

FRUITFUL ENDEAVOUR

COMPOSTING A BOON TO PPR RESIDENTS

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Community bonds over and reaps benefits of food waste collection programme

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OVER the past eight months, residents of the Beringin People Housing Programme (PPR) in Jinjang here have been collecting their food waste and converting it into nutrient-rich fertiliser via composting.

The members of the community collect vegetable and fruit trimmings, eggshells and leftover greens from nearby traders to be sent to a collection centre near Block E of the residential area.

PPR Beringin Rukun Tetangga (RT) chairman Che Roziani Mohd Shariff said although the residents were initially unsure about the project, which first started in August last year, continuous efforts on the ground to create awareness and educate them about it had proven fruitful.

"For the past few months, we have been getting good support from the residents.

"They will pack their greens



Mohd Osman Shaffie (left) and Zahari Mat Nooh preparing food waste for composting at the Beringin People Housing Programme in Jinjang, Kuala Lumpur. PIC BY HAIRUL ANUAR RAHIM

and food waste, such as vegetable and fruit trimmings, eggshells and leftovers, and drop them off at the collection centre," she told the *New Sunday Times* recently.

Che Roziani added the RT had also been getting food peels and offcuts from small traders selling banana fritters and fried food nearby, along with collecting green trimmings from nearby markets.

She added that all the green trimmings and food waste would

be placed into a 60-litre machine at their community garden to be processed into compost.

"We usually do it after *Isyak* prayers. We will open bags containing the waste and put them into the machine.

"The machine will produce compost in 24 hours. We do this daily," she said, adding that the project was part of the Local Agenda 21 Kuala Lumpur (LA21KL), a project led by Kuala Lumpur City Hall.

Che Roziani said most of the compost would be packed and sold to customers at exhibitions and pop-up markets organised by City Hall, and the remaining will be used as fertiliser for the PPR's community garden.

She added that the revenue would fund community projects and activities at the PPR.

Che Roziani said other than reducing food waste from being sent to landfills, the project had brought residents together.

"Residents' participation in the project was entirely voluntary. Yet, we have been receiving good feedback from them.

"Some of them have been providing us with the greens and food waste, while others assist with handling the machine."

Among the residents that have been actively involved in the project are Mohd Osman Shaffie, 56, and Zahari Mat Nooh, 50.

"Rather than just watching the television at home, we decided to get involved with this composting project.

"Although it is not much, at least we can prevent some of the food waste from going to the landfill," said the two.

Osman said it was rewarding to see the food waste turn into nutritious material to boost plant growth.

Meanwhile, Che Roziani said the PPR also had a 1Komuniti 1Kitar Mula (1C1R) kiosk, where the residents could send their recyclable items and exchange them for necessities.

The 1C1R initiative by City Hall aims to cultivate recycling practices and reduce solid waste generation in high-density areas.

"Rather than selling these recyclables to vendors at a very low price, the residents can send their recyclable items, such as paper, plastic, aluminium cans and used cooking oil, in exchange for necessities, like condensed milk, sugar, flour and cooking oil."