

# Birthing The Dragon

RAIHANA RIDZUAN  
MOHD RIDZUAN ADNAN



Dragon fruit or buah naga is one of the popular tropical fruits in Malaysia. The discoverers might have given this name as the fruit has scale-like leaves and fiery colour associated with the dragon. This exotic fruit is utilized as fruit beverages, jam, jellies and ices because of its colour, aroma and taste. In Malaysia, dragon fruit crop cultivation shows a great expansion due to the high market demands since 2006. Hence, the advance biotechnology practices in the agricultural sector are very important to meet the current and future demands in dragon fruit production.

One of the advance biotechnology practices that can lead to successful cultivation of dragon fruit is in vitro culture. In vitro culture is the technique of producing a large number of seedlings from the cells or growth tissue placed in a sterile environment where the nutrients are supplied and controlled. This practice offers disease-free plants with an excellent mass propagation of dragon fruit plantlets in the laboratory before being transferred to the field. The careful screening of the stock plants can lead to the production of cleaner seedlings through tissue culture. Thus, modern biotechnology such as in vitro culture helps to enhance the way of human life in agricultural practices.

