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## 45 acres planted with vanilla

**FORTY-FIVE** acres of land in Sarawak have been planted with vanilla as of October 31, this year.

"Apart from its own 15-acre vanilla farm, the pioneer local private company has planted another 30 acres under contract farming arrangements with 31 farmers in the Kuching/Samarahan Divisions, five in central Sarawak, and 19 in Miri and Bintulu.

"These contract farmers own vanilla plots ranging from a quarter acre to six acres," Land Development Minister Dato Sri James Masing (**Pix**) said in his winding-up speech yesterday.

He further said that the company was collaborating with Forest Research Institute



of Malaysia (FRIM) on the production and promotion of vanilla seedlings through tissue culture.

"The company's long-term plan is to go into downstream activities by setting up an extraction plant and producing consumer products from

vanilla to earn greater economic benefits from the crop, and to stabilise the prices offered to its contract farmers," he added.

On jatropha cultivation, Masing said the government had approved a piece of 100-acre land for Sarawak Land Development Board (SLDB) to conduct Research and Development (R & D) on the crop, said Masing.

He said that his ministry had written to the Department of Land and Survey for the terms and conditions of the land use.

"Perimeter and detailed survey will be carried out as soon as we have received the necessary response from the Department," he added.