



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Kelulut Honey Bee Farm Helps Village in Riau Develop Local Economy**

**Pekanbaru, 2 July 2019** – Kelulut honey bee farms have become an important means of income for a few communities in Riau, contributing to the local economy in the province. Produced by Trigona stingless bees, which are commonly found in forests in Indonesia, Kelulut honey has a taste which is different from regular honey.

Rearing Trigona stingless bees and harvesting the pure, clean and uncontaminated honey they produce for commercial purpose has become the source of livelihood for many in Riau, including the community of Masyarakat Peduli Api (MPA) in Tambak Village.

The village, which is part of [Asian Agri's Fire Free Village Programme \(FFVP\)](#), has received training from the company on how best to rear these Trigona stingless bees.

“With our Fire Free Village Programme, we support communities to improve their quality of life by developing the economy through a local practice that is suitable and feasible for them.

“This is in addition to our existing partnership with the villages under the programme to prevent forest and land fires in our areas together,” said Pengarapen Gurusinga, Asian Agri Regional Head in Riau.

#### **Riau Fire-Free Village Award**

Two villages, Rantau Baru and Tambak, which are part of Asian Agri's FFVP were recently honoured with awards for their commitment to preventing land and forest fires in Riau.

These awards are part of the programme's [No Burn Village Reward](#) incentive, which provides grants or community infrastructure for villages which successfully prevent fires on their land.

Rantau Baru and Tambak Village were awarded IDR 100 million and IDR 50 million respectively. Rantau Baru achieved absolutely zero fires in their village, while Tambak managed to keep the burning in their village to less than one hectare.

Pengarapen Gurusinga, Asian Agri Regional Head in Riau, gave out the awards to the heads of both villages, expressing appreciation for their tireless collective effort and unwavering commitment to prevent land and forest fires in their villages during the one year period.

“The Fire Free Village Programme is designed to initiate synergy between the community, local government and company to work together in curbing the number of forest fires. We are focused on anticipating and preventing them,” he said.

Asian Agri’s FFVP is well supported by Fire Aware Communities (Masyarakat Peduli Api) who voluntarily take on the responsibility to raise awareness among other communities about the dangers of forest and land fires.

“Local communities, especially those who live near land fire areas, have a vital role in ensuring that early anticipation and prevention efforts are effective in stopping any fires from spreading to wider areas. Asian Agri strongly believes in them and empowers them by equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills which will help them in carrying out fire prevention efforts efficiently,” Gurusinga explained.

Through FFVP, Asian Agri continues to partner with villages around the company’s operational areas in carrying out forest fire anticipation and prevention efforts. Presently, Asian Agri partners with 16 villages in Riau and Jambi who are participating in the programme.

### **About Asian Agri:**

Asian Agri is one of Indonesia’s largest palm oil producers since 1979. Today, the company manages 100,000 hectares of land and employs over 25,000 people. A pioneer of the Indonesian government’s Trans-National Government Migration (PIR-Trans) program, Asian Agri works with 30,000 plasma smallholders in Riau and Jambi who operate 60,000 hectares of palm oil plantations, as well as independent smallholders, bringing about positive impact on their quality of life and economic development.

Implementing a strict “no burn” policy and best practices in sustainable plantation management, Asian Agri has helped its smallholder partners improve productivity, yield and supply chain traceability, while assisting them obtain

certifications. The company's mills are technologically advanced and energy self-sufficient, minimizing greenhouse gas emissions.

Asian Agri is a member of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO). More than 86% of both owned plantations in North Sumatra, Riau & Jambi provinces and 100% of scheme smallholder plantations in Riau & Jambi provinces have been RSPO certified. All plantations, including those owned by smallholders, have been certified by ISCC (International Sustainability & Carbon Certification). The company has also been 100% ISPO (Indonesian Sustainable Palm Oil) certified.

The company's operations are ISO 14001 certified, while its Learning Institute and nursery research center in Riau province, Indonesia are both ISO 9001 certified. Asian Agri's R&D Center in North Sumatra was also given a certification by the International Plant-Analytical Exchange at the WEPAL lab at Wageningen University in The Netherlands, for its high standards.

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