

He mentioned that among Sarawak's food products that have potential to be exported are 'buah dabai' and Bario rice.

He lamented that the potential for growth of these two food items as well as cattle breeding for dairy and meat products were rather slow due to the absence of investors.

"It is amazing that Sarawak is

ten times bigger than the size of Negeri Sembilan, yet the number of cattle that they have there is ten times the number we have in Sarawak," he pointed out.

He advised the private sector to take advantage of the state's vastness to expand the agriculture and horticulture sectors which would one day make the state not reliant on imports.

"Currently, our state's food

production is not enough for our people's consumption. This is why in 2015, the total expenditure for food import was RM4.26 billion," said Adenan, adding that rice import was RM289.25 million last year.

"These figures only show that there is more to be done to meet the needs of the people in Sarawak," he added.

On another note, he suggested

Minister suggests state look into corn farming

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LUNDU: Sarawak will be the main producer of corn in the country if it taps into the potential of the crop.

With that in mind, the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry would collaborate on a pilot programme with the state government to venture into corn growing, revealed its minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek yesterday.

He said neighbouring countries Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines had already delved into corn growing as their second crop after rice plantation. He said Sarawak had vast areas of flat land that could be used to plant the crop.

He also proposed that that more funds be given to the state to realise its vision to be self-sufficient in food.

Meanwhile, he thanked the federal government for holding

the Maha event in Sarawak, which he expected to be an eye opener for the locals on the importance of food production.

He said the main Maha 2016 would held on a grand scale in Serdang, Selangor from Nov 24 to Dec 4.

"I have visited the Maha show there. I feel that it would require a week to visit all of the booths there," he quipped.

yesterday. He added that the pilot programme would start this year.

"This may take some time but we will conduct an effective planning to set a new policy for our nation's agriculture sector," he stressed.

Also present were Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Adenan Satem, Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Alfred Jabu Numpang, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Anthony Nogeh, Assistant Minister of Industrial Estate Development Datuk Peter Nansian Ngusie and Opar assemblyman Ranum Mina.

Also present at the launch were Minister of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Anthony Nogeh Gumbek, Minister of Modernisation of Agriculture Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Alfred Jabu Numpang and Assistant Minister of Industrial Estate Development Datuk Peter Nansian Ngusie.



Jabu (left), Shabery (centre) and Nansian (right) at the press conference held on the sidelines of Road to Maha 2016 event in Lundu Waterfront.