

Signify is accelerating LED technology to improve food security in Malaysia

By Azanis Shahila Aman - March 28, 2022 @ 10:22am



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KUALA LUMPUR: Signify, a leader in lighting innovation, is addressing the challenge of transforming the agricultural sector into a modern and competitive sector by focusing on its LED lighting innovations called Philips Light Recipes.

Signify said Philips Light Recipes captured all the elements of lighting that steer plant growth as the company offered a wide array of light recipes, based on proven results for specific varieties, growth phases and cultivation set-ups.

"This ranges from tissue culture, propagation and seedlings to young plants, potted plants and high wire vegetables," it said.

Signify Asean commercial leader for agriculture and whitespaces Steven Kaardinal said the company was eager to implement Philips Light Recipes in local agricultural industries after its successful installation at various farms worldwide.

Kaardinal said Signify - formerly known as Philips Lighting - said in Malaysia, the agricultural sector was hampered by productivity and crop yield issues, unsustainable practices, an inefficient and fragmented supply chain, as well as an ageing workforce.

"In line with Malaysia's 12th National Plan to champion the industrial revolution 4.0 (IR 4.0) technology in the practice of agriculture, it is our goal to achieve food security and improve nutrition among all Malaysians, while promoting sustainable agriculture among farmers.

"As such, we believe LED grow lights can improve many aspects of their business as it gives farmers full flexibility and control (over lighting) to improve their crop quality, productivity and operational efficiency," he told the News Straits Times in an interview.

According to the data from the Department of Statistic Malaysia, the contribution of the agriculture sector to Malaysia's gross domestic product (GDP) in 2020 stood at 7.4 per cent.

The percentage growth of this sector declined 2.2 per cent from 2.0 per cent in the previous year.

Kaardinal said the Covid-19 pandemic had been affecting the entire food system and had laid bare its fragility.

He said border closures, trade restrictions and confinement measures had been preventing farmers from accessing markets, including for buying inputs and selling their produce, and agricultural workers from harvesting crops, thus disrupting domestic and international food supply chains and reducing access to healthy, safe and diverse diets.

"With the use of digital technology through LED smart agriculture, the efficiency and optimisation of this sector can be transformed through increased agricultural productivity, cost efficiency and market opportunities," he said.

Moving forward, Kardinal said the company was seeing that the trends had changed in Malaysia, where local farmers had started to implement new technologies into their farm.

He said as a provider of LED lighting technologies, Signify was committed to growing a partnership ecosystem for technology adoption and collaboration as well as awareness building through government agencies, higher education institutions and agricultural bodies.

"We have seen good response from local farmers who are now considering making changes to smart agriculture. We believe the market is evolving in this agricultural area in Malaysia, but it still needs time. We have taken several steps in approaching government agencies as well as education institutions to promote literacy in this sector," he added.