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GENERAL

Commercial cultivation of Guarana not allowed in Malaysia - MAFI



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KUALA LUMPUR, April 12 (Bernama) -- Commercial farming of guarana (Paullinia cupana) in Malaysia is not allowed by the Agriculture Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industries (MAFI).

In a statement today, the department said this followed a ban on the importation of guarana (also known as P.crysan, P.sorbilis) as it can harm the country's rubber industry.

"This is because guarana seeds brought into Malaysia illegally for commercialisation is banned under the Quarantine Act 1976 and Plant Quarantine Regulation 1981.





“The cultivation of guarana in Malaysia brings the risk of carrying other new diseases such as *Colletotrichum guaranicola*, which is only reported to attack guarana species, in addition, information on the disease is limited and will make it difficult to control if an attack occurs in Malaysia,” he said.

Apart from that, any parties which plant guarana are at the risk of being subjected to legal action by the Brazilian government if the crop is propagated and commercialised from seeds imported illegally.

If convicted, the involved parties can be issued a warning, face confiscation and a penalty of up to Brazilian Real \$10 million (RM7.7 million).



“The Department of Agriculture was informed by the Brazilian Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Food Supply through a letter dated Jan 8, 2020, that only Brazil is allowed to export guarana fruit for processing and human food purposes only,” the statement reads.

The ban is stated under Brazilian law No. 13,123/15, May 20, 2015 (Access and Benefits Sharing of Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge).

According to the department, the importation of plants from high-risk countries endemic to South American Leaf Blight (SALB), a disease caused by the fungus *Microcyclus ulei* (syn. *Pseudocercospora ulei*) to Hevea plants is prohibited, except for research purposes.

“The spores of SALB can infect rubber crops by causing the growth of rubber trees to be a stunt and will not be productive. This situation can cripple the country’s rubber industry, which is worth over RM18 billion annually,” he said.

The department stressed that the disease has crippled the rubber industry in Brazil and SALB nations such as Colombia, Costa Rica, Surinam and Panama.

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