c) <u>Computerisation</u>

Malaysia has taken the lead in this region to develop an Agriculture Information System (AIS).   AIS is primarily aimed at accelerating the pace of agricultural development in the country in line with the `green revolution` concept.

Essentially, the AIS is a computerised system within the Ministry of Agriculture where information on soils, crops, farmers and serving officers are stored and are retrievable for the purpose of planning and implementing extension programmes.   Its purpose is to keep such information up to date and available to the extension service.   Major applications of the system are in the areas of extension services, human resource management, inventory management, management of soil resources and in agricultural development planning.

Data in AIS can also be used by extension officers to increase farm output.   The Department of Agriculture has records of more than 460,000 farmers in the country and this will enable it to identify groups of farmers for special attention.   AIS also enables the Department to oversee the use of land so that it is put to maximum production.   In agriculture development planning, the identification of areas suitable for crop development is important.   AIS is geared for this purpose by the incorporation of information from computerised mapping software into the database.