

**Creating Alternative Economic Activity Through Trial Use of Sawdust
as the Growth Media for Tiram Mushroom (*Pleurotus* sp.)**

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A number of earlier researches have shown that mushrooms have high fibers, high protein, low fats, low carbohydrates, low calories, and are rich in vitamins, minerals and essential acids. Regular consumption is thus believed to help balance the body's metabolism and to heal many diseases. Because it has become a healthy alternative to animal protein, consumer demand for mushrooms has been increasing, encouraging a closer look at its production systems particularly at using timber waste (sawdust) as a growing medium. Indonesia with its many tropical forests has great potentials for wood mushroom cultivation, especially since the country has been faced with problems concerning the utilization and/or disposal of timber waste.

This study was conducted to help solve the pollution problem posed by excessive timber waste and to provide an alternative livelihood for farmers. It was conducted in Karyasari village, Leuwiliang subdistrict, Bogor, West Java, which has plenty of available timber waste, a suitable temperature and humidity for Tiram mushroom culture, a nearby local market for product disposal, and most importantly, a well-organized local community of subsistence farmers.

With the active participation of local farmers, this research was conducted as a series of experiments to find an optimum sawdust-based growing medium for Tiram mushroom. It began by training the implementing group of farmers and building an in-grafting room and rearing house; then followed preparing the medium and establishing the growing process. The preparation process was conducted during the first two months; the experiments beginning on the 3rd month; and production and marketing was carried out from the 4th month onwards. The study is expected to be scaled out to a number of other places in Indonesia with similar timber waste disposal and utilization concerns.

Keywords: Tiram mushroom, timber waste, alternative livelihood