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Tajuk : From Palm Oil Fruits To Biofertilizers.

From palm oil fruits to biofertilizers

CMS-Unimas collaborative R&D initiative expected to conclude by June next year

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KUCHING: CMS Agrotech Sdn Bhd expects its research and development (R&D) initiative to turn empty palm oil fruit bunches into biofertilizers to be completed by June next year.

The activity is carried out in collaboration with Universiti Malaysia

Sarawak (Unimas) under an "improvement of the composting technology for production of value-added compost/biofertilizer" project, which was initiated three years ago.

The method used to convert these empty fruit bunches into biofertilizers is through inoculation of effective microbes and nutrient isolates.

"The microbes have been isolated

and are being characterised to ensure their effectiveness," Cahya Mata Sarawak Bhd (CMS) said in a filing with Bursa Malaysia. CMS Agrotech, which is 100% owned by CMS Infra Trading Sdn Bhd, a wholly-owned unit of CMS, is involved in manufacturing of organic compost and fertilizers.

CMS said the joint R&D partnership with Unimas also involved the devel-

opment of antagonistic bacteria for biological control of plant diseases.

According to an oil palm plantation owner, the empty palm oil fruit bunches are mainly used as mulch in plantations and also as an alternative fuel for electricity generation.

Malaysia is reported to produce an estimated 20 million tonnes of such empty bunches from crude

palm oil processing annually.

In a separate filing, CMS said it had bought back 801,000 company shares priced between RM4.43 and RM4.60 apiece for more than RM3.6mil between Sept 6 and 13.

Substantial shareholder Employee Provident Fund Board sold 160,000 shares on Sept 18, reducing its stake in CMS to 18.55 million shares.