



Cultivating Change: Why The Datai Pledge's Community Farming is What's Needed in 2026

Part of The Datai Langkawi's commitment to sustainability, the initiative, partnered under the 'Pure For The Future' pillar with local farmers and Very Green Ventures, champions sustainable agriculture and community resilience.



Langkawi, Malaysia, 8 December: As climate volatility intensifies and global supply chains face mounting pressure, [The Datai Pledge](#) is pioneering a community-based farming model that proves the power of partnering luxury hospitality with regenerative agriculture. The sustainability and conservation initiative of [The Datai Langkawi](#) has launched a tripartite partnership bringing together local farmers and sustainable agriculture consultancy Very Green Ventures (VGV). The initiative exemplifies The Datai Langkawi's solutions-led approach to sustainability – actively developing long-term, real-world solutions that benefit both people and the planet.

Despite its nature-rich context, the resort's supply chain relied heavily on imported produce from mainland Malaysia, driving up carbon emissions. The new community farming initiative addresses this by sourcing locally and ethically, strengthening Langkawi's agricultural ecosystem while reducing environmental impact.

The project tackles a critical question: *How can a luxury resort reduce its carbon footprint while empowering its community?* The solution: establish a sustainable local supply chain that supports small farmers, protects the environment, and delivers traceable, high-quality ingredients for guests, with surplus produce going to local markets.

For Langkawi's smallholder farmers, the initiative brings practical support and stability, addressing challenges such as limited resources for sustainable farming practices; difficulty maintaining stable markets; and reliance on intermediaries buying at low prices. Through this collaboration, participating farmers gain:

- **Capacity building** through access to training, technical guidance, and funding for upgraded facilities and farm infrastructure.

- **Market assurance**, with The Datai Langkawi as a guaranteed buyer, ensuring stable demand. Surplus produce beyond committed quantities can be sold to third-party markets.
- **Fair pricing** with consistent, transparent structures, subject to annual review.
- **Sustainable growth** via a long-term collaborative framework, enabling farmers to expand operations and build resilience.

The *Community-Based Farming Initiative* delivers tangible outcomes for nature and humanity. It strengthens local livelihoods through stable income, fair pricing, and reliable market access while reducing environmental impact by slashing food miles and ensuring access to high-quality, sustainably cultivated produce.

The initiative deepens connection between guests and their dining experience through traceability and storytelling, celebrating the people and places behind each ingredient, while also complementing the resort's own zero-waste permaculture garden showcasing locally sourced ingredients. It builds community resilience by fostering agricultural networks, knowledge sharing, and shared prosperity through sustainable local production.



Pictured (l-r): Along at his vegetable farm, Yusup harvesting pandan coconuts, and Mahyudi at his chicken farm

The pilot phase begins with three pioneering farmers; Muhammad Fuzail Akmal Bin Mahyuddin, also known as *Along* (cultivating a variety of lowland vegetables), *Yusup Bin Abdullah* (cultivating coconuts and papayas), and *Mahyudi* (rearing free-range, sustainably-raised chickens). With proven success, the model will expand to include additional farmers and crops, building a self-sustaining agricultural network across Langkawi.

Along – Lowland Vegetable Farmer

Brothers Muhammad Fuzail Akmal (*Along*) and Muhammad Suhail Amzar (*Angah*) tend 3.9-acres where they grow okra, long beans, ridge gourd, cucumbers, winged beans, calamansi lime, bananas, and pineapples. Despite challenges from extreme weather, soil-borne diseases and wildlife intrusions, their determination has built a reliable presence at local markets. Through this collaboration, they are refining their produce to meet luxury-hotel standards and expanding their expertise. Along aims to diversify into papaya, passion fruit, herbs, and leafy greens, supplying the resort while inspiring fellow farmers towards sustainable practices.

Yusup bin Abdullah – Coconut and Fruit Farm Owner

For over three decades, local farmer *Yusup bin Abdullah* has worked the land, evolving from vegetable grower into trusted producer of pandan coconuts and papayas on his thriving six-acre farm. Supplying both Pantai Cenang and The Datai Langkawi, Yusup navigates

unpredictable weather with resilience and a commitment to quality. The partnership lets him elevate his produce to luxury standards while scaling sustainably and supporting the wider farming community through knowledge-sharing by example.

Mahyudi – Free-range Chicken Farm Owner

With five years' agricultural experience, *Mahyudi* manages a 3.2-acre rubber plantation – recently replanted and not yet ready for harvest – alongside a household chicken farm housing up to 500 birds. Recommended by the Langkawi Veterinary Department, Mahyudi brings dedication and eagerness to learn. Through this collaboration, he is expanding into sustainably raised chickens with humane practices, meeting The Datai Langkawi's standards, and strengthening his livelihood whilst supplying high-quality produce to the resort.

Stephane Duvacher, General Manager at The Datai Langkawi, said: “The *Community-Based Farming Initiative* is more than a nice thing to do – it is a two-way partnership built on shared values and a collective vision for a greener future for Langkawi. It brings together The Datai Langkawi, passionate local farmers, and agriculture experts, respectfully empowering their ethical, sustainable farming practices. We are advancing farming practices in Langkawi – strengthening local livelihoods, reducing reliance on imported produce, and lowering our carbon footprint. Beyond the environmental benefits, this project is about community resilience, knowledge sharing, and the belief that when we support one another, we all thrive. This is a human story – of farmers, hoteliers, and agriculture experts, working together towards a better tomorrow.”

Very Green Ventures: The Connector, Mentor, and Enabler

Very Green Ventures (VGV), led by a multidisciplinary team at the forefront of the ethical food system, provides consultancy and mentorship, guiding farmers in sustainable agriculture, regenerative practices, and farm management. VGV acts as the critical link between The Datai Langkawi, local farmers and other relevant stakeholders. Their expertise in sustainable agriculture ensures that the project is not just commercial, but a model of ethical and regenerative farming.

The project is led by Paul Dass, Chief Executive Officer of Very Green Ventures, supported by key team members Dhanendra, Melvin Tong and Izhan Abidin. VGV's role is to enable the farmers' success and ensure practical and ethical solutions from operational planning to sustainability guidance.

Building Shared Value

Through the Pure For The Future pillar, The Datai Pledge continues to lead by example, embedding circular practices, reducing environmental impact, and creating economic opportunities for Langkawi's communities. Officially launched in 2020, [The Datai Pledge](#) funds, supports and implements initiatives protecting the island's fauna, flora, and communities. Collaborating with local social enterprises and NGOs, The Datai Pledge conducts research, monitoring, and education programmes, ensuring a long-lasting positive impact on the island's biodiversity and communities.

The *Community-Based Farming Initiative* translates sustainability into actionable, replicable models, harmonising luxury hospitality with environmental stewardship and social empowerment.

For more information on The Datai Langkawi and The Datai Pledge, please visit <https://www.thedatai.com/sustainability>.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

For high-resolution photos of the Community-farming launch Event, please click [here](#).

For high-resolution photos of The Datai Langkawi, please click [here](#).

For high-resolution photos of The Datai Pledge, please click [here](#).

ABOUT THE DATAI LANGKAWI

One of the world's most stunning resorts, The Datai Langkawi, a member of Leading Hotels of the World, is situated on the northwest tip of the island of Langkawi in Malaysia. Located in an ancient rainforest rich in wildlife and overlooking the tranquil Datai Bay awarded by National Geographic one of the Top 10 Beaches worldwide, the iconic property enchants with mesmerising nature, visionary architecture, understated elegance, and Malaysian hospitality. All the 121 rooms, villas, and suites at The Datai Langkawi, including the five-bedroom The Datai Estate Villa, offer breath-taking views of the surrounding nature. Elevated among treetops, set in the very heart of the rainforest, and located directly on the coastline, the dining outlets which include the award-winning The Gulai House, The Pavilion, The Dining Room, and The Beach Club, pay homage to the exotic flavours and culinary traditions of the region and beyond. Facilities include The Nature Centre, an educational facility and home to resident naturalists and marine biologists, and The Spa featuring Ramuan treatments, its own Akar retail range, and Voya facials. Leisure facilities include three pools, a state-of-the-art fitness centre at The Health Club; an array of wellness activities including Pilates and yoga, retail outlet The Boutique, a reserved space to showcase local arts and talents at The Atelier, as well as one of the most scenic golf courses in the world designed by golf legend Ernie Els, The Els Club Teluk Datai. The resort has founded The Datai Pledge in 2020 – a sustainability and conservation programme that supports Langkawi's unique fauna, flora, and communities. All proceeds from The Datai Pledge aid this work and contribute to local non-profit organisation. The Datai Langkawi is managed by Datai Hotels and Resorts Sdn Bhd, a company incorporated to manage and operate hospitality properties in Malaysia and beyond.

ABOUT THE DATAI PLEDGE

In 2020, The Datai Langkawi launched its environmental, community and conservation impact initiative, The Datai Pledge. It is founded on the belief that travel has the potential to be transformative; not only for the traveller but also for the host community. The Datai Pledge was created on the premise of protecting biodiversity and supporting the local community of Langkawi, for today and the future. It comprises four pillars: Pure For The Future, Fish For The Future, Wildlife For The Future, and Youth For The Future, working to make the resort's business operations more sustainable, and support marine life, terrestrial wildlife and local youth, respectively. For guests of The Datai Langkawi, The Datai Pledge aims to create educational experiences that inspire and uphold our collective role in responsible living on a wider global level. The Datai Pledge's vision is to integrate conservation and sustainability into the business operations, company ethos and guest experience of The Datai Langkawi and future properties, to protect and help regenerate the rich biodiversity and enable the local community to thrive. The Datai Pledge is working towards this goal by implementing a robust programme with local non-governmental organisations, social enterprises and community partners.

ABOUT VERY GREEN VENTURES

The mission of Very Green Ventures (VGV) is to spearhead responsible farming, with farmers who embrace ethical practices, nurturing plants and fish with utmost care. Rooted in VGV's passion for sustainable agriculture and a better world, VGV emerged as a beacon of change, championing the cause of food security in Malaysia, where expensive imported vegetables often elude the common populace. Guided by unwavering dedication, VGV continuously refine their farming techniques, exploring novel ways to optimize efficiency, minimize environmental impact, and conserve precious resources. Through collaboration with like-minded partners, VGV drive transformative change, laying the foundation for a greener, more prosperous future.

On the Community-farming Project in Langkawi, CEO Paul Dass oversees business planning, budgeting and policy development, ensuring alignment with organisational goals while fostering strong relationships with investors, government bodies and community partners. Dhanendra, with 25 years background in business consultancy, comes with experience in green technology and sustainability. He is overseeing daily operations, SOP development, resource management and strategic partnership. Permaculture and sustainability expert Melvin co-manages operations while driving ethical farm design, circular and regenerative processes, innovation and the integration of natural farming practices, as well as guiding crop planning and biodiversity research and implementation to enhance long-term productivity. On the financial front, Izhan brings over two decades of experience in finance and HR, managing budgeting, compliance, reporting and financial risk to ensure strong governance and alignment with the farm's sustainability objectives.

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