

UGM Applies SRI Smart Farming and Method in Sumba to Improve Agriculture


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Smart technology and modern method are some of the efforts to improve agricultural yields. UGM's Department of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering and Indonesia Climate Change Trust Fund (ICCTF) have opted these for improving the agriculture in Luku Kalara village of Sumba Timur regency, East Nusa Tenggara province.

UGM and ICCT adopted System of Rice Intensification (SRI) which is a technology innovation in the form of telemetry of soil, air, and water and is web and Android based to increase yields, save seeds and fertilisers, as well as reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Bayu Dwi Apri Nugroho, representative from the Department, said demonstration plot building of the SRI method had started in 2018. It proved to have increased rice productivity. It actually replicated a similar project in Kupang regency which could increase the productivity by 3 tonnes/ha.



SRI is a strategy of climate change adaptation and mitigation. Bayu said this was to respond to challenges especially those facing farmers in dry and vulnerable lands. He said the Luku Kalara village had been chosen due to its characteristics with high percentage (42.8%) of farmers. They lack human resource skills, however, which often cause crop failures or pests.

Finally with the SRI, harvesting was done on Thursday (25/4), attended by Sumba Timur regent Drs. Gidion Mbilihora, M.Si., ICCTF Director, Andi Abikusno, representatives from Ministries, from USAID, Jason Seuc, as well as project manager from UGM.

Gilbert Harangmbani, farmer, expressed enthusiasm to the project, saying he was very much helped by the project. "Initially, we were hesitant as we thought it was risky, but now we have seen the positive impacts," he said. He hoped the project would sustain to improve the farmer's lives.

Andi Abikusno said SRI method was an innovation to increase food security and a way of climate change adaptation. They adopted the method by using young seeds, wide gap of planting spots, organic fertilisers, intermittent irrigation, and mowing, which proved to increase rice productivity.


Jason Seuc, Environment Director from USAID, said the USAID had the commitment to supporting Indonesia to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and deal with climate change impacts as well as natural disasters.

Rohmad Supriadi, Head of Planning in National Development Planning Ministry, said climate change impact was very influential to society that relies on agriculture. Farmers need to adapt to the climate change. "With the SRI method, a productivity improvement is expected to emerge in East Nusa Tenggara," he said.

Regent Gidion Mbilihora said the SRI system was needed to be implemented in Sumba Timur so welfare could be achieved by the farmers. This system was a solution to the local problem related to agricultural productivity. "I hope this method would be applied to all Sumba Timur areas because the result has been enjoyed by the farmers from Luku Kalara village," he said.

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