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FOREWORD

The refocus on the agriculture sector in the Ninth Malaysia Plan gives emphasis on revitalising the sector to become the third engine of growth. The transformation of this sector through emphasis on *New Agriculture* involves large-scale commercial farming, extensive application of modern technologies and production of high value products. The agricultural sector has contributed significantly to the growth and development of the Malaysian economy in the past decades even though the Malaysian economy has undergone structural changes with the prominent emergence of the manufacturing and the services sector.

This development has attracted much interests of researchers and analysts in examining and reviewing issues pertaining to the agriculture sector. In the first article, the author examines the linkages and interdependencies associated with the agriculture sector using the Malaysian Input-Output Tables 2000.

The second article reviews the changes in the socio-economic scenario of the natural rubber industry over the period 1996-2006 and re-examines its future potential and challenges ahead. The authors highlight the impediments besetting the natural rubber industry, particularly the smallholdings and the far reaching socio-economic impact on the lives of the rural populace.

The third article entitled 'Rebasing Producer Price Index : Malaysia's Experience' presents the approach adopted in rebasing the Producer Price Index (PPI) in Malaysia and highlights the steps taken to address the issues relating to limitations of data, updating of the weights of the commodity groups and the weights of the enterprises within the commodity groups.

HO SIOW KENG

Chief Editor

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Contents

Structural Change of The Agricultural Sector : Analysis Based on Input-Output Tables	Fauzana Hj. Ismail	1
Reviewing Rubber : Are We Losing Our Grips?	Aziz@Fikry Mohammad and Yatimah Sarjiman	15
Rebasing Producer Price Index, Malaysian Experience	Mazliana Mustapa	43
