Director of The Nielsen Company Indonesia, Dr. Agus Nurudin, and Head of Centre for Innovation and Academic Studies, Dr. Hatma Suryatmaja.

Agus Nurudin said Indonesia with 260 million population has increasing food demands. On rice supplies, dependence on imported rice is bigger, because the national production cannot meet the amount of demands. In addition, farmer profession is abandoned. He said if consumers still want a cheap price means they kill the profession of farmer.

Based on the Nielsen Company research, said Agus, the growth of agriculture in Indonesia continues to decline compared to the growth of GDP. This decline is caused by the weak commitment of government in agriculture. "We seem not to have commitment, while land ownership needs to be

managed well,” he said.

He suggested government not to intervene rice business players just to have economical price. This price control without taking into account the commercial aspect is like finishing the farmer profession.

Another speaker, Dr. Ir. Haryono, M.Sc., said food and beverage products became increasing demands. But the consumable products need to undergo quality research and innovation first.

Meanwhile, Dr. Hatma Suryatmaja said progress in information technology and communication has impacted technology use in education sector. “The role of lecturer is expected to be facilitator instead of source of knowledge because the students are now very close to digital technology,” he said.

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