To anticipate Soybean Scarcity, it was Proposed that the Agricultural Lands Should be Exempted from PBB

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As an effort to anticipate national shortage of food commodities, especially soybeans due to the limited agricultural lands, a Professor of Bogor Agricultural University (IPB), Prof. Dr. Yonny Koesmaryono proposed that agricultural lands should be exempted from pajak bumi dan bangunan (PBB – tax of lands and buildings). "In an effort to protect the agricultural lands conversion into the emerging of residential or commercial business, the government should increase the PBB of those who own more than one house or who build houses for commercial purposes," explains Prof. Yonny.

No doubt that the agricultural lands are getting narrower and narrower. This situation has caused the decrease of soybean productions, as the expansion of fertile agricultural land is not easy. The lands utilize for agricultural activities are mostly less fertile as in swamps, peat, brackish whose productivity is less optimal.

According to Prof. Yonny, in addition to land fertility other factors that affect the low productivity of soybeans is the climatic conditions. Soybean is actually subtropical region crop. In its lands of origin, in the average the optimal yield of soybeans is about 5-7 tons/ha. While in tropical areas such as Indonesia, in the average the yield of soybeans is only about 1.5 tons/ha. "Accordingly, several steps have to be taken to boost the soybean production in the tropics that include: plant breeding techniques, guarantee a decent price, expansion of land outside of Java, and the soybean self-sufficiency roadmap," said Prof.Yonny.

Similar to rice and corn, Prof. Yonny have suggested the need for Riset Unggulan Strategis Nasional (RUSNAS - National Strategic Research Advancement) for soybeans that will become the foundation of their government to create policies to maintain the availability of domestic demands and reduce dependence on foreign imports. In the concept of food security, if there is no local stocks availability of the respective product, the government will be allowed to import. But when the world's stock is also limited, then our foreign exchanges doesn't mean anything for its importation. "This situation we are experiencing currently, the USA as the major producer of soybean is suffering from the drought, so its soybeans production was declining. Meanwhile, the world's soybean demand is high. This condition has caused the rise of soybean prices. With the establishment of soybean Rusanas, it is expected that the government will be having the roadmap for soybean self-sufficiency, "said Prof. Yonny. (Wied)