FGV Meets Increasing Domestic Demand with Planting Material Innovation

2021 sees increased production of banana, bamboo, coconut and paddy planting materials

KUALA LUMPUR, 18 February 2021 – FGV Holdings Berhad (FGV), one of the leading planting material producers in Malaysia, ramps up the production of banana, bamboo, coconut and paddy planting materials to meet the increasing domestic demand for crop farming activities.

Dato' Haris Fadzilah Hassan, FGV Group Chief Executive Officer said, "Utilising the right planting material is one of the main factors that determine the success of commercial crop production. The increase in demand from customers showcases our ability in offering various high-quality products through in-depth research in tissue culture, state-of-the-art research & development (R&D) infrastructures as well as over 50 years of experience in clonal research."

FGV is one of the leading planting material producers in Malaysia

The production of banana clonal varieties is targeted at two million this year, doubling up from last year's one million banana clones produced to cater to the rising demands for the Berangan, Cavendish and Tanduk species. The production has been steadily rising at 100 percent yearly since 2019 to cater to the niche market demand for fresh bananas and banana-based food industry.

For bamboo clonal planting material, the production of the Betong bamboo species is targeted at one million by 2022 from the current quantity of 200,000. It is the most commercially popular bamboo type due to its multiple functions, from providing raw materials for construction to soil conservation and erosion control. Bamboo can be a sustainable source of raw material as it matures quickly within three to four years and can live up to 100 years.

"With the Betong's commercial production, the FGV Innovation Center at Enstek, Negeri Sembilan became the first plant tissue culture laboratory in Malaysia to successfully produce the Betong bamboo clonal seedlings on a large scale," said Haris Fadzilah.

FGV Innovation Center at Enstek, Negeri Sembilan

Besides Betong, FGV's clonal research is also targeting to produce new bamboo clonal planting material of the Semantan variety by 2022. Semantan bamboo can be grown throughout Malaysia and its uses include the production of raw materials for particle boards, handicrafts and sticks application such as chopsticks, toothpicks and satay sticks.

Meanwhile, FGV is also increasing the production of Pandan coconut planting material to 70,000 in 2021, an increase of 20,000 from last year. Currently, 70 percent of the planting materials produced is supplied for FGV's internal planting activity, while 30 percent is sold to the domestic market.

Pandan coconut seedlings

Other than the Pandan species, FGV is also targeting to produce 200,000 MATAG coconut seedlings by 2025 upon maturity of its 50-hectares coconut seed garden located in Pusat Penyelidikan Pertanian Tun Razak, Jerantut, Pahang. MATAG is a hybrid breed crossed

between the local Malayan Yellow Dwarf (MYD) coconut or Malayan Red Dwarf (MRD) with the Tagnanan Tall (TAG) coconut which originates from the Philippines. MATAG is the most sought-after coconut variety, where it can produce up to 25,000 more coconuts per hectare each year than the normal coconut tree. MATAG coconuts are suitable for producing coconut water, coconut milk and virgin coconut oil (VCO).

“We also offer contract cloning services to mass-produce other types of planting materials based on customers’ needs for their farming or field planting projects. The planting materials that can be cloned include any plant that has commercial value and is suitable for in-vitro micro propagation. Among the potential new materials that possess high market value include Vanilla and Guarana,” added Haris Fadzilah.

Parties who are interested in FGV’s contract cloning service may send their inquiries to fassbmarketing@fgvholdings.com or contact FGV Innovation Centre at 06-7916246.

As for paddy planting material, FGV has commenced the planting of 28-hectares of MRQ76 fragrant rice seed gardens last year in Sungai Leman, Selangor and Seberang Perak, Perak. The planted MRQ76 seeds which were harvested in December 2020 and January 2021 will be used to commence 350-hectares of FGV’s fortified field fragrant rice contract farming scheme under the Integrated Agricultural Development Area (IADA) in Seberang Perak and IADA Barat Laut, Selangor in March 2021.

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