

## **The productivity of the Indonesian Farmers are High**

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Posted by admin on 21 October 2011

A member of the Team for Research Agenda on Food Sector of Bogor Agricultural University, Dr. Dwi Andreas Santosa protested the allegations that the Indonesian farmers are less productive. "The Indonesia Farmers are grouped among the most productive rice producers. The Indonesian farmers produce 5.01 tons/ha of rice. Higher than rice yields of farmers of Vietnam and Thailand, which only produces 3.7 tons/ha and 4.5 tons/ha, "said Dr. Andreas in Morning Dialogue in Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI), on Tuesday, 18 October 2011, in Bogor.

But factor cause both Thailand and Vietnam' rice productions are higher than Indonesia, according to Dr. Andreas, is the areal of farms owned by farmers. "The areal of rice fields owned by everage Thai farmer is 5000 (five thousand) square meters, wherease famers of Vietnam owned area of 1000 square meters. Compare to Indonesian farmers who in the average they own only area of 360 square meters (0,36 hektar), and as many as 49 percent of them are labours, "said Dr. Andreas.

In repond to the suggestion from a listener on the solutions to increase rice yields by incorporating farmers ' lands, Dr. Andreas replied that land consolidation will indeed be more profitable. "And it would be better if the Indonesian government will have the agrarian reform by distributing to landless farmers," said Dr. Andreas.

In addition to the issues of land area, Dr. Andreas also highlighted top down policy on agriculture has been implemented by the government. The government usually underestimate farmers' knowledge, therefore the government tends to impose forceable policies to peasants. Dr. Andreas dismayed with the policies that were forcely implemented, as they became burden for peasants, e.g. on the production of organic fertilizer and seed supply. In reality, farmers used to produce organic fertilizer themselves and self-produce their needed seeds. "However, instead of assist the peasants, the government projected the organic fertilizer production to the some companies. As a result, the companies do not produce the good quality products, but it is more expensive, the price is Rp 1750, -. The government actually should give free choice for farmers to produce their own fertilizers, even the government should provide direct subsidies for them, "said Dr. Andreas. The production costs of organic fertilizer by farmers is only Rp 350, -. If the government provides direct subsidies which is usually is given to the companies amounted to Rp 1,000, -, then farmers will be benefitted about Rp 650, -. (Wied).