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MEDIA RELEASE

'JACKFRUIT RENDANG' A FAVOURITE AMONG LOCALS IN THE NETHERLANDS DURING MALAYSIA FOOD & FRUITS WEEK (MFFW) 2021

Malaysia Food & Fruits Week (MFFW) was recently organized by The Agriculture Counsellor Office (ACO) in The Hague from 25 September – 2 October 2021 in Westfield Mall of The Netherlands. The ACO is a regional office under the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industries (MAFI) and is based in The Hague, The Netherlands. The program was held in partnership with Wah Nam Hong supermarket, which is also one of the earliest supermarkets with 5 outlets in The Netherlands. The program was also carried out in collaboration with The Embassy of Malaysia in The Hague, MATRADE, Tourism Malaysia and the Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (FAMA). The aim of the program was to further promote Malaysian culinary and tropical fruits such as mangosteen, starfruit, passion fruit, dragon fruit, jackfruit and durian. Visitors were also educated with a fruit cutting demonstration and a food and fruit tasting session.

Malaysian culinary such as the 'nasi lemak' or coconut infused rice with a set of side dishes such as crispy fried anchovies and peanuts, hard boiled eggs, chicken 'rendang' and jackfruit 'rendang', including durian based desserts were also served. The program was also attended by several food bloggers and reviewers. The jackfruit 'rendang' in particular caught the attention of vegan food lovers. Through this program, the Malaysian Musang King durian was further introduced and became a highlight among the food bloggers, reviewers and visitors. During the promotion, the sale of in-store Malaysian products also increased by 50% as compared to normal sale. In addition, food products by entrepreneurs under FAMA were also well accepted with confirmed purchase orders by the store.

According to the Ambassador of Malaysia to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Dato' Nadzirah Osman who also officiated the program, strategic partnerships are important in order to increase imports of Malaysian food products into The Netherlands. Although faced by challenges such as COVID-19, programs such as MFFW has been carried out in accordance with the SOP and the requirements set by the Dutch Government.

Mr. Khalid bin Ibrahim who is the Undersecretary of MAFI's Business Development and Investment Division said that the use of social media and the presence of food bloggers and reviewers are pertinent in supporting the efforts to promote Malaysian food and fruits not only in The Netherlands but also across Europe. He further said that the ACO is also highly committed and proactive in giving out advice and guidance to industry players in order to gain better market access.

The ACO in The Hague, The Netherlands is a regional office under MAFI, which covers 33 countries including the United Kingdom (UK), 27 European Union countries, 4 *European Free Trade Association* countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway & Switzerland) and Russia. Some of the roles and functions of the office are to expand market access, provide advice / facilitate on sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) matters, assist on rules, regulations, import and export requirements for the agriculture sector, facilitate transfer of agriculture technology and explore investment opportunities.

Prepared by:

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