

Don't hastily boycott durians sold in weight: Exco

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MALACCA: Recently some people had called for a boycott of durians sold according to weight that allowed the durian mongers to reap huge profit when they acquired durians at low prices from the growers but sold them at high prices.

However, state Agriculture, Entrepreneur Development, Agro-based Industry and Co-operative Committee chairman Norhizam Hassan Baktee advised the public to not be hasty in their action which could harm both parties.

"I believe the price of durian will drop when we have a large number of durians when the fruit starts piling up later in the durian season.

"When there are piles of durians in Malacca, I will personally organise the Eat Durian Festival to let the public enjoy durians at low prices," he told *Bernama* here today.

He said today's durian prices were different from 10 years ago because, apart from supplying the local market, it had become the nation's export product too.

"Durian is also used as the ingredient for various food products such as durian coffee which has increased the demand for the fruit," he said.

Meanwhile, the state Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs (KPDNHEP) director, Jaiya Abu said durian fruit was not included in the controlled items list and its price depends on the demand and supply in the market.

"Hence, KPDNHEP does not monitor durian prices as it is a seasonal product and there are no standard operating procedures (SOPs) for regulating the sales from various categories of sellers. However, we monitor the weighing equipment used to ensure that it is calibrated periodically.

"In this way, KPDNHEP can avoid the sellers from cheating. So far we have identified and compounded two sellers who use scales that are not precise," he said.

He said the issue of high durian prices may be due to several factors, including high demand for exports to countries such as China and Singapore, which led to insufficient domestic supply.

Jaiya said the second factor is that the supply of durians is still low as it is still early in the season but the demand for the fruit is already high. — *Bernama*

