

## Center to promote organic crops in Taiwan

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**Singapore:** A Refined Agriculture and Biological Resources Research Center has been set up at National Cheng Kung University in southern Tainan for certification of plant molecular varieties and promotion of organic cultivation.

The center, equipped with a molecular laboratory for analyzing products to grant certification, has applied molecular genetic tools to identify plant species and confirm characteristics of the target crop.

NCKU President Hwung-Hweng Hwung pointed out that with the establishment of the center in accordance with the agricultural policy of Tainan city government, the NCKU will take the social responsibility to work with the local government to promote the examination system for organic vegetables and provide safe and non-toxic organic products to people.

According to professor Tzen-Yuh Chiang, chairperson of Department of Life Sciences, NCKU, Taiwan's agronomic technology is competitive in the world but lack of origin certification and variety rights confine the products to the domestic market.

The mission of the center is to promote trilateral cooperation among the industry, the government and the academia, Chiang noted, adding the alliance will make efforts to apply life sciences to refined agriculture and to exploit biological resources.

The R&D center will also include a plant factory in which temperature control and LED lights will be utilized to cultivate high-value crops, such as lily, ginseng and Gastrodia.