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FRIM offering tissue culture training services to entrepreneurs

KUALA LUMPUR: To increase understanding, the Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) is offering basic tissue culture training and consulting services to entrepreneurs especially.

FRIM Forest Biotechnology Division biotechnology programme chief, Dr Nor Hasnida Hassan, said tissue culture is gaining more notice in the propagation of homogenous, disease-free and high-quality plant material for the mass production of plants.

"The technology involves the growth of whole plants in a laboratory using a small piece of plant tissue from a leaf, branch or shoot cultured in a nutrient medium, in a sterile and controlled environment," she said in a statement.

She said the technique produces exact duplicates of the parent plant in a short time, and quality is guaranteed.

FRIM, a government agency, actively conducts research and studies related to tissue culture technology, while at the same time is committed to conservation, training, innovation, R&D and the commercialisation of plant material.

It developed the first tissue culture laboratory in December 1984 before expanding into the commercial production of forest species through the formation of the Tissue Culture Unit in the early 90s.

During its inception, the tissue culture laboratory was the best way to overcome the difficulty of obtaining tree seeds for a reforestation programme.

Besides this, FRIM conducted workshops to educate about the procedure for plant tissue culture, as well as comprehensive training that included the acclimatisation of young plants in a nursery.

It was the best platform to raise awareness about tissue culture in terms of technique, commercial application and business potential.

Nor Hasnida said tissue culture technology is one of best methods to get a young plant that is similar to the parent plant, and is used in agriculture, floriculture as well as the conservation of tree species facing extinction.

However, it requires a laboratory with specialised equipment. – Bernama