

Agricultural use for Lynas residue

> Tests show processed material doubled growth of crops

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KUALA LUMPUR: Rare earth mining company Lynas Corporation hopes to process residue from its production operations for commercial use next year.

Lynas Malaysia Sdn Bhd vice-president Datuk Mashal Ahmad said 211,454 metric tonnes of residue are being stored at its advanced material plant and it is collaborating with two institutions to turn the waste into material for use in agriculture.

He said Universiti Putra

Malaysia (UPM) and the Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (Mardi) is running field tests on a soil conditioner that was derived from its water leach purification (WLP) residue.

"Researchers from both institutes have tested this conditioner, called "Condisoil", on various crops including corn, kenaf, padi, coconut and cattle-grass.

"After two harvest seasons, the initial results are amazing, with the growth rate of the plants doubled using Condisoil," he told a press conference.

However, Mashal said approval for Condisoil's commercial usage can only be determined once tests on a third harvest are completed in June.

"Currently, all test results by various bodies, including the Malaysian Nuclear Agency

(Nuclear Malaysia) and Sirim on the two earlier harvests show that the usage of Condisoil has no ill effects on the plants or the atmosphere," he said, adding that Lynas has been funding both UPM and Mardi to conduct its research independently.

Lynas chief executive officer Amanda Lacaze said the residue material will be stored in facilities that meet the design requirements of permanent deposit facilities.