



Chuah (sixth from left), Saifuddin (seventh from left) together with some of the representatives from new local SMEs after receiving their certificates at the 'Buy Malaysian Products with Tesco' campaign launch at Tesco Extra Kajang. — SHAARI CHE MAT/The Star

Earning spot on hypermart shelves

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Fourteen local SMEs now have their products sold in Tesco stores

TESCO Stores Malaysia Sdn Bhd (Tesco) continues to support local small and medium enterprises (SME) to play a bigger role in the retail industry and enjoy higher sales.

In its latest initiative, Tesco has brought 14 new SMEs into its fold as part of its "Buy Malaysian Products with Tesco" campaign.

These SMEs, selling items ranging from cooking paste and confectionery to beauty products, is a testament to the retailer's strong belief that local products are of equal value and quality as international brands.

At the campaign's launch held at Tesco Extra Kajang, Tesco product director Kenneth Chuah said Tesco had long been a big supporter of local SMEs and brands.

"The 14 new SMEs that we are bringing in today as part of our 'Buy Malaysian Products' campaign have gone through multiple levels of tests and have proven that they stand on par with multinationals in terms of quality and delivery," he said in his welcoming speech.

"The campaign is a great opportunity to showcase and provide samples of those products to our customers," he added.

On being a big supporter of Malaysian SMEs and brands, Chuah announced that "about 80% of Tesco own brand products are all proudly Malaysian made and manufactured."

"Our very own baby products range, Fred & Flo, previously known as Tesco Loves Baby, are all designed to meet UK standards

while manufactured in Malaysia to ensure price affordability.

"Today, Fred & Flo diapers are a bestseller both in our stores and online, on top of being exported overseas to our neighbouring countries," he said.

He highlighted that the company had been exporting Tesco own brand products since 2018 to Singapore, Hong Kong, United Arab Emirates, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, which showed that there was demand internationally for great quality Malaysian-made products.

The retailer has also incorporated the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry's approved logo for 100 of its Tesco delivery trucks to bring more awareness of the campaign to the public.

Speaking to reporters later, Chuah said currently, Tesco had over 100 local SMEs selling more than 1,000 products.

He said there were also between 400 and 500 Malaysian suppliers selling thousands of products at Tesco's 60 stores across the country.

"We are still looking for more SMEs to help them to be stronger.

"Most of them are small enterprises and we want to help them build their business and enjoy big share of sales.

"We also look for more innovative group of suppliers," he added.

Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail, who was guest of honour at the event said: "Buy Malaysian Products'

campaign was aimed at improving public awareness of the quality of local products, encouraging consumers to buy those items and stimulating domestic economic growth.

"It will create more opportunities for Malaysian entrepreneurs from SMEs and marketplaces.

"Tesco is a platform which gives full cooperation to the Government to ensure success of this campaign," he said.

He complimented Tesco's efforts to help those new SMEs sell their products by exempting listing fee charges.

At the event, Saifuddin presented certificates to the new SME operators and visited their booths to learn more about their products.

Speaking at a media conference later, the minister said he was optimistic the SMEs would do well if they were given an opportunity to promote their products.

Saifuddin disclosed that SMEs contributed 38% to the country's gross domestic product, worth RM517bil in 2018.

He said Tesco recorded RM402mil in its sales of Malaysian-made products at its 60 stores up to June last year.

"Hypermarkets can be a good platform to market Malaysian products by placing those items at strategic locations."

He added that Malaysian-made products had shown exceptional achievement in terms of e-commerce, with sales of 2,300 products online by end of last year.

On top of that, Saifuddin said the

collaboration with AirAsia had seen over 500 Malaysian products available to its passengers.

"We are also in the midst of discussing with Malaysia Airports Bhd about how we can accommodate SMEs at airport terminals, as there is good market potential to cater for the different segments of customers," he noted.

Haircrafter International Sdn Bhd (HISB) is one of the successful SMEs to have men's grooming products on Tesco shelves.

HISB chief executive officer Amir Syakireen Ramli and project manager Afifah Ayob said the company had been selling three of its 10 types of men's grooming products exclusively at Tesco stores since December last year.

"We have the award-winning The Hipster Pomade priced at RM29 each, which is very popular at Tesco. It is a favourite among Malaysians aged between 13 and 35. We also have Xtreme pomade suitable for those actively involved in sports," said Afifah, adding that their products were also being marketed online and purchased by customers in 10 countries, as well as exported to Maldives and Indonesia.

NFA Technologies Sdn Bhd managing director Noormawarni Nordin is proud to see the company's Mismis Natural Halal Oral Care range sold in Tesco.

Founded in 2014, NFA Technologies focuses on researching, producing and marketing toothpaste with natural ingredients such as polyphenols from cocoa,

cloves and olive oil.

"It is great to have such a large chain like Tesco believing in our brand.

"We hope to expand our brand reach to the retailer's millions of customers," said Noormawarni.

Ready-to-eat sambal paste maker Samza Food Industries Sdn Bhd executive director Norhazlina Sajali is thrilled to introduce her range of traditional cooking authenticity to Tesco's customers.

The company, which was established in 2015, received certifications from Islamic Development Malaysia Department (Jakim) and Health Ministry's Safe Food Industry Responsibility unit (MeSTI).

"We are excited to introduce traditional dishes to Tesco's customers, using our bestsellers namely *sambal garing bitis* and *serunding halia*, which will now be available in Tesco stores.

"What makes Samza unique, apart from the taste, is our convenient packaging that allows you to take them anywhere even when you are travelling," said Norhazlina.

The public had the chance to sample the 14 new SMEs' offerings at Tesco Extra Kajang last week.

Tesco Malaysia was established in May 2002 with its first store in Puchong, Selangor.

In 2013, Tesco paved the way in online grocery shopping through the launch of Tesco Online, which started in Klang Valley before expanding to Penang, Johor Baru, Melaka, Negri Sembilan and Ipoh.