

Krabi Smart City to focus on mixed farming and tourism

The Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives is planning to launch the Krabi Smart City project on 973 rai of old palm plantations to promote mixed farming and tourism, Deputy Agriculture Minister Thammanat Phromphao said.

“The Agricultural Land Reform Office [ALRO] has reported that there are more than 30,000 rai of lands in Krabi whose concession contracts for palm plantation with the office have expired. But the lands could not be used for other purposes due to influential locals still profiting from the remaining palm trees, preventing villagers from using them for other purposes,” he said.

“The office has visited the lands in question and coordinated with military personnel to help cut down palm trees to prevent any individuals profiting from them. So far we have returned 973 rai of old palm plantation in Krabi Noi subdistrict, Muang district, to the ALRO,” Thammanat said.

“The office will be turning these lands into a smart city similar to the Yu Jaroen model city in Surat Thani,” added Thammanat. “Some 120 rai will be allocated for residential purposes where houses will be placed in close proximity for easier infrastructure management, while the rest of the areas will be reformed for mixed farming such as raising livestock, plantation and fishery. Palm plantation will no longer be allowed in these areas to prevent future problem and oversupply in the domestic market.

“Thammanat added that the ALRO will promote the growing of fruits and vegetables that have high demand in the current market, such as golden bananas. “We expect that by catering to market needs, farmers can increase their income from Bt8,000 per month growing oil palm to up to Bt15,000 per month growing seasonal fruits,” he said.

“The smart city will also be a platform for agricultural tourism, where we will promote homestay businesses and organise annual tour programmes in cooperation with the Tourism Authority of Thailand,” added Thammanat. “The project will be fully financed by ALRO’s fund.”

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