RRI Dialogue: Agribusiness Resistant to World Economic Crisis

RRI (Radio of the Republic of Indonesia) Dialogue: Agribusiness Sector Resistant to the World Economic Crisis

Agribusiness sector has a high resistance against the economic crisis. This is so because the crisis hitting the world is caused by the non-real economic factors, while the agribusiness sector is a real economic activity. It has a much stronger foundation and deals with the needs of the community. "We are really helped by the agribusiness sector, thus having little distortion and low depreciation of rupiah for agribusiness commodities," said Chairman of the Agribusiness Study Program, Graduate School of Bogor Agricultural University (IPB), Dr. Rita Nurmalina in the RRI Evening Dialogue on the topic 'Socialization of the International Conference on the Effect of Global Economic Crisis on Businesses in South East Asia ', Tuesday (1 / 6) at the Radio of the Republic of Indonesia (RRI), Bogor.

To improve competitiveness and expand markets of Indonesia, IPB together with businessmen, academicians and government through the concept of Academician, Businessmen, and Government (ABG) promotes the excellence of national agribusiness commodities. Asked about IPB’s contribution in facing the economic crisis, especially the farmers who are out of business, the International Conference Committee, Dr. Suharno said that IPB as an educational institution takes the role in preparing reliable human resources, conducting research, empowering community and formulating policies offered to the government. "IPB as an educational institution does not have the authority to set an economic policy. It is the government’s authority. When IPB makes concrete efforts on the field to help the community or the Small Medium Enterprises affected by the crisis, it is only part of community services. Moral responsibility alone is not IPB’s primary obligation," said Dr. Suharno.

Responding to the questions from listeners about the declining trend of students’ interest in the undergraduate program majoring in agriculture, the Chairman of the Department of Agribusiness, Faculty of Economics and Management (FEM) IPB Dr. Nunung Kusnadi said that this could not be separated from the direction of the national economic policy which is less supportive to agriculture. Also, students think that agriculture is only on-farm activities. Agriculture has a broad meaning, including financial analysis of businesses and banking. "In fact, on-farm activities
will not work properly without experts in off-farm activities, and vice versa. Both activities can not be separated from each other; they are mutually dependent," said Dr. Nunung.

A country that makes industry as a major driver of economy can not be separated from the progress in its agribusiness and agricultural systems. More than 80 percent of raw materials in industries use agricultural commodities. IPB’s simple contribution in dealing with the economic crisis is for example taking the role as the organizer of this international conference. "We invite various national and international economic experts to analyze, formulate problems and seek a concept of solution to the crisis, "said Dr. Suharno. The event to be held on June 9, 2009 at IPB International Convention Center (IICC) is planned to present some keynote speakers in the conference, including Dr. Bayu Krisnamurthi, Prof. Roy Sembel, Minister of National Education and Ir. Ciputra. Those interested to attend the conference can contact Febrianti Dewi in the Department of Agribusiness, FEM IPB, phone/fax 0251 8629654.