

# UPM to work with govt to regulate chicken price

**SERDANG:** Experts from Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) are ready to work with the government in creating a mechanism which will ensure chicken price remains stable throughout the year.

These experts will work on the same principle as Canada's Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission (OFPMC) and will include management methods for breeding farms, chicken prices and the distribution of manpower.

OFPMC is a regulatory agency established under the purview of Canada's Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Act.

Associate Professor Dr Azhar Kasim, animal nutritionist and system analysis expert at UPM's Agriculture Faculty, said the mechanism would ensure breeders, suppliers and consumers benefited equally.

"We are ready to share our expertise with the Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Ministry to help in regulating the price of chicken so that it will be stable at all times and not just during the festive seasons.

"This year, the increase in (chicken) price is ridiculous and we want it to stop as it may encourage other

meat sellers to increase their prices.

"OFPMC is so good in handling the prices of farm products that even the United States is keen to adopt its methods."

He said the price of chicken had been stable since 2011 and should remain the same as it was the cheapest source of protein.

"According to our data, the supply of chicken should be enough, but there are irregularities in networking between the suppliers and breeders, which may have caused the shortage of supplies to the traders."

Professor Dr Abdul Rahman Omar, UPM's Bioscience Institute director and professor of Immunology and Infectious Diseases at the Veterinary Faculty, said the price increase was due to factors such as the increase in demand, increase in chicken bran price and infectious disease affecting chickens.

He said they were avoidable if all parties took preventive measures.

"For example, chicken vaccines have been around for the past 10 years.

"If breeders were responsible and vaccinated their chickens, this situation could have been avoided."