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Tuesday June 26, 2007

Drop old farming methods

FARMERS need to embrace new methods in farming and not stick to conventional ways.

Deputy Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Shariff Omar said through the fertigation method, farmers would be able to increase their yield twice as much as that from the traditional method.

“With fertigation, farmers can grow more vegetables and this can help improve their income as well as help balance the country’s im-port trade.

“By 2010, we want to export our produce to other countries and not continue importing vegetables,” he said after a visit to a chilli fertigation farm.

Mohd Shariff said area far- mer associations should also play a vital role in educating their members about the latest techniques.

He said the fertigation method failed to take off because farmers preferred the conventional method of farming.

“Fertigation is cost-effective and farmers don’t need a big plot of land,” he said.

Mohd Shariff added that with better harvest, farmers in an area could pool their produce under contract farming and sell it to the Federal Agricultural Marketing Au-thority (FAMA).

He added that area farmer asso-ciations could provide loans of up to RM30,000.

Currently, only 10% of farmers in North Seberang Prai are using the fertigation method.

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