

International Meeting: University Network for Tropical Agriculture (UNTA)

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Industrial Agriculture for Sustainable Food Security and Rural Development

Variety of current crisis was overshadowing the global food system resilience. The year of 2050 was predicted that the world population achieved 9 billions and demanded the existence of an adequate food supply system. To provide this sufficient food, it was needed the new strategy that was reliable which aimed to ensure the increased food production in a sustainable manner. Nowadays, as we knew that the increase in food demand, the lack of resources, the increased land use change and the impact of global warming increasingly pressed the agricultural sector. Not to mention, more than 870 millions of people with profession as smallholder, were still suffering from chronic hunger and malnutrition-prone," said the Rector of Bogor Agricultural University (IPB), Prof. Dr. Ir. Herry Suhardiyanto, while giving a speech of welcome to the national and international delegations at the Seminar and Meeting of University Network for Tropical Agriculture (UNTA), Tuesday (3/9) at IPB International Convention Center.

As a form of response to address the issue, The World Economic Forum was launching "New Vision for Agriculture". This new vision of agriculture was made to be the platform to build cooperation various stakeholders in promoting the food security, the environmental sustainability and the economic development. This was consistent with the program of FAO which was also launching the action which was contained in The Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP). The focus of GAFSP was to provide the technical assistance in improving the food security and the income for low-income countries.

This second UNTA Meeting and Seminar was also one concern for the university to contribute the solution the problems of agriculture and global food issues, especially the problems of tropical agriculture. "I hope UNTA can become the means for exploring the potential for even greater for developing of farming system in the tropical area with unique characteristics," the Rector of IPB continued. In this case, the University that had strong competence in the field of tropical agriculture should cooperate closely related to the human resource development, the skill upgrading and future of farmers and the development and application of research and advanced technology in the tropical agriculture. As an example, some tropical countries, like Taiwan and Brazil, had implemented several technological breakthrough and government regulatory policies to promote agriculture.

Further the Rector of IPB said that the fact showed some middle-income tropical countries had been transformed to the industrial countries. "The agriculture having industrial perspective is very important". The industrial agriculture was a form of modern cultivation which included the industrialization in the fields of livestock, fishery and food commodity. The industrial agriculture combined techno-science, economic and political methods. Added the innovation in machinery and production, the creation of new market for consumer, the application of patent protection toward the genetic information and global trade," the Rector of IPB said.

This was different from the traditional farming practice in most industrialized countries using high oil fuel, including water and soil nutrient causing to become unsustainable. This, according to the Rector of IPB, had a big contribution to the occurrence of environment degradation, the loss of soil fertility and the biodiversity. Therefore, this activity took the theme of "Industrial Agriculture for Sustainable Food Security and Rural Development".

According to the Chairman of Seminar Committee, Dr.Ir.Ernani Rustiadi, this activity coincided with the Commemoration of the 50 Anniversary of IPB. The activity was attended by the representative of FAO, Dr. Carlos Arthur B. da Silva, the Ministry of Agriculture, Dr. Suswono and Ministry of Education and Culture of RI, Dr. Illah Sailah (Dirjen DIKTI), presented by Rectors and Deans of universities in Thailand, Malaysia, Taiwan, Australia, Japan, Vietnam, Netherlands and Germany. In the opportunity, Dr. Suswono also launched the Book of 'Strategi Induk Pembangunan Pertanian (SIPP) 2013-2045', Ministry of Agriculture.

Moreover, the activity which was held, thanked to the cooperation of Bank Rakyat Indonesia (BRI) and Bank Negara Indonesia (BNI), was also attended by the Deans from Universities in the country, which were: Syiah Kuala University, Jambi University, Sriwijaya University, Lampung University, Gajah Mada University, Jenderal Soedirman University, Diponegoro University, Udayana University, Mulawarman University, Lambung Mangkurat University, and Hasanuddin University.

This seminar activity was followed by the meeting among the Rectors and delegations from the universities of UNTA members which would discuss the regional cooperation program, covering the education and research in the field of tropical agriculture. In this meeting, it would also be discussed 'Memorandum Bogor' as a form of the shared commitment to achieve the food security and better life. IPB would also introduce the international study program, i.e. International Tropical Agriculture, and was being prepared and would be proposed to become the joint/double degree program with the partnered universities of UNTA members.

Conducting the seminar and the networking meeting of international university with a focus of tropical agriculture at IPB, confirmed the position of IPB as the leading agricultural university which became the reference for developing the agricultural university. This position was in accordance with the ranking of IPB in the QS World University Ranking 2013 by subject, which placed IPB in the ranking of 150 - 200 best universities in the world in the field of agriculture and forestry. Several study programs had also gained the international accreditation, amongst all from Asean University Network for the study program of Agronomy and Horticulture, Aquaculture, Plant Protection; ABET for the Department of Agricultural Industrial Technology; IFT for the Study Program of Science and Food Technology; and IMAREST for the Study Program of Science and Marine Technology.

IPB had the international reputation, but still provided the main concern in the national interest, in accordance with the mandate given. Therefore, in this Golden Anniversary, IPB took the theme of 'Mainstreaming of Agriculture for Sustainable Development.' We hoped that there was the convergence of program and activities of related parties to jointly promote the agriculture of Indonesia.