INTRODUCTION TO SKIM AKREDITASI LADANG BAIK MALAYSIA (SALM)

What is SALM ?

SALM is a national program implemented by the Department of Agriculture Sarawak in 2002 to recognize and certify farms which:

- adopt good agricultural practices (GAP)
- operate in an environmentally friendly manner
- are sensitive to workers welfare
- yield products that are of quality, safe and suitable for human consumption.

It is primarily developed for farms producing fresh fruits and vegetables.

The agriculture sector is being confronted with many issues and challenges that need to be addressed. Globalization and dismantling of trade barriers have resulted in many changes in the international food trade. Notable among these changes are those relating to the agric-food sector pertaining to environmental soundness, food safety, and worker health and welfare. There is also a general lack of knowledge and understanding on the concept of GAP. These challenges are faced by the fresh fruit and vegetable sector in Malaysia and initiatives are being undertaken by way of implementing GAP program.

SALM approach

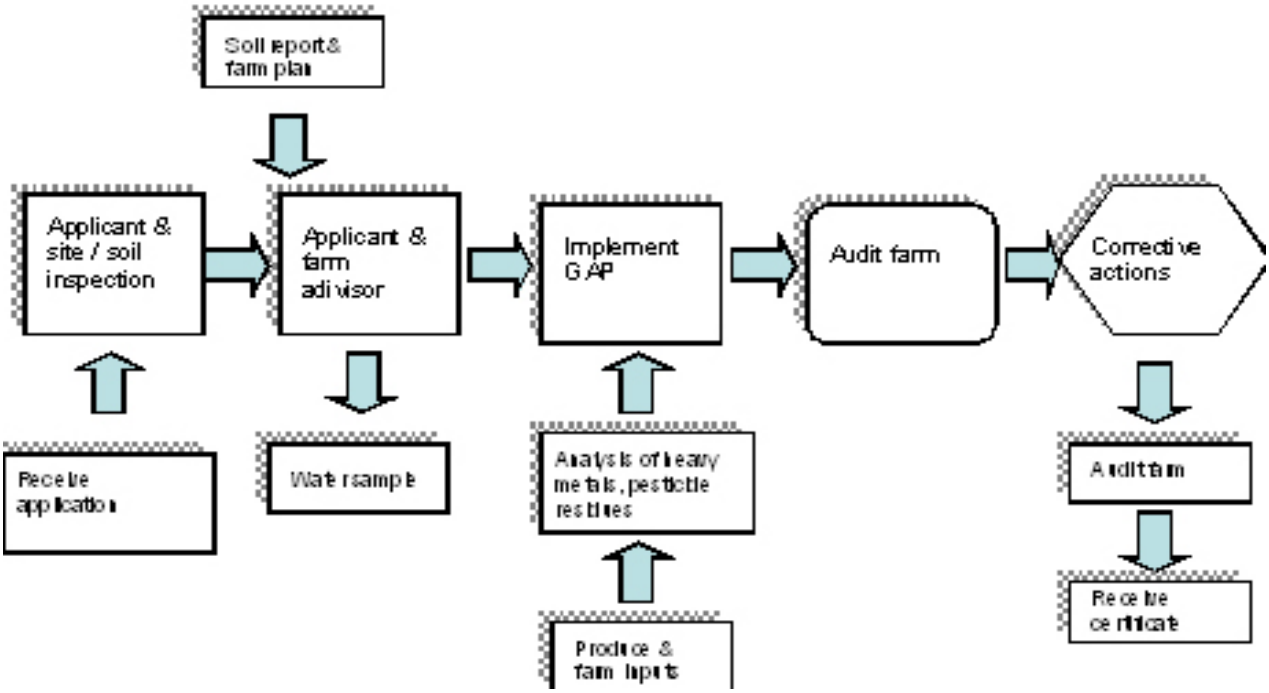
The approach used in SALM is developmental in nature and incorporates the element of continuous improvements as the implementation relies on minimum standards. The goal of the scheme is to get farmers to adopt and practice GAP as a work culture or as a norm on their farms.

Concept of SALM

This program is based on the concept of inspection and evaluation of farm and farming practices by inspectors and auditors for conformance to accepted and defined protocols, national guidelines, standards, legislation and policies of GAP. SALM incorporates field inspection, observations, interviews and auditing, as well as the sampling of harvested produce for pesticide residue and heavy metal analysis. Currently, the government bears the cost of inspection and analysis.

Process of certification

Certification is through farm visits to evaluate farming practices so that they are in conformity with stipulated conditions imposed by standards, guidelines and regulations currently in place. Farms conforming to the stipulated conditions will receive certificates of official recognition which allow them to affix seals of quality on their products destined for the markets. The certificate is renewable every two years.



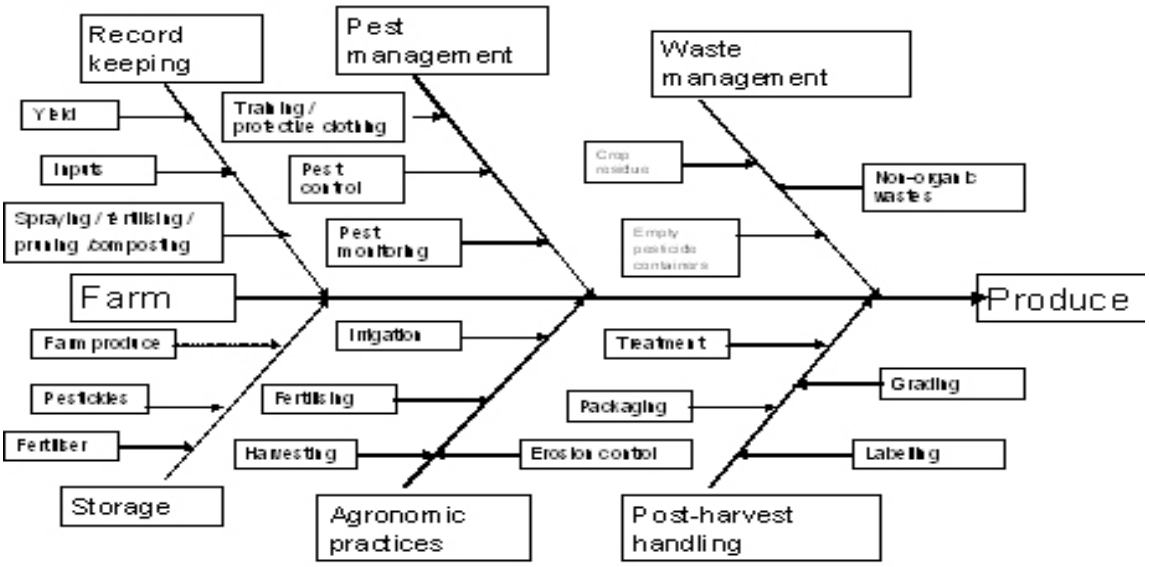
Steps in the processes of certification

Sample of SALM certificate

Scope of evaluation

SALM requirements are grouped into ‘major’ and ‘minor must’ categories. The former requires mandatory adherence. The 17 ‘minor must’ minimum standard requirements which must be fulfilled before certification is given to the farm are:

1. The farm is a legal entity.
2. The farm has a soil inspection report.
3. The soil and terrain is suitable for the intended crop.
4. The farm is situated at an elevation less than 1000 meters above sea level, exemption is given to those operated before 2002.
5. The farm practices sound soil conservation measures.
6. The farm maintains up-to-date records of 17 types of activities.
7. Sewage or industrial sludge is not permitted for fertilization.
8. Genetically modified planting materials are not permitted.
9. The pesticides used are legally registered by the Pesticide Board.
10. The farm practices integrated pest management (IPM).
11. The farm possesses a proper storage area for pesticides and fertilizers.
12. Farm workers use protective clothing when applying pesticides.
13. The farm possesses a proper waste disposal system.
14. The farm practices good harvesting techniques, handling and transport system.
15. The farm employs legal workers (above 16 years).
16. Pesticide residues in farm produce are less than the Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) of Schedule 16 of the Food Act 1983.
17. Contents of heavy metals are below the permissible limits of Schedule 14 of the Food Act 1983.



Fish-bone showing the elements in the Standard of Conditions

Status of SALM application

As of January 2010, a total of 15 farms out of 111 applications in Sarawak are certified. Another 59 farms are in the various stages of the certification process. A large proportion of the farms which have or are seeking accreditation are the vegetable farmers.

List and details of SALM certified farms in Sarawak

SALM farm	Location	Type of crops	Year certified
PPK Subis	Kebuloh, Miri	Nethouse vegetables	2003
Poh Lian Plantation	29th Mile, Kuching / Serian Rd	Nethouse vegetables	2003
Poh Lian Plantation	Sadong Jaya, Samarahan	Nethouse vegetables	2003
Wong Hiing Hiong & Sons	Sg. Mador, Bintangor	Nethouse vegetables	2003
Tiong Kai Hua	Sg. Stok, Sarikei	Dragon fruit	2003
M K Ting Plantation	Airport Rd, Kuching	Fruit orchard	2003
M K Ting Plantation	Tondong	Fruit orchard	2003
Mak Ah Kit Farm	Sg. Rait, Miri	Nethouse vegetables	2003
Poh Lian Plantation	31st Mile, Kuching / Serian Rd	Nethouse vegetables	2003
KTM Edible Mushroom Culture Farm	Oya Rd, Sibu	Mushroom	2004
Then Kok Hui	Sg Merah, Batu Niah	Coconut & dragon fruit	2005
Planters Harvest Sdn Bhd	Oya Rd, Sibu	Dragon fruit	2006
Moses Ak Tommy	Sg Resit, Siburan	Nethouse vegetables	2007
Chong Chiew Tung	Siburan	Nethouse vegetables	2007
Chong Chiew Foong	Siburan	Nethouse vegetables	2007

Benefits of SALM

Produce from SALM certified farms are preferred in the local market because they are produced in environmentally sustainable manner and safe for consumers. These farms are also eligible to apply for the Malaysian Best logo which is a branding program administered by Federal Agriculture Marketing Agency (FAMA).

Where to obtain information on SALM

SALM Secretariat,
Quality Assurance Program Unit,
14th Floor, Agriculture HQ,
Menara Pelita, Jln Tun Abdul Rahman,
Petra Jaya, Kuching.
Telephone: 082-441000

In the following months, this column will feature a series of articles on SALM.

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