

Form agricultural association to boost income, farmers urged

RAUB: The Chinese are facing four hurdles that are impeding their development in agricultural activities, said MCA Youth chief Chong Sin Woon.

Citing factors on land ownership, funding, technological know-how and marketing, Chong said the formation of a strong and active agricultural association could solve these problems.

"There are many farmers who do

not have land ownership and are farming illegally.

"This in turn will affect them financially because they cannot get loans and will turn to loan sharks instead," he said during a seminar organised by Koperasi Petani Muda Malaysia here on Monday evening.

Also present were MCA vice-president Datin Paduka Chew Mei Fun, Pahang MCA chairman Datuk Hoh Khai Mun and Raub MCA chief Tan

Sri Lam Kam Sang.

Chong said farmers also tend to overuse fertilisers which causes long-term damage to their produce, land and the environment.

Farmers, he said, might have the knowledge to farm but they do not know how to market their produce and relied heavily on middlemen.

"When I visited Taiwan, I observed the role of their agricultural association in representing

farmers. Their association can negotiate with government agencies and help market produce.

"If there is such an association in Raub, I am sure the farmers can get a better price for their produce.

"We have good products but we do not know how to exploit the market," he added.

He also proposed that farmers young and old take up courses in Universiti Putra Malaysia to learn

how to use technology to improve production and quality.

"There is a bright future in farming. It is a lucrative business although perception does not make it seem that way in our country.

"As long as we are willing to move forward and improve ourselves in this field, I am confident we can put agriculture on par with other development in Malaysia," he added.