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Chicken and eggs question

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Many worry about impact of price float after June

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KUALA LUMPUR: While industry players have lauded the government's proposal to float the price of eggs and chicken after June, consumer groups are worried about the impact on lower income earners.

Mydin Mohamed Holdings Bhd managing-director Datuk Wira Ameer Ali Mydin said floating the price of eggs and chicken would ensure there is enough supply in the market.

"When prices are floated, there will be more supply so automatically prices will drop.

"For the industry and businesses, we are more than happy that the government is listening to our views," he said when contacted.

While the government intends to lift the ceiling price on chicken and eggs after June, Ameer Ali suggested that it can be done as early as May after the first week of Hari Raya Aidilfitri.

"Floating the price starting from May 7 or 15 would be better as most people would have held Hari Raya open houses," he said.

On Tuesday, Agriculture and Food Security

Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Sabu said the price of chicken and eggs is expected to be floated after June as part of the government's efforts to overcome food shortage.

He also expressed confidence that his ministry would be able to fulfil the demand for chicken and eggs through price floating, adding that even now, there has been enough to meet the market demand.

Ameer Ali, however, said currently, there is not enough supply of chicken and eggs in the market.

He called upon the minister to make surprise visits to hypermarkets and wet markets to check on the supply.

"In my opinion, there is not enough supply at present," he said.

Federation of Livestock Farmers' Associations of Malaysia adviser Datuk Jeffrey Ng said they welcome the proposal to float the price of eggs and chicken.

"Price control of both items is not very fair to producers," he said.

However, should the price be floated, Ng said it would need to benefit both consumers and producers.

"We need to make the whole supply chain a healthy scenario to benefit all parties.

"No one should be given advantages, including wholesalers, then only will we have a fair market," he added.

Consumers Association of Penang president Mohideen Abdul Kadeer questioned if the government would be providing direct subsidies for those in the B40 and the lower M40 categories after floating the price.

"Floating the price will impact both groups.

"However, it will be less if the government directs the RM1.8bil savings from subsidies to farmers and those in the B40 and lower M40 groups," he said.

He also said subsidies should directly benefit consumers.

On the timing after June, Mohideen said it would be enough for the government to prepare the groundwork.



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