

**Speech by Ms Grace Fu, Minister for Sustainability and the Environment, at the First Session of Stakeholder Engagement for the Lim Chu Kang Master Plan on 17 May 2021**

Good afternoon. It is my pleasure to be here with all of you at our first Stakeholder Engagement for the Lim Chu Kang master plan. Thank you for your support and for understanding the need to conduct this session via a virtual platform.

**Importance of Food Security**

2 The short film that you just watched provides a glimpse of what today's conversation is about. "You can go without many things in life, but you cannot go without food". Singapore imports more than 90 per cent of our food. We are vulnerable to disruptions to the global food system caused by climate change, disease or pest outbreaks, and volatilities of the global food market. Increasing local production, amongst other strategies, is important for food security. We have set ourselves the target of "30 by 30", to produce 30 per cent of our nutritional needs locally by 2030. "30 by 30" also features in the Singapore Green Plan 2030 that the Government launched in February and is one of the concrete steps we are taking to enhance our resilience against climate change.

3 In a survey conducted by the Singapore Food Agency (or SFA), 98 per cent of the respondents were of the view that it was important for Singapore to be able to produce our own food to reduce our reliance on foreign imports. 85 per cent of respondents identified the risks of disruption to food supply in times of crisis as the reason behind this view. I am heartened that there is common understanding of the need for Singapore to strengthen our local food production capabilities further. It is for this reason that we are here to kick-start an important conversation about the future of food production in Singapore.

**Opportunity to harness synergies and further integration**

4 As a small and densely populated country, we have to manage trade-offs between many competing land use needs, such as for housing, industry and green areas for sustainability and biodiversity. Our water, energy and labour constraints

also need to be factored in. With only about 1 per cent of land set aside for agriculture, we need to 'grow more with less', in a sustainable way. To optimise the limited land area that will be used for food production, SFA will embark on a holistic exercise to master plan our farmlands in Lim Chu Kang. We are looking to transform the area into a high-tech agri-food zone that can raise food production in a sustainable and resource-efficient manner.

5 By master planning Lim Chu Kang, we can re-parcel existing plots to optimise land use, develop infrastructure to support productive farming, and establish shared facilities such as waste treatment plants or packing facilities to enable farms to reap economies of scale. We also want to introduce circular economy principles, such that where possible, the by-products of farms can be used as inputs for other parts of the agri-food eco-system. Farms that are involved in upstream or downstream activities from one another can be located close by to benefit from a common eco system and avoid transportation.

6 We also envision the farms in Lim Chu Kang to be sensitively developed taking into account the surrounding nature areas and contribute towards the recreational offerings of the area. In addition to the Round Island Route which is planned to be looped through Lim Chu Kang, we will also explore implementing strategic trails and park connectors to bring people closer to the area. We would also like to facilitate educational tours of the farms from young school children to researchers from IHLs as we grow our agri-food sector. By doing so, we hope to see Lim Chu Kang as an attractive destination where Singaporeans will be excited to visit and enjoy for education and recreation.

### **Opportunity for co-solutioning and co-creation**

7 The Lim Chu Kang master plan will be a key milestone in our Singapore Food Story. We want to hear your vision for the area and co-develop a Lim Chu Kang that Singaporeans will be proud of. We believe that Lim Chu Kang can become a distinctive agri-zone that contributes to our food security, and evolve to be green, sustainable and climate-resilient. It will be an innovative agri-tech cluster that our youths will aspire to work in, and a recreation space that is well-loved by Singaporeans.

8 Over the next few months, I invite you to contribute your ideas and formulate your proposals at the series of engagement sessions that my colleagues have put together.

9 I'm sure everyone can relate to some part of the film we saw at the start. For me, it's the line "it takes a nation to feed our people". We all need to come together to secure Singapore's food future. Once again, I thank you for your enthusiasm and look forward to your ideas which will form part of the eventual master plan. Let us shape our food future together.

10 Thank you.