

**PROMOTING THE APPLICATION OF DIGITAL FARMING, PETROKIMIA GRESIK INTRODUCES
DRONE TECHNOLOGY FOR GRANULAR FERTILIZER**

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Petrokimia Gresik, an Agro-industry Solutions company, a holding member of Pupuk Indonesia (Persero) is committed to supporting the digitization of agriculture by holding "Petro AgriTalk: Digital Farming, Threats or Opportunities for the Agricultural Sector" at the Petrokimia Gresik Experimental Garden (Buncob), in Gresik, East Java, Thursday (14/7).

The President Director of Petrokimia Gresik, Dwi Satriyo Annurogo said that digital farming is one of the agricultural intensification strategies that should be applied in the industrial era 4.0, to increase agricultural productivity as well as farmers' income.

"For three years, Indonesia has not imported (rice, ed), but if we don't do anything now, then a food crisis will occur in our country. For that we must continue to make continuous improvements and innovations," said Dwi Satriyo.

One of the digital farming technologies introduced by Petrokimia Gresik in the series of Petro AgriTalk events is drone technology for the application of granular-type fertilizers. The drone that was demonstrated in the Petrokimia Gresik Buncop area was the first pilot for a granular fertilizer because so far drones have only been used for liquid-type fertilizers. Meanwhile, the fertilizer applied is Petrokimia Gresik's flagship product, Phonska Plus Formula 15-15-15.

"The drone that we are flying is technology from Thailand, and hopefully we can adapt it because it is very beneficial for Indonesian agriculture," said Dwi Satriyo.

Utilizing drones for fertilization will save production costs for farmers, where one of the most expensive cost items in agricultural cultivation is labor. Meanwhile, drones are sufficient to be operated by one person and are capable of fertilizing between 40-60 Ha/day with more precise fertilizer distribution results.

Soon this technology is expected to complement the Makmur program that has been carried out by Petrokimia Gresik and Pupuk Indonesia to build a better agricultural ecosystem. Namely collaborating with banking, insurance, offtake, and Petrochemical Gresik institutions as the driving force in charge of preparing fertilizers, pesticides, and overseeing agricultural cultivation.

According to him, the presence of technology in the Prosperous Program can increase farmers' technical knowledge, such as the correct dosage of fertilizer through the recommendation of a Soil Test Car, the selection of superior seeds, or other agro-inputs in a

more efficient way. Likewise, system information regarding weather or market conditions will help farmers make accurate decisions.

"This drone technology will perfect the role of the Gresik Petrochemical Soil Test Car," added Dwi Satriyo

Furthermore, Dwi Satriyo explained that this activity was a follow-up to the collaboration initiated by Pupuk Indonesia (Persero) with MarkPlus, Inc. Through this collaboration, Petrokimia Gresik's future development products will be synergized with technology to increase the effectiveness of fertilization to increase agricultural productivity.

Apart from the President Director of Petrokimia Gresik, who also presented as a speaker, Hermawan Kartajaya (Founder & Chairman of MarkPlus Inc.), Ir. Jaka Widada, M.P., Ph.D (Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, Gadjah Mada University) and Dimas Eko Prasetyo S.T (SEVP Operation PT Perkebunan Nusantara X).

On this occasion, Hermawan Kartajaya invited agricultural stakeholders in Indonesia to learn agricultural technology from Thailand which is currently somewhat more advanced. With the ASEAN spirit, he hopes there will be technology transfer for the advancement of agriculture in the country.

"Humans and technology will go hand in hand. Fertilization technical activities can be carried out by drones. Meanwhile, farmers can do more productive things. So that agricultural productivity can continue to be boosted," said Hermawan.

He also appreciated the steps taken by Pupuk Indonesia (Persero) in assigning its subsidiary, in this case, Petrokimia Gresik, to become the first pilot for the use of drones for granular fertilizer.

"In the domestic fertilizer sector, Pupuk Indonesia Group is the largest, so we are prioritizing Pupuk Indonesia Group for this collaboration," said Hermawan.

In addition to the speakers above, the event which was attended by 128 participants from agriculture faculty students, young farmers, agricultural services, State-Owned companies, and other agricultural stakeholders also presented representatives from NAC Drone Thailand, whose role was to support the implementation of the Petrochemical Gresik drone simulation, as well as provide In-depth insight into the transformation towards Industry 4.0.

According to Dwi Satriyo, besides increasing the effectiveness and productivity of agriculture, the introduction of digital farming is also a means to further development in the interest of the younger generation in engaging in the agricultural sector. The younger generation is synonymous with technology and everything practical.

"During the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been an increase in the youth workforce for the agricultural sector from 18 percent to more than 20 percent. This is a breath of fresh air for the Indonesian agricultural sector which we must continue to encourage with technological advances," he concluded.

PT Petrokimia Gresik

Yusuf Wibisono
Corporate Secretary

For further information contact:

Corporate Secretary: Yusuf Wibisono

Office : (031) 3981811

Ext. 2218

Email : wibisono@petrokimia-gresik.com
yusufwibie@gmail.com