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MANILA BULLETIN:

Laurel forms group to review DA's regulatory policies, implement corrective measures

BY JEL SANTOS

May 30, 2024 03:21 PM



Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. has created a technical working group (TWG) tasked with conducting a thorough assessment of the agency's regulatory policies and implementing necessary corrective actions.

In a statement, he said the TWG will be chaired by Agriculture Undersecretary for Policy, Planning and Regulations Asis Perez. He is cochaired by Undersecretary and Chief of Staff Alvin John Balagbag. Both are lawyers.

The TWG was created through Special Order No. 753 issued last May 24.

The TWG, according to Laurel, will look into the results of the comprehensive review undertaken by DA regulatory agencies earlier and provide comments and inputs as well as

recommend changes, including “the repeal and amendment of conflicting and obsolete regulations, to rationalize the regulatory policies being implement by the Department.”

The agency said the TWG will endorse draft regulations proposing the repeal or amendment of existing rules to the DA Regulatory Clearinghouse System for thorough review.

Laurel said he formed the group to streamline regulations across different agencies within the DA, aiming to enhance efficiency, reduce bureaucratic obstacles, and address loopholes and uncertainties that may be exploited by unscrupulous individuals.

“We expect this review process to eventually foster the faster delivery of services to our stakeholders, easy the conduct of business with the DA as well as facilitate the entry of more investments in agriculture,” he said.

According to Perez, the TWG will proactively review many regulations, and the process is expected to take around one year to complete.

“Our mandate is to make the DA not just a fair and efficient regulator but, more importantly, an enabler to promote the growth of agriculture,” the undersecretary said.

He noted that priority will be given to reviewing regulations with significant impacts on the lives and livelihoods of stakeholders throughout the agriculture value chain.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/5/30/laurel-forms-group-to-review-da-s-regulatory-policies-implement-corrective-measures>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Lab-grown meat isn't on store shelves yet, but some states have already banned it

BY ASSOCIATED PRESS

May 30, 2024 10:35 PM



FILE - Chef Zach Tyndall prepares Good Meat's cultivated chicken at the Eat Just office in Alameda, Calif., June 14, 2023. Lab-grown meat is not currently available in any U.S. grocery stores or restaurants. If some lawmakers have their way, it never will be. (AP Photo/Jeff Chiu, File)

Lab-grown meat is not currently available in any U.S. grocery stores or restaurants. If some lawmakers have their way, it never will be.

Earlier this month, both Florida and Arizona banned the sale of cultivated meat and seafood, which is grown from animal cells. In Iowa, the governor signed a bill prohibiting schools from buying lab-grown meat. Federal lawmakers are also looking to restrict it.

It's unclear how far these efforts will go. Some cultivated meat companies say they're considering legal action, and some states – like Tennessee – shelved proposed bans after lawmakers argued they would restrict consumers' choices.

Still, it's a deflating end to a year that started with great optimism for the cultivated meat industry.

The U.S. approved the sale of lab-grown meat for the first time in June 2023, allowing two California startups, Good Meat and Upside Foods, to sell cultivated chicken. Two high-end U.S. restaurants briefly added the products to their menus. Some cultivated meat companies began expanding production. One of Good Meat's products went on sale at a grocery in Singapore.

But before long, politicians were pumping the brakes. Lawmakers in seven states introduced legislation that would ban cultivated meat, according to Kim Tyrrell, an associate director with the National Conference of State Legislatures.

In the U.S. Senate, Republican Sens. Jon Tester of Montana and Mike Rounds of South Dakota introduced a bill in January to prohibit the use of lab-grown meat in school lunch programs.

The backlash isn't confined to the U.S. Italy banned the sale of lab-grown meat late last year. French lawmakers have also introduced a bill to ban it.

The pushback is happening even though lab-grown meat and seafood are far from reaching the market in a meaningful way because they're so expensive to make.

Cultivated products are grown in steel tanks using cells from a living animal, a fertilized egg or a storage bank. The cells are fed with special blends of water, sugar, fats and vitamins.

Once they've grown, they're formed into cutlets, nuggets and other shapes. Companies have been heavily focused on scaling production to bring down costs and on winning government approval to sell their products.

Now, they're also trying to figure out how to respond to the state bans. Upside Foods launched a Change.org petition, inviting supporters to "tell politicians to stop policing your plate."

"It's a shame they are closing the door before we even get out of the gate," Tom Rossmeissl, the head of global marketing for Good Meat, said. The company is considering its legal options, he said.

Backers of the bans say they want to protect farmers and consumers. Cultivated meat has only been around for about a decade, they say, and they're concerned about its safety.

"Alabamians want to know what they are eating, and we have no idea what is in this stuff or how it will affect us," Republican state Sen. Jack Williams, the sponsor of Alabama's bill, wrote in an email to The Associated Press. "Meat comes from livestock raised by hardworking farmers and ranchers, not from a petri dish grown by scientists." But those within the cultivated meat industry say their products must meet rigorous government safety tests before going on sale. Their nascent industry isn't trying to replace meat, they say, but figure out ways to feed the world's growing need for protein.

Rossmeissl said the U.S. is currently leading the effort to develop cultivated meat and seafood, with 45 companies in the space, but that could change. In January, for example, an Israeli company received preliminary approval to sell the world's first steaks made from cultivated beef. China is also investing heavily in lab-grown meat.

"It should be startling and concerning to Americans that we're throwing up barriers to something that could be really important to our economy and food security," he said. State Sen. Jay Collins, a Republican who sponsored the Florida bill, noted that the legislation doesn't ban research, just the manufacturing and sale of lab-grown meat. Collins said safety was his primary motivator, but he also wants to protect Florida agriculture.

"Let's not be in a rush to replace something," he said. "It's a billion-dollar industry. We feed a ton of people across the country with our cattle, beef, pork, poultry and fish industries."

Rossmeyssl thinks the meat industry is trying to avoid what happened to the dairy industry after the introduction of plant-based alternatives like oat milk. Plant-based milk made up 15% of U.S. milk sales last year; that's up from around 6% a decade ago, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Good Food Institute, an advocacy group for plant-based and cultivated products.

Meat producers did back the bans in Florida and Alabama. The leaders of those states' cattlemen's associations – which are advocacy groups for ranchers – stood next to both governors as they signed the bans into law.

But the picture is more complicated at the national level, where the meat industry doesn't support bans on cultivated products. Some meat producers, like JBS Foods, are working on developing cultivated meat of their own.

"We do not support the route of banning these outright," Sigrid Johannes, the director of government affairs for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, said. "We're not afraid of competing with these products in the marketplace."

The Meat Institute – which represents JBS, Tyson and other big meat companies – sent a letter to Alabama lawmakers warning them that the state's ban was likely unconstitutional since federal law regulates meat processing and interstate commerce.

The founders of Wildtype, a San Francisco-based company that makes cultivated salmon, traveled to Florida and Alabama to testify against the bills but weren't able to sway the outcome. They hope someone will challenge the bans in court but say it's not realistic for their tiny company to take on that battle.

"We are David and on the other side of the aisle there is a gigantic Goliath," Wildtype co-founder Arye Elfenbein said.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/5/30/lab-grown-meat-isn-t-on-store-shelves-yet-but-some-states-have-already-banned-it>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Vaccine rollout vs ASF to reinvigorate PH's hog industry--Villafuerte

BY DEXTER BARRO II

May 30, 2024 03:03 PM

AT A GLANCE

- Camarines Sur 2nd district Rep. LRay Villafuerte says the upcoming rollout of imported vaccines to curb the spread of African Swine Fever (ASF) will help revitalize the country's hog industry.



(Unsplash)

Camarines Sur 2nd district Rep. LRay Villafuerte says the upcoming rollout of imported vaccines to curb the spread of African Swine Fever (ASF) will help revitalize the country's hog industry.

In a statement on Thursday, May 30, Villafuerte said the Department of Agriculture (DA) is set to kick off the vaccination program either this June or July, as previously announced by President Marcos.

“The anti-ASF vaccine rollout...is expected to put an end to ASF-related deaths of locally grown pigs, thereby stabilizing the hog population, stanching the multibillion-peso annual

losses in this livestock subsector, and eventually pulling down the retail prices of pork products that have unduly spiraled ever since this deadly virus struck the country in 2019,” he said.

The lawmaker stressed that the local hog industry continues to reel from the shortfall in pork supply and the resulting market price spike.

This, despite several policy measures initiated by the DA and its BAI (Bureau of Animal Industry) to repopulate the domestic hog population amid ASF outbreaks all over the country. ASF carries an almost 100 percent fatality rate for infected pigs and boars.

The disease has led to a 50 percent drop in the domestic swine population, from 13 million before it first appeared in 2019, to 6.6 million in 2021.

With the absence of a nationwide vaccine drive, the pork inventory in cold storage facilities now totals 50,658 metric tons (MT) as of May 2024. This is a huge decrease from last year’s 67,359 MT, according to the National Meat Inspection Service (NMIS).

“Because of the continued supply shortfall, pork prices have jumped from the previous average of P250 a kilo in the market to the current P400 and above,” noted Villafuerte.

Villafuerte, president of the National Unity Party (NUP), earlier told the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to speed up its registration process for the chosen Avac vaccine from Vietnam to prevent any serious setbacks.

“The FDA needs to be on track with its registration and accreditation process for the Vietnamese-made vaccine because the implementation of an immunization drive by the DA-attached BAI is contingent on the availability of this anti-ASF drug, which, in turn, will depend on when our [FDA] can give its go-signal to the commercial use of these shots for our local hogs,” he explained.

According to BAI, the ASF outbreak has reached 5,324 barangays, in 73 provinces, in 17 regions over the last five years.

As of mid-May, there are active ASF cases in 11 provinces, in seven regions.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/5/30/vaccine-rollout-vs-asf-to-reinvigorate-ph-s-hog-industry-villafuerte-1>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Rice tariff cut cannot reduce inflation rate—farmers' group

BY JEL SANTOS

May 30, 2024 01:34 PM



The proposal to implement a tariff cut in a bid to reduce prices of imported rice cannot lower the country's inflation rate, the Federation of Free Farmers Cooperatives, Inc. (FFFCI) said on Thursday, May 30.

Leonardo Montemayor, the chairperson of the Federation of Free Farmers Cooperatives, Inc. (FFFCI) and former Department of Agriculture (DA) secretary, asserted that the tariff reduction will solely benefit importers and traders, with no advantage to consumers.

“Hindi rin nito mapapababa ang inflation rate (The tariff reduction will not reduce the country's inflation rate),” he said in a radio interview.

“Anuman ang benepisyo ng reduced tariff rate sa inangat nating bigas, hindi naman makikinabang ang consumer kasi in effect ganoon pa rin ang magiging presyo. Ang malaking pakinabang diyan ‘yung importer saka trader (Whatever benefits come from the reduced tariff rate on our imported rice, the consumer will not benefit because the price will essentially remain the same. The ones who will gain the most from this are the importers and traders),” he went on.

The former DA secretary said the proposal for tariff reduction is quite alarming.

“Kasi iyong taripa sa bigas, eh, apat na taon nang pinababa ‘yan, ‘yung mga bigas mula India, Pakistan at ibang non-ASEAN countries, ibinaba na ‘yun. Hindi naman nagkaroon ng karampatang pagbaba sa presyo ng bigas para sa ating mga mamimili. Mahal pa rin (Because the tariff on rice has been reduced for four years now, including for rice from India, Pakistan, and other non-ASEAN countries. Despite this, there hasn't been a corresponding decrease in rice prices for our consumers. It's still expensive,” Montemayor pointed out.

According to the FFFCI, there is no certainty that reducing the tariff rate from 35 percent to 17.5 percent will be effective.

“Eh, ang nangyari nga kasi noong nakaraan ‘di ba ‘yung taripa sa Pakistan. Ang ginawa ng Pakistan, itinaas naman iyong bigas na in-export sa atin wala ring epekto. Patas lang (What happened previously with the tariff on rice from Pakistan was that Pakistan increased the price of the rice they exported to us, so there was no effect. It balanced out),” he said. For the farmers' group Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura (SINAG, cutting tariffs will “penalize” local producers and promote the interests of a small group of privileged importers and favored traders.

“We have been under a reduced tariff regime for the last four years; and yet rice prices have gone up,” Jayson Cainglet, the executive director of SINAG, noted.

He added: “Reduced tariff resulting in more imported rice have not reduced rice prices.”

Montemayor said the government should fortify the Philippines' agricultural production.

The DA's budget, he said, should be significantly increased.

Constructing roads in rural areas is very important, he added.

Earlier, Finance Secretary Ralph G. Recto said a reduction of the tariff on imported rice to 17.5 percent would be more advantageous for consumers and farmers.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/5/30/rice-tariff-cut-cannot-reduce-inflation-rate-farmers-group>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Recto: Agri truck toll-hike exemption to curb inflation

BY XANDER DAVE CEBALLOS

May 30, 2024 11:40 AM

The exemption of trucks from toll fee increases and availing of rebates will prevent an impact on second-round effects on food inflation, Finance Secretary Ralph G. Recto said.

“I thank our government agencies as well as our partner toll expressway concessionaires and operators for their full cooperation,” Recto said in a statement on Thursday, May 30.

“This measure will prevent the second round effects of toll rate increases onto food inflation and ensure that we keep food prices stable and affordable for our consumers,” he added.

Second-round or second-order effects are also called indirect effects and are manifested as wage hikes and transport fare increases.

This initiative, which will be implemented starting June 1, was led by the departments of finance, transportation, and agriculture; Toll Regulatory Board, with the support of the Metro Pacific Tollways Corp. and San Miguel Corporation Tollways.

To qualify for the Agri-Trucks Toll Rebate Program, truckers should be accredited by the agriculture department and have valid Autosweep and/or Easytrip RFID accounts.

Once enrolled and approved into the system, agri-truckers will enjoy toll rebates that will be credited to their RFID accounts every Wednesday of the following week.

The rebate program is expected to run for three months and will be subject to evaluation for possible extension, and should benefit 200 to 300 agricultural trucks traveling from north and south Luzon.

It covers the Manila-Cavite Expressway, North Luzon Expressway, Subic Clark-Tarlac Expressway, Muntinlupa-Cavite Expressway, and the South Luzon Expressway.

The enrollment for the rebate program is as follows:

1. Register the RFID account.
2. Submit and present the requirements such as:
 - Original DA accreditation certificate
 - Copy of the vehicle's OR/CR (Official Receipt/Certificate of Registration)
 - Valid ID
 - Easytrip/Autosweep card
3. Fill up the agricultural trucks toll fee increase exemption form provided by the Customer Service Center personnel.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/5/30/recto-agri-truck-toll-hike-exemption-to-curb-inflation>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Researchers find a tiny organism has the power to reduce a persistent greenhouse gas in farm fields

BY ASSOCIATED PRESS

May 30, 2024 11:33 AM

In the world of greenhouse gas emissions, carbon dioxide gets most of the blame. But tiny organisms that flourish in the world's farm fields emit a far more potent gas, nitrous oxide, and scientists have long sought a way to address it.

Now some researchers think they've found a bacteria that can help. Writing in this week's nature, they say extensive lab and field trials showed the naturally derived bacteria reduced the nitrous oxide without disrupting other microbes in the soil. It also survived well in soil and would be relatively cheap to produce.

"I think that the avenue that we have opened here, it opens up for a number of new possibilities in bioengineering of the farmed soil," said Lars Bakken, a professor at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences and one of the authors of the study.

A pound of nitrous oxide — better known as laughing gas, the stuff that relaxes people in the dentist's chair — can warm the atmosphere 265 times more than a pound of carbon dioxide, and it can persist in the atmosphere for more than a century. Farmers' heavy use of nitrogen fertilizer drives up the amount produced in soil, and in 2022 it accounted for 6 percent of all U.S. greenhouse gas emissions from human activities, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

Reducing fertilizer use can help, but crop yields would eventually fall.



In this April 28, 2004, file photo Mearl McCartney plants soybeans using a no-till drill near Bowling Green, Ohio. In the world of greenhouse gas emissions, carbon dioxide gets most of the blame. But tiny organisms that flourish in the world's farm fields emit a far more potent gas, nitrous oxide, and scientists have long sought a way to address it. (AP Photo/J.D. Pooley, File)

That's a big problem in agriculture, "so the fact that they have developed a unique strategy to reduce it pretty dramatically was really interesting," said Lori Hoagland, a professor of soil microbial ecology at Purdue University who was not involved in the study.

Bakken and his colleagues used organic waste to grow their bacteria, reasoning that many farmers already apply processed manure-based fertilizers so it could be easily integrated into their routines. Building on past work, they searched for a microorganism that would last long enough to make a real dent in nitrous oxide emissions without staying in the soil so long that it disrupted other tiny life forms that are often vital for crop health.

In field trials, they used roving robots to measure nitrous oxide emissions day and night, comparing conditions in soil with and without the bacteria. They found the bacteria reduced the nitrous oxide emissions of an initial fertilizer application by 94 percent, and a couple weeks later, dropped the emissions of a subsequent fertilizer application by about half. After about three months, there was no difference in the makeup of microbial life forms, suggesting their bacteria wouldn't disrupt the soil.

The bacteria they settled on — *Cloacibacterium* sp. CB-01 — is found naturally in anaerobic digesters, machines that are already being used to transform organic waste products like cow manure into biofuels. The fact that the bacteria is not genetically modified might ease its acceptance and adoption, said Paul Carini, a soil microbiologist at the University of Arizona who was also not involved in the research.

Bakken said the bacteria could be included in certain fertilizers on farms as soon as three to four years from now if the economics make sense.

Carini thinks they do.

"Any time you're using a waste product from one industry to benefit another industry, that's pretty cost-effective," he said.

However, Bakken pointed out that farmers aren't paid for reducing nitrous oxide emissions, and he thinks there have to be more incentives to do so. "The task for the authorities is to install policy instruments that makes it profitable in one way or another," he said.

Hoagland, the Purdue professor, said more research in field conditions would likely be needed before the bacteria could be deployed worldwide, as there are many different types of farm soils.

"If they can get this to work across soils and things, it would just have a tremendous impact, for sure," she said.

It's a challenge that has long vexed academics as well as major agricultural companies that have tried to develop organisms that can be added to the soil for beneficial effect, Carini said. He said that where many inquiries in this direction have been spotty, this one had clearer results. Like Hoagland, he said more work is needed to prove the bacteria's effectiveness. But he called the work a blueprint for selecting beneficial organisms that can be added to soil. "I think this is the next frontier in soil agriculture research," he said.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/5/30/researchers-tiny-organism-power-reduce-a-persistent-greenhouse-gas-farm-fields>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Agri chief invites Bruneian firms to tap huge potentials in PH agri sector

BY BETHEENA UNITE

May 30, 2024 01:13 PM

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. told Bruneian companies that there is a huge business potential in the Philippines' agriculture sector as he invited them to invest in the country.



President Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr. meets with Bruneian businessmen on May 29, 2024 during his two-day state visit in Brunei. (Photo courtesy of Malacañang)

Laurel, who was part of the delegation of President Marcos during his two-day state visit in Brunei, told Brunei investors of the various opportunities in Philippine agri-trade and agri-business.

He enumerated the myriad reasons why they should choose the country, pointing out its growing domestic market and export potential, rich natural and human resources, and favorable policy environment.

The Agriculture chief told them that the Philippines has a significant domestic market for agricultural products and high-quality food commodities, given the population of over 110 million people growing at an annual rate of 1.5 percent and rising middle-class population with changing dietary preferences.

Aside from export-oriented crops such as bananas, pineapples, coffee, coconuts that have strong demand abroad, there are also new and emerging export products like abaca, coffee and seaweed that are gaining international popularity, Laurel said.

“The Philippines still has an export potential of approximately \$2.7 billion for tropical fruits and vegetables, \$452 million for fish and shellfish, and \$2.2 billion for processed foods and beverages,” Laurel told Bruneian businesses, adding the Philippines is stimulating this potential through preferential trade agreements with other countries.

The country’s rich natural and human resources make it viable for business and investment, he said.

He further said that the Philippine’s abundant land and fishery resources support the availability of local raw materials for agro-processing, while its fertile soil, diverse climate, and water resources make the country suitable for various crops and livestock.

Moreover, the 58-million rural population, the third largest in the ASEAN region, is a sizeable pool of human resources for agriculture and agro-processing, Laurel added.

Investors should also consider the Philippines because of its favorable policy environment, he pointed out.

“Modernizing Philippine agriculture is a critically important agenda of our government. Fueled by our long-term vision of a food-secure and resilient Philippines with empowered and prosperous farmers and fishers, the Philippine government is embarking on plans and programs from this year through 2027 to accelerate the modernization of Philippine agriculture and transformation of food systems,” he noted.

“Our development framework to support the modernization and industrialization of agriculture stretches through 2030,” he added.

Laurel also said foreign investors can benefit from various incentives, tax breaks, and streamlined processes being offered by the Philippine government.

Among the investment opportunities in Philippine agriculture by sector include irrigation system, farm mechanization services, and feed milling facilities.

In the post-harvest and processing and logistics segment, investors could consider investing in modern post-harvest storage systems, integrated food terminal facilities, establishment of fish ports including landing, and post-harvest.

Another area is cross-cutting segment, in which Bruneian investors could put their money on agri-fishery industrial business corridors, agri-fishery enterprises and business incubation initiatives, state-of-the-art service laboratories and testing and analysis, ICT-based interventions, organic multiplier farm, seed centers in the community, and composting system/facilities for organic agriculture.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/5/30/agri-chief-tells-bruneian-firms-there-s-huge-business-potential-in-philippine-agri-sector>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Galunggong price up by P40 per kilo

[Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

May 31, 2024 | 12:00am



BFAR spokesman Nasser Briguera, citing initial reports, said the typhoon left P1 million worth of galunggong damaged.

STAR / Fil

MANILA, Philippines — The retail price of galunggong or round scad nationwide has increased by P40 per kilo due to the effects of Typhoon Aghon, according to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources.

BFAR spokesman Nasser Briguera, citing initial reports, said the typhoon left P1 million worth of galunggong damaged.

“Based on the price monitoring of BFAR... from P200 (per kilo), it went up by P240,” Briguera said.

He said the supply of fish remains stable, noting that not all fish sold in the markets are locally sourced.

“We have no imported fish arriving as importation is only done during the closed fishing season,” Briguera added.

The BFAR is still waiting for reports on damage to the fisheries sector due to Aghon.

“We still don’t have a complete report in terms of damage, but initially... P1 million in Region 5,” Briguera said.

He said the minimal supply of galunggong was due to the decrease in unloading.

Briguera said the retail price of galunggong is seen to normalize once the weather improves.

Based on the monitoring of the Department of Agriculture in Metro Manila markets, the retail price of galunggong ranged between P160 and P280 per kilo.

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2024/05/31/2359263/galunggong-price-p40-kilo>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DA expands climate info system to aid farmers, fishers

[Jasper Emmanuel Arcalas](#) - The Philippine Star

May 31, 2024 | 12:00am



In this photo taken on April 25, 2024 Filipino farmer Eddie Balagtas shows a drought-stricken farm in San Antonio, Nueva Ecija.

AFP / Jam Sta. Rosa

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) is expanding its climate information system across all regions with the adoption of the Agro-Climatic Advisory Portal (ACAP) to help farmers and fisherfolk cope with weather disturbances.

The ACAP is a new digital tool developed and piloted by the DA through its Climate Resilient Agriculture Office in the Bicol Region. It is an online web portal capable of “automatically generating and disseminating climate information services” such as climate- and weather-informed farming and fishing advisories, the DA said.

“All concerned are hereby directed to implement the expansion of climate information services across all regions,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said in Department Order 9.

The DA regional field offices were instructed to develop their own ACAP that would be integrated to the central ACAP-Philippines portal “for better coordination and dissemination” of advisories especially in preparation for the onset of La Niña and other climate-related risks.

Tiu Laurel noted that the ACAP would help the department in managing future agricultural losses due to extreme climatic conditions since farmers and fisherfolk would be equipped with advanced information regarding weather and climate situations.

The DA noted that the number of climate-related threats to the agriculture sector has been rising in recent years. It said that the average number of destructive typhoons has increased to nine every year from eight.

Furthermore, the DA said the annual average production losses due to climate hazards have increased to P30 billion between 2013 and 2022 from P29 billion in 2010 to 2019.

The department emphasized that the rice sector remains as one of the agriculture sectors greatly affected by climate hazards, resulting in rising food prices and food insecurity.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/05/31/2359288/da-expands-climate-info-system-aid-farmers-fishers>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Filipina chefs give world-class twists to Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao dishes

[Deni Rose M. Afinidad-Bernardo](#) - Philstar.com

May 30, 2024 | 2:38pm



Chefs Salonga-Datu, Castro SyCip and Araos-Wijangco (three women at the center, top left photo) and their creations for 'Higara: A Night of Filipino Food Culture 6 Hands Dinner'

NCCA / Released; Philstar.com / Deni Rose M. Afinidad-Bernardo

MANILA, Philippines — In celebration of Women’s Month last March, Filipino Food Month last April, and National Heritage Month this May, the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) recently held “Higara: A Night of Filipino Food Culture 6 Hands Dinner” featuring Filipina chefs to honor the country’s vibrant culture and delectable cuisine.

Recently staged in Sheraton Hotel Manila in partnership with the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Tourism, and the Philippine Culinary Heritage Movement, the month-long Filipino Food Month (FFM) celebration had the theme “Kalutong Filipino, Lakas ng Kabataang Makabago.”

Presidential Proclamation No. 469 established April as FFM or Buwan ng Kalutong Pilipino, while the dinner featuring Filipina chefs is in relation to Republic Act No. 9710, otherwise known as Magna Carta of Women, and initiated by NCCA to enable women's participation in the formulation and implementation of plans for national, regional, and local developmental activities.

The dinner emphasized the presentation of cuisines and meals that Filipino women farmers, women-led cooperatives, and women chefs have planted, harvested, processed, and prepared. The event highlighted the culinary artistry of three talented Filipina chefs: Waya Araos-Wijangco, Gel Salonga-Datu, and Rhea Castro SyCip.

Chef Jam Melchor, head of the Philippine Culinary Heritage Movement, kicked off the event with an opening message, followed by Agnes Catherine Miranda from the Department of Agriculture and Hon. Verna Covar-Buensuceso from the Department of Tourism. Victorino Mapa Manalo, NCCA Chairman, praised the chefs for elevating Filipino cuisine.

The menu, crafted by the three chefs, featured appetizers like Pinikpikan Rillete by Chef Araos-Wijangco; and Kulawu Salad by Chef Salonga-Datu, main dishes including Banguigui-Sulu marlin by Chef Araos-Wijangco, and Kalderetang Pato by Chef Castro SyCip, and desserts such as Bibingka Cheesecake by Chef Salonga-Datu and Binaki by Chef Castro SyCip.

Araos-Wijangco shared at her introduction of Banguigui-Sulu marlin that she used a 41-kilo fresh catch straight from Sulu fishermen.

“And because it came from Sulu, I wanted a little Mindanao treatment to the dish, so we dipped it in a coco tamarind sauce. I pickled some Sakurap – little onions you see on top of the fish. It's grown in Benguet, because we have now substantial Muslim communities up in the north. They grow a lot of the condiments and herbs that they use in their cooking in Benguet also,” she narrated.

“We always feel successful when we know the people who grew everything in the plate that we serve,” she declared. “And now, we already know the fishermen who caught the fish in the plate. Creating systems like this, can you imagine if this kind of transaction can be repeated nationwide by so many restaurants in so many ways? The benefits that farmers and fishermen would get for not having to deal with middlemen, and they get so much value from their produce is the kind of

system that we want to create.”

Climate change, according to her, is among the biggest threats to the country’s food system.

Castro SyCip, a food and beverage practitioner for over 20 years, including for international hotel chains, likened Kaldereta to Adobo as “each family or each household has its own traditions” in cooking these. Her family, she shared, prepares Kaldereta with coconut milk or cream.

For Kalderetang Pato, she added liver to the coco cream she used to flavor the seared duck breast as sauce thickener. Instead of whole peas, she added foam peas in the plate to taste.

The evening was enriched by performances from Banda Kawayan, Ramon Obusan Folkloric Group, Bayang Barrios, and Angeli Benipayo. A tribute video honored the farmers who contribute to the meals we enjoy. Beyond just food, the event celebrated storytelling, culture, and the unique experiences that define Filipino cuisine.

<https://www.philstar.com/lifestyle/food-and-leisure/2024/05/30/2359136/filipina-chefs-give-world-class-twists-luzon-visayas-mindanao-dishes>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Farmers' group opposes planned rice tariff cut

By: [Luisa Cabato](#) - Reporter / [@luisacabatoINO](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 09:57 PM May 30, 2024



(REUTERS/File Photo)

MANILA, Philippines — A farmer's group on Thursday expressed its opposition to the planned [cut in tariffs on rice imports](#) that are supposed to curb inflation and reduce rice prices.

In a statement, the Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) claimed that previous adjustments in tariffs on corn, rice, and pork did not result in cheaper prices for consumers.

Finance Secretary Ralph Recto previously said the government [plans to temporarily reduce rice tariffs](#) below the already lowered rate of 35 percent to 17.5 percent, which could cut rice retail prices by P5 per kilo.

But FFF said that the P5 per kilo reduction is not guaranteed to reduce retail prices and “could depress palay prices by P3 per kilo if cheap imported rice is dumped into wholesale markets, where domestic rice is also sold by millers and traders.”

“This could result in a loss of Php 33 billion to rice farmers, who normally harvest 11 million tons of palay in the second half of the year,” FFF said.

“Moreover, assuming an additional 2 million tons of rice imports during the second semester, the DoF tariff proposal would mean foregone customs revenues of Php10 billion that are legally earmarked for rice farmers’ productivity programs. Together with the losses from lowered palay prices, farmers stand to lose a total of Php 43 billion from the proposed tariff cut for 2024 alone,” it added.

FFF National Manager Raul Montemayor noted that rice retail prices actually increased when the government reduced tariffs on non-ASEAN rice imports.

The FFF added that the decrease in tariff also “failed” to expand the Philippines’ rice resources beyond Vietnam and Thailand, with non-ASEAN countries accounting for less than four percent of total imports last year.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1946809/group-on-rice-tariffs>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

UN's FAO extends aid to El Niño – hit Isabela farmers

By: [John Eric Mendoza](#) - Reporter / [@JEMendozaINO](#)

10:47 PM May 30, 2024



MANILA, Philippines — Unconditional cash assistance to farming households cushioned the effects of the El Niño phenomenon in Isabela province, the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said.

According to FAO, the one-time distribution of multipurpose cash for 964 rice and corn farming households from 25 villages were used for basic necessities and alternative livelihood.

“Beneficiaries used the funds to buy food, cover school-related expenses and even pay debts,” the FAO said in a statement on May 27.

“Others used the funds to engage in vegetable trading as drought conditions peaked in the province.”

Aside from the multipurpose cash assistance, other FAO interventions included the distribution of supplemental cash for irrigation used to purchase fuel for water pumps, while farm tools were also turned over to 210 registered farmers.

The FAO said that while the multipurpose cash is important for urgent needs, it is also important to invest in proactive measures to mitigate the adverse impact of drought on poor farmer families.

FAO estimated that in the Philippines, a dollar invested in anticipatory action interventions like stated above could yield \$4.4 in benefits and avoided losses.

The Department of Agriculture estimated that the agricultural [damage caused by the El Niño phenomenon](#) has already reached [P6.3 billion](#), damaging 60,000 hectares of land.

The El Niño, or the weather phenomenon which increases the prospect of below-normal rainfall conditions, brought record-high temperatures and a dry spell to the country.

The state weather bureau, however, declared the official start of the rainy or wet season in the country on Wednesday.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1946835/uns-fao-extends-aid-to-el-nino-hit-isabela-farmers>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Typhoon Aghon leaves over P21 million damage to agriculture – NDRRMC

By: [Zacarian Sarao](#) - Reporter / [@zacariansINO](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 12:08 PM May 30, 2024



This May 26, 2024, photo shows the flooded portion of Buendia Avenue in Pasay City due to continuous rain brought by then-Tropical Storm Aghon, which intensified into a typhoon category later. Aghon (international name: Ewiniar) left more than P21 million in agricultural damage, based on the May 30, 2024, report of the National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (NDRRMC).INQUIRER / RICHARD A. REYES

MANILA, Philippines — Typhoon Aghon (international name: Ewiniar) left more than P21 million in agricultural damage, according to the National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (NDRRMC).

In a situation report released Thursday, the NDRRMC said Aghon caused P21,651,458 losses in agriculture when it lashed Luzon and Visayas.

The cost accounts for 292.9 hectares of farmland, with 918 metric tons of production deficit in volume.

The NDRRMC also said the country's first typhoon this year damaged P448,300 worth of livestock, poultry, and fisheries. In total, Aghon affected 369 farmers and fisherfolk.

Meanwhile, the total number of individuals affected by Aghon rose to 51,858, based on the NDRRMC's May 30 report.

Eight people were reported injured during the typhoon, it added.

On the typhoon death toll, the NDRRMC said it received reports that six people were killed but only one has been confirmed so far.

As of May 30, the NDRRMC said the government already distributed P6,765,912.89 worth of food packs to affected families.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1946595/aghon-leaves-over-p21-million-damage-to-agriculture-ndrrmc>

BUSINESS WORLD:

DoF estimates P10B in foregone revenues from lower rice tariffs

May 30, 2024 | 12:32 am



A worker unloads a sack of rice at a warehouse in Tondo, Manila, May 7, 2024. — PHILIPPINE STAR/JOHN RYAN BALDEMOR

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance (DoF) proposal to further lower the tariffs on rice imports is estimated to bring down prices by as much as P5 per kilo, but also result in around P10 billion in foregone revenues.

“Our current estimate is less than P10 billion in (foregone) revenues if the (tariff cut) is implemented,” Finance Undersecretary and Chief Economist Domini S. Velasquez said in mixed English and Filipino at a forum on Wednesday.

Finance Secretary Ralph G. Recto earlier proposed to lower tariffs on rice imports to 17.5%, from the current 35%, to bring down prices of the staple.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary and Spokesperson Arnel V. de Mesa said the proposed tariff reduction could help bring down the price of imported rice by as much as P5 per kilo.

“If we lower the (tariff) to 17.5%, the reduction (in prices) will be big. Our initial estimates, we see about P4 to P5 reduction,” he said.

As of May 28, the average retail price of imported well-milled rice rose to P52-P54 per kilo from P40-P46 a year ago. Imported regular milled rice ranged from P49-P51 to P37-P38.

Meanwhile, local well-milled rice ranged from P48-P55 per kilo, higher than the P39-P46 band in the year-ago period. Regular milled rice averaged P45-P52 from P34-P42 previously.

Ms. Velasquez said the government generates some P30 billion in tariff revenues from the implementation of the Rice Tariffication Law (RTL).

However, she said the potential drop in revenues is not an issue if the tariff reduction will help bring down prices of rice.

“On the DoF’s part, we’re willing to forego that tariff loss just to make sure inflation is down,” she added.

Ms. Velasquez said that the discussions on the tariff proposal are still in the early stages.

“I think (the proposal) is 15% to 20%. Before, when rice prices increased, there were even requests of 10%,” she said.

In December, the government approved the extension of the reduced most favored nation tariff rates on several commodities, including rice, until Dec. 31, 2024. Tariff rates for imports of rice were kept at 35% for shipments within the minimum access volume quota and for those exceeding the quota.

As of April, the government has collected P16 billion from rice tariffs.

The Philippines imported 1.89 million metric tons (MT) of rice as of early May, data from the Bureau of Plant Industry showed.

Ms. Velasquez said global rice prices are easing but there are still pressures due to the lean season.

“We saw that prices in the market this May are already easing from April... We hope that lowering the tariff will help, especially during the lean season.”

Mr. Recto earlier said the retail price of rice could drop by as much as 20% by September. — **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocson**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/top-stories/2024/05/30/598407/dof-estimates-p10b-in-foregone-revenues-from-lower-rice-tariffs/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Farmers see reduced rice tariffs depressing palay farmgate prices

May 30, 2024 | 9:12 pm



Farmers are seen in a rice field in Bustos, Bulacan, Oct. 17, 2023. — PHILIPPINE STAR/KJ ROSALES

FARMERS said that the further reduction of rice import tariffs could dampen palay (unmilled rice) farmgate prices, and estimated the income lost to farmers at P33 billion

The Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) said in a statement that every P5 per kilogram drop in the retail price of the grain could bring down the palay farmgate price by P3 per kilo if “imported rice is being dumped into retail markets.”

Finance Secretary Ralph G. Recto, on Monday, proposed to lower rice import tariffs to 17.5% from 35%, with the government seeking to bring down rice prices by 20% by September.

“Any new tariff reduction will be useless if our foreign suppliers jack up their prices, especially since they know that we have no choice but to buy their rice,” FFF National Manager Raul Q. Montemayor said.

The FFF said that exporting countries took advantage of earlier tariff cuts by raising their prices. Most Philippine rice imports are shipped in from Vietnam or Thailand.

It added that the reduced tariffs had failed to diversify the Philippines' rice sources, as non-ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries accounted for less than 4% of imports.

The Department of Finance (DoF) said that the further reduction in rice tariffs could potentially result in P10 billion in foregone revenue for the government.

“When government reduced tariffs on non-ASEAN rice imports from 50% to 35% starting in May 2021, rice retail prices actually rose. Savings from lower tariffs were simply pocketed by importers and middlemen and were not passed on to consumers,” Mr. Montemayor added.

Executive Order No. 50 extended the reduced tariffs on rice imports until December. Rates were kept at 35%, regardless of the minimum access volume and country of origin.

“The main beneficiaries of decreased tariffs will be the relatively well-off, who can better afford to buy good-quality rice,” Mr. Montemayor said.

“Tariff cuts are not needed since import prices are expected to go down soon anyway, as stated by Secretary Recto himself,” he added.

Rice imports amounted to 1.97 million metric tons as of May 23, according to the Bureau of Plant Industry. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/05/30/598710/farmers-see-reduced-rice-tariffs-depressing-palay-farmgate-prices/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

French participation sought in setting up proposed Bohol dairy, cheese facility

May 30, 2024 | 9:15 pm



REUTERS

THE National Dairy Authority (NDA) said that it is hoping to seal a partnership with the French government to put up a dairy and cheese facility.

“We have a project ongoing still under consideration between a French company and the Philippine government,” NDA OIC Administrator Galvino Alfredo C. Benitez said on the sidelines of a forum Thursday.

“They are planning put up a dairy farm and we can accommodate them in Bohol,” he added.

Mr. Benitez said that the partnership would be conducted through a French private firm, which is now conducting feasibility studies.

“We should be finishing it this year. So probably there will be an implementation that will be starting by next year for both the dairy farm and as well as the cheese facility,” he added.

He added that the French firm is also willing to conduct technology transfer and provide dairy cattle.

“The cheese facility is a new idea, and they are also pushing for it... it is still being written up for funding,” he said.

The Philippines imports about 99% of its dairy requirement.

In 2023, dairy production amounted to 17,850 metric tons (MT), or about 0.8% of milk consumption of 1.94 million MT. The milk cow herd was 75,798 head.

Mr. Benitez said that the NDA is forecasting an “incremental increase” in dairy production during the year.

The government is aiming to increase dairy production to 80 million liters of milk per year by 2028.

“Increasing domestic milk production is seen as a strategy to promote food security, help solve malnutrition and increase the income of farmers in the dairy sector,” he said.

He added that the NDA is hoping to persuade coconut farmers to try dairy production with funding from the coconut levy fund.

Republic Act No. 11524, or the Coconut Farmers and Industry Trust Fund Act, placed coconut levy assets into a trust fund aimed at rehabilitating and modernizing the industry.

“Instead of giving it back to the coconut farmers in cash, it will be through services. (One possibility is) dairy. So, we’re encouraging coconut farmers to enter dairy,” he said. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/05/30/598713/french-participation-sought-in-setting-up-proposed-bohol-dairy-cheese-facility/>

MANILA STANDARD

Recto supports trucks' exemption from toll increase

By Darwin G. Amojelar

May 30, 2024, 9:49 pm

Finance Secretary Ralph Recto said he supports the exemption of trucks transporting agricultural products from toll hike and providing them with rebates starting June 1, 2024 to reduce food inflation and ensure stable food prices for Filipinos.

“I thank our government agencies as well as our partner toll expressway concessionaires and operators for their full cooperation. This measure will prevent the second-round effects of toll rate increases onto food inflation and ensure that we keep food prices stable and affordable for our consumers,” Recto said.

The initiative was led by the Department of Finance (DOF), the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB), the Department of Transportation (DOTr) and the Department of Agriculture (DA), with the support of the Metro Pacific Tollways Corp. (MPTC) and San Miguel Corporation (SMC) Tollways.

The Agri-Trucks Toll Rebate Program caters to truckers that are accredited by the DA and have valid Autosweep and/or Easytrip RFID accounts.

Once enrolled and approved into the system, toll rebates will be credited to the truckers' RFID accounts every Wednesday of the following week.

The rebate program is targeted to run for three months subject to extension, and is seen to benefit 200 to 300 agricultural trucks traveling from north and south Luzon.

Covered by the program are the Manila-Cavite Expressway, North Luzon Expressway, Subic Clark-Tarlac Expressway, Muntinlupa-Cavite Expressway and the South Luzon Expressway.

<https://www.manilastandard.net/business/314453480/recto-supports-trucks-exemption-from-toll-increase.html>

MANILA STANDARD

Bumper tobacco harvest



By Revoli Cortez

May 30, 2024, 11:20 pm

A female tobacco farmer in Sudipen, La Union raises her harvest of fresh high quality tobacco leaves which command good prices at the market.

<https://www.manilastandard.net/gallery/news-in-photos/314453525/bumper-tobacco-harvest.html>

La Union farmers, fishers honored

By Gabriel L. Cardinoza

May 31, 2024

SAN FERNANDO CITY, La Union — For their contribution in sustaining a strong agricultural production in the province, the La Union provincial government honored its farmers and fisherfolk during the celebration of the Farmers and Fisherfolks month this May.

Some 33 farmers, fisherfolk and agripreneurs were honored during the "Aldaw ti Pammadayaw (Recognition Day)" on Monday at the La Union Convention Center here, according to the La Union Provincial Information Office in a press statement sent to The Manila Times.

Gov. Raphaelle Veronica Ortega-David thanked the farmers and fisherfolk of her province for their resilience, solidarity and crucial role in boosting the economy and in attaining the vision of the province to be the heart of agritourism in Northern Luzon by 2025.

"May this recognition serve to uplift the morale of our local farmers, fisherfolk and agricultural workers. We at the provincial government firmly believe that they play such a significant role in ensuring the sustained prosperity of our local economy," Ortega-David said.

The province increased its rice production to 5.79 metric tons (MT) per hectare from 4.56 MT per hectare in 2023. This contributed to the remarkable performance of the province as the third fastest growing economy nationwide obtaining a 10.2 percent growth rate.

Recognized as Most Outstanding Farmers were Medardo Ordinario, Norberto Zabala Jr., Joselyn Estolas, Freddie Monis, Lapicto Bugtong, Nelson Tavas and Julius Caesar Dumaguin.

Awarded as Most Outstanding Fisherfolk were Dante Noces, Jose Dayap, Lorna Bautista, Jomar Hidalgo, Vivian Casuga, Arnulfo Velasco, Marcial Sobrepena, Delailah Lacadue and Rolando Rabang.

Recipients of the Most Outstanding Organic Farmer awards were Primo Balderas, Federico Rullamas and Florencia Mendoza. The Most Outstanding Agricultural Entrepreneur Awards went to Rowena Ramos, Shirley Bernal, Josephine Culbengan, Emily Tucay, Valentin Dangpilen, Lopemae Hana Bautista, Jefte Dangalan, Timoteo de Guzman, Jose Laroya and Geneva Ganalon.

The awardees were assessed based on their initiatives and accomplishments that made a positive impact in their respective communities. They received plaques and checks amounting from P10,000 to P40,000. "This award is not only my personal success, but a symbol of the collective victory of farmers in the province whose toil and labor persistently despite the challenges of the times," said Dumaguin, one of the most outstanding farmers

The celebration was centered on the theme, "Diligence and Fortitude: Offering of Farmers and Fisherfolk for the Provincemates."

Ortega-David, meanwhile, said that the provincial government will remain steadfast in its commitment to develop programs that will empower and help farmers and fisherfolk increase their productivity and improve their livelihood, thereby fostering development in the province's agriculture and fishery sector.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/05/31/regions/la-union-farmers-fishers-honored/1949190>

THE MANILA TIMES

DA chief sets review of regulatory policies

By [Janine Alexis Miguel](#)
May 31, 2024

AGRICULTURE Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. has formed a technical working group (TWG) to review and potentially revise the department's regulatory policies.

Undersecretaries Asis Perez and Alvin John Balagbag were appointed co-chairmen of the working group based on Special Order 753 issued on May 24, 2024.

Tiu Laurel said on Thursday that the working group would examine the results of a comprehensive review conducted earlier by DA regulatory agencies.

The TWG will provide feedback, suggestions and recommended changes, including the repeal and amendment of conflicting and outdated regulations, to streamline the DA's regulatory policies.

"I created this technical working group to harmonize regulations of various agencies of the DA to promote efficiency, trim red tape, and plug loopholes and clarify ambiguities that could be exploited and abused by unscrupulous individuals," Tiu Laurel said in a statement.

Regulations to repeal or amend existing rules will then be endorsed by the TWG to the DA Regulatory Clearinghouse System for further review.

"We expect this review process to eventually foster the faster delivery of services to our stakeholders, ease the conduct of business with the DA, as well as facilitate the entry of more investments in agriculture," Tiu Laurel said.

Perez, meanwhile, said the TWG would actively review numerous regulations, with the process anticipated to last about a year.

He added that one of their goals was to transform the department into an effective regulator and a facilitator for agricultural growth.

"There will be priority regulations to review, those that have far-reaching impacts on the lives and livelihoods of our stakeholders across the agriculture value chain," he said.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/05/31/business/top-business/da-chief-sets-review-of-regulatory-policies/1949258>

The cost of cheap rice

FINER POINTS

By Dr. Fermin D. Adriano, PhD

May 31, 2024

THE move to restore the National Food Authority's (NFA) power to import rice as a way to build its stocks is being justified by proponents as leading to a substantial decline in rice prices. They argue that the Rice Tariffication Law's (RTL) provision prohibiting the NFA to import is misplaced and has handicapped the government from actively intervening in the market to prevent soaring rice prices.

It is being bandied that if the NFA is allowed to import, the government can offer rice at P30 per kilo. The prevailing market price now is around P48 for regular milled rice and P52 for well-milled rice. Special and premium rice are priced around P58 and upward.

Rice at P30 per kilo will indeed be a great relief for long-suffering consumers, particularly those belonging to the bottom 30 percent of the income quintile. Around 60 percent of the poor's incomes (even higher for some now given rising food prices) goes to purchase food and some 20 percent of it used to buy rice. A decline in rice prices will thus be a huge benefit to the poor. The only problem is that those who are promising rice at P30 per kilo, once the authority of NFA to import is restored, are not telling us how much the proposal will cost the public and how long such can be sustained.

My previous columns in this paper have repeatedly challenged proponents of amending the RTL to inform the public of the exact cost of restoring the NFA's power to import. To this date, however, I have yet to see the exact figures as they prefer instead to issue press releases trumpeting the supposed miraculous result. In the

absence of any knowledgeable discourse, let me try a crude estimate of how much it will cost taxpayers to provide P30-per-kilo rice to the public.

The Philippine Rice Research Institute has just published the latest prices of rice in Thailand and Vietnam. It noted that Thailand's 25-percent broken is now at P36.75. Vietnam's 5-percent broken costs P36.63. With a 35-percent tariff imposed on rice coming from Asean, this means that the Thai 25-percent broken will cost P49.61, and Vietnam's 5-percent broken will cost P49.45.

Most of our rice imports comes from Vietnam at almost 90 percent of the total. Assuming that the NFA is going to keep getting rice from Vietnam, it will have to pay the price of P36.63. It will likely be exempted from paying the 35-percent tariff since it is a government entity. Assuming that added total logistics costs amount to P10 per kilo, that means that the final cost will be around P46-47 per kilo. If the government sells rice at P30, it will have to shoulder a loss of P16-17 per kilo.

Our daily rice consumption is 38,000 metric tons (MT). The total rice consumption for the year is a little over 16 million MT. For the NFA to stabilize rice prices, the rule of thumb in economics is for it to control around 10 percent of the market, meaning 1.6 million MT will have to be imported. At the lower price of P46 per kilo, the NFA will need P73.6 billion to procure 1.6 million MT. By selling at P30 per kilo, it will lose P16 per kilo. Multiply this by 1.6 million MT, and the NFA will lose P25.6 billion to maintain the P30 per kilo support price.

An alternative is for the government to reduce its imports to around half (5 percent) of the 1.6 million MT needed to ensure a successful rice price stabilization intervention. The problem is that at that volume, the imports will have little effect on taming rice inflation. In other words, rice prices will continue to rise. A second possible implication is that Kadiwa stores and other designated outlets by the government to sell cheap rice will quickly run out of stocks.

Already limited in the kilos of rice that they can buy, the poor will suffer the further ignominy of expecting to buy the staple only to find out that stores have run out of supply. That will be the worst political optics that can happen to the administration: long queues of a consuming public infuriated by the inability of the government to deliver on its promise.

We have repeatedly suggested that there is a better alternative: temporarily reduce rice tariff from 35 to 10 percent. By doing this, the private sector can bring in rice at a cheaper price and, in the process, check rising rice prices. Bangladesh has adopted a variable rice tariff: duties are raised when supply (during harvest) is bountiful and lowered when supply is lean (during planting season).

This scheme was proposed more than 35 years ago when I was part of a team of professors at UP Los Baños that wrote the agricultural agenda for the Cory Aquino administration. However, vested interest groups angling for possible commissions that could be earned in importing rice were just too powerful and influential. They remain so to this day.

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<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/05/31/business/top-business/the-cost-of-cheap-rice/1949251>

Aklan town bans fishing due to oil spill

By Rjay Zuriaga Castor

May 31, 2024

ILOILO CITY — The local government of New Washington in Aklan has ordered the suspension of fishing activities in several areas following an oil spill in Barangay Polo on Sunday.

The spill, traced to a vessel owned by Metallica Shipyard, released an estimated 150 liters of oil to the sea, according to the Philippine Coast Guard Sub-Station in Dumaguit.

The local government said the oil spill has affected the shipyard's vicinity in Barangay Polo, along with Sitio Malogo, Kamingawan, Lagatik, and Riverside in Barangay Poblacion; and Sitio Kamangahan in Barangay Tambak.

In response, Mayor Jessica Regenio-Panambo issued an executive order (EO) on May 28, suspending all fishing and aquatic resource harvesting in the affected zones.

"The contamination of aquatic resources following the oil spill can lead to a possible environmental and health concern," read part of the EO.

Metallica Shipyard owner Jonathan Salvador said the incident occurred when rising seawater due to Typhoon Aghon destabilized their vessel which is undergoing maintenance.

He added that a rope entangled under the vessel contributed to the instability, damaging an onboard oil container.

The shipyard pledged to cover all the damages.

No injuries have been reported from the oil spill incident.

The operations at the Metallica Shipyard have also been temporarily suspended.

New Washington is dubbed as the "seafood capital" of Aklan, with major products including oysters, crabs and prawns.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/05/31/regions/aklan-town-bans-fishing-due-to-oil-spill/1949192>

Tariff cut to depress palay prices by P3/kg

By Jed Macapagal

May 31, 2024

THE Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) said halving rice tariffs from 35 percent to 17.5 percent may depress local palay prices by P3 per kilogram and does not guarantee retail prices of rice and inflation will go down.

Department of Finance (DOF) Secretary Ralph Recto recently proposed the tariff cut, saying this could reduce rice retail prices by P5 per kg.

FFF said previous adjustments in tariffs on rice, corn and pork did not bring about cheaper prices.

The group said lower rice tariffs can pull down palay prices “if cheap imported rice is dumped into wholesale markets, where domestic rice is also sold by millers and traders.”

Raul Montemayor, FFF national manager, has urged the government to look for alternative ways to bring down rice prices without hurting local farmers.

“Government can just buy rice locally or even import if absolutely necessary and distribute these to poor consumers through its Kadiwa (Centers) and other outlets. The private sector can take care of supplying unsubsidized rice to consumers who can afford to buy them. Tariff cuts are not needed since import prices are expected to go down soon anyway, as stated by Secretary Recto himself,” said Montemayor.

FFF added lowering rice tariffs may result to P33 billion losses to rice farmers who normally harvest 11 million tons of palay in the second half of the year. The group said assuming an additional 2 million tons of rice imports arrive during the second semester, the DOF tariff proposal would mean foregone customs revenues of P10 billion that are legally earmarked for rice farmers’ productivity programs.

That would be a total of P43 billion in 2024 alone.

Montemayor said when government reduced tariffs on non-Asean rice imports from 50 percent to 35 percent starting May 2021, rice retail prices actually rose instead of declined.

“Savings from lower tariffs were simply pocketed by importers and middlemen and were not passed on to consumers,” he said.

FFF said exporting countries took advantage of earlier tariff cuts by raising their prices, citing that rice exports from Pakistan used to be about 8 percent cheaper than Vietnam rice before the tariff cuts in 2021 but are now equal in price.

“Any new tariff reduction will be useless if our foreign suppliers jack up their prices, especially since they know that we have no choice but to buy their rice,” Montemayor said.

The group also said the tariff cut in 2021 also failed to significantly expand the country’s rice sources beyond Vietnam and Thailand as non-Asean countries account for less than 4 percent of total imports in 2023.

FFF said more than two-thirds of rice imports were premium grades which give better profit margins to importers.

https://malaya.com.ph/news_business/tariff-cut-to-depress-palay-prices-by-p3-kg/

Economic gains touted abroad

By Malaya Business Insight

-

May 31, 2024

IN every trip abroad, President Marcos Jr. does not miss the window of opportunity to sell the Philippines as an investment destination. The idea is to entice as many foreign investors and convince them to start businesses in the Philippines, and for those who have ongoing ventures, to expand their business activities here. The rationale behind this is to generate more jobs for Filipinos and further ramp up economic growth.

With the trip to Brunei Darussalam this week, the same schedule was followed. One of the highlights of the President's state visit to this Asean friend is the Philippines Business Forum during which he again talked about merits and advantages of doing business in the country.

Marcos enumerated key fiscal and policy reforms such as the Retail Trade Liberalization Act, Foreign Investments Act, Public Services Act, and the Renewable Energy Act, and stressed that these new laws make the Philippines attractive for business ventures, both local and foreign.

He told Brunei's business leaders that "the Philippines is making strides as a nation in terms of improving the ease of doing business, demonstrated by our efforts to simplify tax payments and regulatory processes."

'President Marcos was persistent in urging them to seriously consider the Philippines as their prime investment destination.'

This presidential rote will not necessarily translate into an investment route for foreigners if they find that the economic data being dished out, along with the physical business environment, do not fit the investment hype.

For one, the Philippine gross domestic product (GDP) in the first quarter of this year reached 5.7 percent, indicating just very little recovery at all. Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Arsenio Balisacan, however, cited the figure as among the highest in Asia.

Just a couple of weeks ago, President Marcos proclaimed that the Philippines will soon be a major contributor to the Indo-Pacific region's economic activity.

"I am proud to share that our economic achievements have been outstanding. [In 2023], the Philippines' 5.5 [percent] GDP growth surpassed major economies in Asia based on the latest available data," the President said in his address at the 6th Indo-Pacific Business Forum in Taguig City.

“Foreign direct investments continue to flow in, with four consecutive months of expansion. Our investment pledges have also soared, reflecting a healthy pipeline of inward FDI,” he said.

Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) partner countries play a significant role in the Philippines’ robust economic growth, contributing substantially to its FDI and approved investments, the President said, adding that through these economic strengths, the administration aspires to transform the Philippine economy into a regional hub for smart and sustainable manufacturing and services.

Secretary Balisacan said: “Despite our challenges on both domestic and international fronts, our economy continues to demonstrate remarkable resilience and growth. This performance retains the country’s position as a leading force among Asia’s emerging economies.”

He added that the government is doing all it can to contain the effects of the El Niño that has so far caused almost P6 billion in damage to agriculture as of the first week of May this year.

Both before the business leaders of Brunei and the 14 partner-nations of the Indo-Pacific region, President Marcos was persistent in urging them to seriously consider the Philippines as their prime investment destination. He even mentioned the strategic advantage of the country’s strategic geopolitical location in Indo-Pacific, its economic engagements, and participation in regional agreements.

If these marketing pitches produce sizable foreign direct investments in the months going forward, then we might say the President efforts are making success. If not, it is time for the government to return to the drawing board, review the economic projections and find out where they failed.

https://malaya.com.ph/news_opinion/economic-gains-touted-abroad/

With food barely affordable, healthy diets elude Filipinos

Ada Pelonia

May 31, 2024

THE majority of the country’s population grapples with food affordability which makes sustainable healthy diets out of reach, according to the International Food Policy Research Institute (Ifpri).

“More than 50 percent [of the population] in Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Myanmar, and the Philippines struggled to afford nutritious food,” its latest Global Food Policy Report [GFPR] read.

According to the 2024 GFPR, affordability is a “major constraint” to healthy diets in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) driven by the high cost of nutrient-dense foods (fruits and vegetables) as compared to calorie-dense staple foods.

Citing data from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the report said about a quarter of the population in East and Southeast Asia (ESEA) deals with moderate food insecurity (limited access to adequate and nutritious food). This ranges from less than 5 percent in Singapore and Japan to more than 30 percent in Cambodia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Lao PDR.

The report noted that inadequate diets combined with challenges in food system drivers add to the double burden of malnutrition wherein hunger and micronutrient deficiencies coexist with overweight and obesity.

Food system drivers

The 2024 GFPR said that several food system drivers shape diets in ESEA, with respective implications affecting the affordability of healthy diets. Among these drivers were trade and food system employment.

“The diversity in national food trade profiles—ranging from import dependence to export orientation to self-sufficiency goals for particular foods—poses a challenge for coherent regional trade policy that considers nutrition alongside economic goals,” it read.

Citing data from the Food Systems Dashboard, the report said the differences in fruit and vegetable availability across ESEA countries reflect limited regional trade.

Figures showed that the availability of fruits and vegetables in some ESEA countries like Timor-Leste, Cambodia, Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines had less than the recommended 400 grams per capita daily.

Meanwhile, citing FAO and the International Labour Organization (ILO), the report said small-scale farmers produce 80 percent of the region’s food often under poor working conditions and with uncertain land tenure. They also tend to suffer from poor diets and malnutrition.

“The range and informality of agricultural and food system work in ESEA have implications for designing food system policies that support livelihoods while improving the availability of nutritious foods for consumers,” it read.

The 2024 GFPR thus calls for policies that take into account the needs and preferences of diverse populations amid a myriad of food system issues while bolstering regional cooperation to make sustainable healthy food available and accessible for everyone.

“Food systems, however, are often a blind spot for policymakers in ESEA and elsewhere. Sectoral policies in agriculture, economy, health, and other areas are often siloed, and decision-makers fail to consider their interconnections or combined effect on the diets and health of citizens,” the report read.

“A proactive approach to food policy that is both integrative [considering synergies, trade-offs, and spillovers from multiple sectors] and inclusive [attentive to the welfare of the most marginalized stakeholders in food systems] is vital for healthy diets and the well-being of all in the region.”

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/05/31/with-food-barely-affordable-healthy-diets-include-filipinos/>

Lawmaker hopes vaccination will arrest ASF spread, revitalize hog industry

Jovee Marie N. de la Cruz

May 30, 2024

A LAWMAKER on Thursday expressed optimism that the roll out of the imported vaccines against African swine fever (ASF) will stop the large-scale deaths of pigs, mostly from culling, and revive the moribund hog industry.

On Thursday, Camarines Sur Rep. Luis Raymund Villafuerte said the anti-ASF vaccine rollout, announced by President Marcos in May, will stabilize the hog population, reduce the multibillion-peso annual losses in this livestock subsector, and eventually bring down the retail prices of pork products that have soared since this deadly virus hit the country in 2019.

The industry continues to suffer from a pork supply shortfall and consequent market price spikes despite numerous policy measures by the DA and the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) to repopulate the domestic swine population amid recurring ASF outbreaks, said Villafuerte.

The domestic pork inventory has continued to decline in the absence of a vaccine drive. Data from the DA-attached National Meat Inspection Service (NMIS) showed that nationwide stocks in cold storage facilities totaled 50,658 metric tons (MT) in mid-May 2024, down from 67,359 MT the previous year. Most of this inventory consisted of imports, with 49,899 MT, lower than the 64,214 MT the previous year. Pork stocks from local raisers fell to 758 MT from 3,145 MT owing to the continued impact of ASF on domestic output.

Meanwhile, data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) indicated that the seasonally adjusted value of livestock output fell 1.8 percent in the first quarter of the year, with hogs being the top contributor to the contraction in production value.

Because of the continued supply shortfall, pork prices have jumped from the previous average of P250 a kilo in the market to the current P400 and above.

Villafuerte said the Philippines is the world's 10th-largest consumer, 8th-biggest producer, and 7th-largest importer of pork.

Villafuerte has renewed his appeal to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to speed up its registration process for the chosen imported vaccine brand from Vietnam to make sure that the DA's technical working group is ready and able to carry out an inoculation drive nationwide this June or July.

Earlier, the FDA confirmed that the BAI had applied for certification of the Avac vaccine against ASF that is produced in Vietnam.

Villafuerte said, "The FDA needs to be on track with its registration and accreditation process for the Vietnamese-made vaccine because the implementation of an immunization drive by the DA-attached BAI is contingent on the availability of this anti-ASF drug, which, in turn, will depend on when our food and drug administration can give its go-signal to the commercial use of these shots for our local hogs."

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/05/30/lawmaker-hopes-vaccination-will-arrest-asf-spread-revitalize-hog-industry/>

El Niño damage to fisheries hit P61.64 million

Ada Pelonia

May 30, 2024

THE damage to the fisheries sector caused by the El Niño phenomenon has reached P61.64 million, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) said on Thursday.

The BFAR noted that as of May 10, the production losses incurred in the Ilocos Region reached P32.65 million, followed by Western Visayas at P26.56 million, CAR at P1.20 million, Cagayan Valley at P988,465, and Bicol Region at P240,000.

The report also revealed that the dry spell in said regions affected 3,086 fisherfolk, with tilapia, shrimp, crab, seaweed, milkfish, catfish, and seabass being the affected commodities.

“By April, the Bureau had carried out 1,174 monitoring, control, and surveillance activities, including Harmful Algal Blooms [HAB] and environmental assessments,” its report read.

BFAR said it provides livelihood assistance to the affected fisherfolk alongside its preparation for a rehabilitation and recovery plan in the affected areas.

“To boost production in less vulnerable areas, BFAR distributed 1,546 environment-friendly fishing gears, 18.05 million fingerlings/seedstock, 103,330 broodstocks, and 60 seaweed farm implements,” the bureau reported.

The agency said its efforts include stakeholder consultations, training workshops, and the provision of technical assistance sessions. It added its beneficiaries of 22,515 fisherfolks and 796 fisherfolk associations.

Citing the advisory of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) last year, BFAR said that El Niño had intensified with sea surface temperatures (SST) surpassing 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The changes in SST and water quality due to the change in extreme temperatures affect aquaculture and inland fisheries production while simultaneously impacting the fisheries sector.

Scientists noted that changes in precipitation patterns and water availability could impact the habitat conditions of fish in lakes, rivers, and reservoirs which can alter fish populations. (See: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/04/07/el-nino-a-threat-to-fisheries-marine-biodiversity/>)

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/05/30/el-nino-damage-to-fisheries-hit-p61-64-million/>

Recto: Rebates for trucks to make food affordable

Reine Juvierre Alberto

May 30, 2024

Exempting trucks transporting agricultural products from toll fee increases will help ease high food prices, according to Finance Secretary Ralph G. Recto.

The Department of Finance (DOF) said on Thursday Recto welcomed the decision of the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) to exempt trucks carrying farm goods from toll fee hikes and avail of rebates beginning June 1, 2024.

“This measure will prevent the second-round effects of toll rate increases onto food inflation and ensure that we keep food prices stable and affordable for our consumers,” Recto said.

The Agri-Trucks Toll Rebate Program benefits truckers that are accredited by the Department of Agriculture (DA) and have valid Autosweep and/or Easytrip RFID accounts to be spared from the toll rate increase.

Toll rebates will be credited to the truckers’ RFID accounts every Wednesday of the following week once they are enrolled and approved into the system, the DOF said.

The Manila-Cavite Expressway (Cavitex), North Luzon Expressway (Nlex), Subic Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTex), Muntinlupa-Cavite Expressway (MCX), and the South Luzon Expressway (Slex) are covered by the program, the DOF added. The rebate program may run for three months and is still subject to extension. This is seen to benefit 200 to 300 agricultural trucks traveling from North and South Luzon.

The program was initiated by the DOF, TRB, DA, and Department of Transportation (DOTr), together with toll concessionaires Metro Pacific

Tollways Corp. (MPTC) and San Miguel Corp. (SMC) Tollways, the DOF noted.

“I thank our government agencies as well as our partner toll expressway concessionaires and operators for their full cooperation,” Recto said.

Earlier, the TRB approved the implementation of the second tranche of toll fee adjustments in Nlex beginning next month. Class 2 vehicles, such as buses and small trucks, traveling within the open system will pay an additional P14.00 while P17.00 for Class 3 vehicles, such as trucks.

Fees for end-to-end travel in Nlex will cost an additional P68.00 for Class 2 and P81.00 for Class 3 vehicles. Slex will implement the toll hike within the year.

Latest data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) showed that inflation in April accelerated to 3.8 percent. Food inflation also rose to 6.3 percent in April, with key contributors being vegetables, fish, and ready-made products.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/05/30/recto-rebates-for-trucks-to-make-food-affordable/>

Improving food security through cold storage and logistics investment

BusinessMirror

May 31, 2024

Building more cold storage facilities in the Philippines is an endeavor that could have been done a long time ago. By extending the shelf life of fresh produce and agricultural products, cold storage solutions contribute to the reduction of food waste while helping farmers and entrepreneurs avoid post-harvest losses, ultimately improving their profitability.

The good news is that the government has recognized the importance of increasing the country's cold storage capacity. The Department of Agriculture's (DA) recent announcement of a 30 percent increase in cold storage capacity is a welcome step towards addressing a long-standing challenge in the Philippine agricultural sector: post-harvest losses. This initiative, coupled with the planned development of deep-water ports and the proposed "farm-to-market digital logistics integrated backbone" (FMDLIB) system, signals a much-needed focus on improving the efficiency of the agricultural supply chain. (Read the BusinessMirror story: "Govt eyes 30% hike in cold storage capacity to help farmers," May 30, 2024).

For years, the Philippines has grappled with the issue of food waste, a significant portion of which occurs after harvest. Lack of proper storage facilities, particularly cold storage, leads to spoilage, impacting farmers' incomes and contributing to food insecurity. The DA's commitment to expanding cold storage capacity is a crucial step in mitigating these losses.

The proposed FMDLIB system, utilizing decommissioned railway lines, offers a promising solution for transporting agricultural commodities more efficiently. Integrating this system with food hubs and cold storage facilities near port areas would create a streamlined and cost-effective supply chain. This would benefit not only farmers by reducing transportation costs and increasing market access, but also consumers by ensuring a more consistent supply of fresh produce.

However, the DA acknowledges the challenges posed by the Philippines' archipelagic nature. Developing a robust water port system, particularly in remote areas, will be crucial for connecting food hubs to ports and facilitating the efficient movement of agricultural goods.

The creation of a technical working group to craft policies on the development and operation of deep-water ports is a crucial step in this direction. These ports will not only enhance the efficiency of cargo handling and distribution but also reduce the cost of transporting farm inputs like fertilizers, leading to lower production costs for farmers. This will hugely benefit farmers by reducing their production costs and potentially increasing their output. The expected reduction in transportation costs by P15 to P20 per unit is a significant benefit that can increase the competitiveness of our farmers, which will ultimately benefit consumers.

While the implementation of these initiatives will require careful planning and coordination, the potential benefits are undeniable. By investing in cold storage, efficient transportation systems, and deep-water ports, the government can create a more resilient and profitable agricultural sector. This will not only contribute to food security but also empower farmers and entrepreneurs, ultimately contributing to the country's overall economic growth.

As the Philippines continues to navigate the complexities of its agricultural landscape, these efforts to build a stronger, more resilient supply chain should be applauded and supported. With a holistic approach that addresses both pre- and post-harvest challenges, the country can unlock the full potential of its agricultural sector, benefiting producers, consumers, and the economy as a whole.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/05/31/improving-food-security-through-cold-storage-and-logistics-investment/>

AFP 'standby' sa fishing ban, arrest policy ng China

[Doris Franche-Borja](#)

May 31, 2024 | 12:00am



Local fisherfolk place the symbolic buoys with markings “WPS Atin ito!” on the Philippine Exclusive Economic Zone before pushing to the Bajo de Masinloc during the second civilian resupply mission to the West Philippine Sea on May 15, 2024.

STAR/Miguel de Guzman

MANILA, Philippines — Tiniyak ng Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) na nakahanda sila sa anumang posibleng tensiyon na dulot ng implementasyon ng fishing ban at pag-aresto ng China sa mga mangingisda sa South China Sea at West Philippine Sea.

Ayon kay AFP spokesperson Col. Fancel Margareth Padilla, ang paghahanda ng AFP ay bunsod ng hindi pagkilala sa fishing ban na ipinatutupad ng China.

“Hindi natin nire-recognize ang fishing ban na ito. Ito ay sa ating territorial waters at dapat talaga ang ating mga mangingisda can freely fish in these waters,” ani Padilla.

Sinabi ni Padilla na may mga contingency plans at resources ang AFP upang agad na makatugon sakaling magkaroon ng gulo.

Giit ni Padilla na nakasuporta ang AFP sa Philippine Coast Guard at sa Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources bunsod ng fishing moratorium at pag-aresto sa umano'y "trespassers" sa South China Sea ng walang gagawing paglilitis.

Sa katunayan ayon kay Padilla, hinihikayat pa rin nila ang mga Pilipinong mangingisda na ituloy lamang ang kanilang pangangisda sa katubigan na sakop ng Pilipinas. Nakabantay at nakasuporta anya ang AFP sa mga mangingisda at sa mga posibleng pangha-harass ng China.

Matatandaang sinabi na rin ni Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos Jr. na hindi nila tinatanggap ang 'detention policy' ng China.

<https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/bansa/2024/05/31/2359323/afp-standby-sa-fishing-ban-arrest-policy-ng-china>

REMATE:

P21M winasak ng bagyong Aghon sa sektor ng agrikultura

May 30, 2024 11:59



MANILA, Philippines – Nag-iwan ng pinsala ang Bagyong Aghon sa sektor ng agrikultura na nagkakahalaga ng P21,651,548, ayon sa National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC).

Sa ulat nitong Huwebes, sinabi ng NDRRMC na may kabuuang 369 na magsasaka at mangingisda ang naapektuhan ng bagyo.

Winasak din ni Aghon ang mga pananim sa 292.9 ektarya, gayundin naapektuhan ang mga alagang hayop, manok, at palaisdaan na nagkakahalaga ng P448,300.

Nauna nang sinabi ng NDRRMC na may kabuuang 51,858 katao o 16,404 na pamilya ang naapektuhan ng Aghon.

Karamihan sa kanila ay naiulat sa Calabarzon na may 25,980 at Bicol na may 10,675.

Nag-iwan din ito ng pitong patay, karamihan ay mula sa Quezon province. Kabilang sa mga nasawi ang dalawang lalaki, edad 56 at 22, na nalunod, at isang 39-anyos na lalaki na natamaan ng nahulog na puno.

May kabuuang 51,858 katao o 16,404 pamilya ang naapektuhan ng Aghon, ayon sa NDRRMC. Karamihan sa kanila ay naiulat sa Calabarzon na may 25,980 at Bicol na may 10,675.

Naibigay na ang tulong na nagkakahalaga ng P6,765,912 sa mga biktima sa CALABARZON, MIMAROPA, Bicol, at Central Visayas, ayon sa NDRRMC.

Nakaalis na si Aghon sa Philippine Area of Responsibility nitong Miyerkules. **RNT**

<https://remate.ph/p21m-winasak-ng-bagyong-aghon-sa-sektor-ng-agrikultura/>

REMATE:

Lugi sa agrikultura kay Aghon nasa P11.8M, pero suplay ng pagkain stable pa rin

May 30, 2024 10:20

MANILA, Philippines – SINIGURO ng Department of Agriculture (DA) nitong Martes ang pangkalahatang stable na supply ng pagkain sa bansa sa kabila ng pananalasa ng bagyong Aghon.

Sa isang panayam, sinabi ni Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa na ang pinsala sa agrikultura dahil sa bagyong Aghon ay nasa P11.83 milyon na ngayon, na karamihan sa mga pagkalugi ay naiulat sa sektor ng bigas.

“Sa ngayon, wala pa tayong nakikitang malaking epekto ng Aghon. Napakaliit pa ng damage na na-register sa agriculture sector” sinabi niya.

Kaugnay nito sinabi pa ng opisyal na kasama sa kabuuang pinsala ang PHP10.66 milyon sa produksyon ng bigas, kung saan ang Laguna at Quezon ang pinakamahirap na tinamaan; gayundin ang PHP1.15 milyong pinsala sa mga high-value crops.

Sinabi pa ni De Mesa na medyo maliit ang pinsala dahil ang bansa ay umani na ng humigit-kumulang 99 porsiyento ng mga palay nito para sa tag-araw, at karamihan sa mga sakahan ay nasa ilalim ng paghahanda ng lupa o nasa maagang yugto ng produksyon ng pananim para sa tag-ulan.

Sa usapin ng produksyon ng gulay, aniya, ang epekto ng Aghon sa mga gulay na “pinakbet” sa Calabarzon ay maaaring madagdagan ng ibang rehiyon.

“Ang malapit naman na source ng lowland vegetable natin ay Central Luzon at Cagayan Valley, madali naman iyon ma-supplement. Iyong highland vegetables natin, wala naman tayong problema dahil of course ng Benguet,” ani de Mesa.

Ayon sa DA-Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Operations Center, humigit-kumulang 84 ektarya ng mga bukirin ang ganap na nasira, habang 155 ektarya ang bahagyang nasira na may posibilidad na makabangon.

Ang mga apektadong lugar ay nasa rehiyon ng Calabarzon at Mimaropa; habang ang Bicol at Eastern Visayas ay hindi pa nagsusumite ng kanilang validated reports.

Samantala, tiniyak ng DA ang standby farm inputs bilang tulong sa mga apektadong magsasaka kabilang ang mga punla para sa palay, mais, at iba pang gulay, gayundin ang mga pataba. *Santi Celario*

<https://remate.ph/lugi-sa-agrikultura-kay-aghon-nasa-p11-8m-pero-suplay-ng-pagkain-stable-pa-rin/>

REMATE:

DA sa pork vendors: ‘Wag manamantala sa presyo sa nagdaang bagyo

May 30, 2024 09:33



MANILA, Philippines – SINABI ng Department of Agriculture (DA) na ang suplay ng baboy sa merkado ay available, affordable at accessible sa gitna ng mga ulat na ibinebenta ito sa halagang P420 kada kilo.

Umapela rin ang ahensya sa mga negosyante na huwag samantalain ang nagdaang bagyo.

Tinuran ito ni DA Undersecretary D.V. Savellano makaraang bumisita sa ilang supermarket noong Martes para tingnan ang presyo ng manok at baboy.

Napag-alaman niya na ang kasim (balikat ng baboy) ay ibinebenta sa halagang P263 kada kilo hanggang P380 kada kilo, habang ang liempo (tiyan ng baboy) ay nagtitingi ng P345 kada kilo, ngunit ang mga naunang ulat ay pinatunayan ng presyo nito na umaabot sa P420 kada kilo. kilo. Ang manok ay ibinebenta sa halagang P160 kada kilo.

Kaugnay nito umapela din si Savellano sa mga mangangalakal na huwag samantalahin ang epekto ng Bagyong Aghon sa mga produktong agrikultura para magtaas ng presyo.

“Pakiusap namin, huwag naman mag-take advantage sa situation, especially ngayon sinabi kanina may bagyo na nagyari sa Quezon. Baka may mag take advantage, huwag naman.” *Santi Celario*

<https://remate.ph/da-sa-pork-vendors-wag-manamantala-sa-presyo-sa-nagdaang-bagyo/>