

## PRIME NEWS

# Teen's chilli venture pays off

**LUCRATIVE:** Aqif Asyraf saving up for studies

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**S**IXTEEN-year-old Tuan Aqif Asyraf Tuan Hizani is an enterprising young man.

He is preparing to pay for his tertiary education by cultivating chillies and marketing them.

The Form Four student of SMK Langkap aims to pursue a degree in agriculture in a local university after his Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia examination next year.

He started growing chillies in December last year and, in February, his first harvest of 200kg raked in RM3,000.

Subsequently, he made another

RM15,000. After deducting the cost of agricultural expenses, such as fertilisers, fungicides and water bill, he made a profit of RM10,000.

"I go to school in the morning but before I leave home, I make sure that the automatic timer is functioning.

"The chilli plants need to be watered for two minutes every two hours. I usually check the drip system again when I return from school.

"I learned how to grow chillies from my uncle, who has 10,000 chilli plants on his plot of land in Pasir Putih, Kelantan.

"I can grow only 1,000 plants at the moment, but I plan to increase it to 2,000 plants soon," he said at his chilli farm in Kampung Kasar here.

Aqif Asyraf admitted that growing chilli was a challenge and for someone who has no knowledge of farming practice, he had to depend on his uncle and the Internet to master the technique of soil preparation, application of fertilisers and other de-



**Tuan Aqif Asyraf Tuan Hizani** showing the chillies that he cultivated with help from his uncle and the Internet. Pic by Rosli Zakaria

tails such as the drip system.

"The money is good and I will use it for my future education," he said.

He added that his mother, Nora Daud, 47, and three villagers helped grade the chillies before selling it to a chilli sauce factory in Langkap.

"I still have a lot to learn about agriculture.

"I want to study at University Pu-

tra Malaysia after SPM next year.

"I am willing to attend short courses during the lojj school break to perfect the technique of growing chillies."

Asked if his school knew about his green venture, Aqif Asyraf said his class teacher was aware and had encouraged him to achieve bigger successes in his endeavours.