

Hatta Radjasa: Plants Clinical Car Will Help Farmers Rice Overcome Crop Failure

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The government should provide Integrated Plant Clinical Car to help farmers in the field in overcoming crop failure due to pests and diseases. This was stated by Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs, Hatta Radjasa when he visited the Clinical Car for Integrated Plant of the Faculty of Agriculture - Bogor Agricultural University, at the the University stand at the Agrinex Expo 2011, Friday, 4 March 2011, at the Jakarta Convention Center (JCC). "Farmers experienced crop failure due to pests and diseases several times already, the existence of an integrated plant clinical car is expected to help farmers overcome constraints they encountered in the field," said Hatta. Similar with mobile libraries or mobile community health center, the Integrated Plant Clinical Car will visit one field to another. As the name implies, this car will be function like a clinic in a hospital, the car is equipped with a variety of clinical facilities, such as set of testing equipment in the laboratory.

According to researchers of Faculty of Agriculture, Bogor Agricultural University, Dr.Suryo Wiyono, this car is designed specifically to assist farmers in the field. According to Dr. Wiyono, so far many farmers do not knowledgeable to cultivate crops, or how to protect their crops against pests and diseases. With this clinical car, said Dr.Wiyono, various issues will be responded. Because, this car will provide services to farmers ranging from problems of plants, soil, pests and diseases to plants.

Moreover, such car worth Rp900 million per unit, will enable to serve the landscape architecture consultation. The procurement of this car was funded by hibah kompetisi (competition grant) of the Directorate General of Higher Education, Ministry of National Education (MONE), through the revitalization of agricultural higher education program. This Ingrated Clinical Plant Car is equipped by various laboratory equipment to analyze soil and the plants. "Farmers may contact the clinical car directly for consultation, especially how to control plant pests and diseases. Furthermore, farmers may consult on the design, management and aforesation of parks, "he said. Finally, the clinical car will also serve fruits and vegetables testing.

In addition to farmer groups, the target of this integrated car plant clinic is Ornamental Plant collectors, agribusiness companies, government agencies, Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and students as well. In addition to serve Bogor, in cooperation with several farmers groups in Central Java, this mobile clinic also serve farmers in Pati and Kudus, and in some areas in East Java. In some Friday visit (Jum'at Keliling) to 14 (fourteen) villages around campus which are organized by Institute for Research and Community Service (LPPM) IPB, the clinical car is always there to assist local farmers.

Bogor Agricultural University assigns the best experts to participate in this car. They are experts in soil, pests, horticulture, food crops, and landscape. "The team comprised of faculty members and students at their final course. Dr. Wiyono also statede that Integrated Clinic Car for Plant, will periodically visit agricultural fields which suffer pests infestation or areas which are experiencing the decrease in agricultural production. The car will attend and visit farmers who require consultation. (Wied).

