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Use of Betor for In-field Crop Collection and Semi-mechanised Upkeep Works in an Oil Palm Estate: A Case Study at PT LNK, Medan, Indonesia

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Betor is a combination of traditional rickshaw with a motorcycle. It is widely used in PT LNK for in-field collection of fresh fruit bunches (FFB). It improved the harvester productivity by 43 per cent when compared with the usage of conventional wheel barrow. In addition to crop evacuation operations, the betor can also be modified and used for semi-mechanised pest and disease (P&D) spraying and palm circle spraying in immature fields. The semi-mechanised spraying of P&D using betor improved labour productivity by 150 per cent and reduced the cost per hectare by 35 per cent when compared with conventional knapsack spraying. For palm circle weeding, the semi-mechanised betor system resulted in a 32 per cent increase in worker productivity and concomitantly reduction of cost by 9 per cent when compared with the conventional knapsack spraying. Betor is the preferred choice by estates and smallholders for in-field crop collection and upkeep works due to its low cost and ease of implementation.

Keywords: *Betor, in-field crop collection, pest and disease spraying, palm circle spraying.*

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