**Why do we  import so much sugar?**

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A report in the Post on Oct. 19 says: “Indonesia may import 5.4 million tons of raw sugar this year, more than double the 2.5 million tons imported last year.” This is ridiculous!

This year, as it has done in the past several years, the government blames the rainy weather for low sugar output. Consumers as well as the public are expected to continue to swallow this silly reason.

Where are the agricultural pundits? Don’t the two last ministers of agriculture hold doctorate degrees from the Bogor Institute of Agriculture (IPB) in West Java?

Doesn’t IPB claim to be the best school in agricultural science and agricultural economics in Indonesia, where our President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono earned one of his doctorate degrees?

Why can’t the government turn around our sugar production in the last ten years? Why do we let foreign farmers meet the huge demands of Indonesian consumers?

How come this year we imported 5.4 million tons, twice the amount of raw sugar we import annually and more than the total annual sugar consumption of 4.5 million tons?

Does the government, particularly the agriculture minister, say that annual domestic consumption has suddenly increased from 4.5 million tons to 8 million tons this year?  All this doesn’t make sense and it smells fishy, just like the meat quota scandal.

If the article is correct, it only confirms my belief that the people working in the Agricultural Ministry think that the public and farmers know nothing about the issue. This is an insult.

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