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MANILA BULLETIN:

62,500 farmers, fisherfolk in Panay, Guimaras receive cash aid from PBBM

BY TARA YAP

Jun 27, 2024 06:59 PM

ILOILO CITY – The Office of the President on Thursday released cash aid to more than 62,500 farmers and fisherfolk affected by the El Niño climate phenomenon in Panay and Guimaras Islands.



PRESIDENT Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. leads the distribution of cash aid to farmers and fisherfolk affected by the El Niño climate phenomenon in San Jose de Buenavista town, Antique province on Thursday, June 27. (Uswag Ilonggo party-list)

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. led a ceremonial distribution in San Jose de Buenavista town, Antique province. Each beneficiary received P10,000 each under the Presidential Assistance for Farmers, Fisherfolk, and Families (PAFFF).

Marcos said that the Department of Agriculture (DA) alone cannot shoulder the funding for farmers and fisherfolk impacted by El Niño.

Only those that were verified by DA, including its attached agency the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), were eligible to receive P10,000.

Iloilo province had the most number of beneficiaries with 30,362. There were also 11,841 beneficiaries in Guimaras province; 8,293 beneficiaries in Capiz province; 7,067 beneficiaries in Antique province, and 5,026 beneficiaries in Aklan province.

The President was assisted in the distribution by Secretaries Francisco “Kiko” Tiu Laurel Jr. of DA, Rex Gatchalian of DSWD, and Benjamin “Benhur” Abalos Jr. of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

Governors Arthur “Toto” Defensor Jr. of Iloilo, JC Rahman Nava of Guimaras, Fredenil “Oto” Castro of Capiz, Rhodora “Dodod” Cadiao of Antique, and Joen Miraflores of Aklan were present.

Sen. Loren Legarda, Antique Rep. AA Legarda, and Rep. Jojo Ang of Us汪 Ilonggo party-list, and Antique Vice Gov. Edgar Denosta were also present.

Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Assistant Secretary for Television Dale de Vera said the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) also provided services.

A separate distribution was held for Negros Occidental province.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/6/27/62-500-farmers-fisherfolk-in-panay-guimaras-receive-cash-aid>

PBBM vows more aid to Kanlaon eruption, El Niño victims in Bacolod

BY RAYMUND ANTONIO

Jun 27, 2024 06:23 PM

It was President Marcos' time to give smiles to the Bacolod City, the City of Smiles, as he delivered more aid on Thursday, June 27, amid the challenges brought by the El Niño phenomenon and the eruption of Kanlaon Volcano recently.

The Chief Executive was at the University of Negros Occidental – Recoletos, Bacolod City, Negros Occidental for the distribution of presidential assistance to farmers, fisherfolk, and families.

“Ngayon naman kaliwa’t kanan ang pagsubok na inyong kinakaharap --- mula sa pabagong klima hanggang sa mga kalamidad --- hindi namin kayo pababayaang (Now that you are facing challenges left and right — from climate change to calamities — we will not forsake you),” he said in a speech.

“Narito po kami ngayon sa Bacolod upang ipadama ang aming pagmamahal at suporta sa mga tunay na bayani ng ating panahon — kayo ang walang-humpay na [nagsisikap] para sa ating bayan (We are here in Bacolod to express our love and support for the true heroes of our time — you tirelessly persevere for our country),” he added.

During his visit, the President announced that his administration will give P10,000 each to beneficiaries from Bacolod City and other parts of Negros Occidental.

The city government of Bacolod will also receive P10 million, while the provincial government of Negros Occidental will receive P50 million.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) will also be providing P10,000 each to farmers, fisherfolk, and their families, while House Speaker Martin Romualdez will also give out five kilos of rice to each beneficiary.

Earlier, Marcos said the DSWD already provided more than P24 million to Bago City, La Carlota, La Castellana, Moises Padilla, and Pontevedra because of the effects of the Kanlaon Volcano eruption that reached agricultural damages up to P11 million in the province.

This, the President added, impacted 135 farmers and fishermen.

“Bukod pa rito, kasalukuyang isinasagawa ng Department of Agriculture ang pagsisiyasat sa epekto ng pagputok ng bulkan sa sektor ng agrikultura at pangisdaan upang matiyak na maibibigay ang angkop na tulong at mga hakbangin (Aside from this, the Department of Agriculture is currently studying the effects of the volcanic eruption to the agricultural and fisheries sectors to ensure that we can provide the appropriate aid),” he shared.

The DA, the Chief Executive added, is also continuously studying the effects of El Niño and helping rehabilitate fisherfolk and farmers.

“Bilang inyong Pangulo, ang aking pangarap ay isang bansang maunlad kung saan ang bawat isa ay mamumuhay nang may dangal at katiyakan sa kanilang kinabukasan (As your President, my dream is for a country that’s progressive, and one where everyone is living with dignity and certainty of their dreams),” Marcos said to the applause of the audience.

In asking for their help and support, the Chief Executive underscored the importance of helping each other to achieve his promise of “Bagong Pilipinas (New Philippines).”

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/6/27/pbbm-vows-more-aid-to-kanlaon-eruption-el-nino-victims-in-bacolod>

MANILA BULLETIN:

DA to issue order to import 200,000 tons of refined sugar in July—Laurel

BY JEL SANTOS

Jun 27, 2024 03:46 PM



The Department of Agriculture (DA) will release a special order (SO) that will allow the importation of 200,000 metric tons (MT) of refined sugar next month.

DA Secretary Francisco “Kiko” Tiu Laurel Jr. said the importation is vital to ensure ample supply of sugar and price stability in the country.

“I’m planning, kung magkakaroon tayo yung importation sa sugar, dapat by September, may arrival tayo at least 200,000 tons (I’m planning that if we are going to import sugar, we should have an arrival of at least 200,000 tons by September),” Laurel said during an interview with agriculture beat reporters on Wednesday night, June 26, in Makati City.

According to Laurel, the sugar supply in the country will decrease by August-September, making it necessary to import.

“So we have to have gap sugar, 200,000 tons at least by September-October,” he added.

He said the agriculture department has been discussing this matter with sugar producers for six months.

Laurel mentioned that he plans to meet with the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) on either July 10 or 11 to further discuss the matter.

The DA chief said that the price of sugar in the country is currently in the range of P75 to P80 per kilo.

As of June 26, refined sugar's retail prices, per the DA's monitoring, range from P74 to P92 per kilo in Metro Manila.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/6/27/da-to-issue-order-to-import-200-k-tons-of-refined-sugar-in-july-laurel>

MANILA BULLETIN:

‘Kahit kaibigan ko’: Laurel says DA to blacklist 4 firms engaging in smuggling

BY JEL SANTOS

Jun 27, 2024 03:15 PM



The Department of Agriculture (DA) will blacklist four companies who are allegedly engaged in smuggling activities within the next few months.

This was bared by DA Secretary Francisco “Kiko” Tiu Laurel Jr. during a meeting with the media in Makati City on Wednesday night, June 26.

“You will see in the next few months, marami akong iba-blacklist na kumpanya. Iyong mga smugglers, kahit kaibigan ko, iba-blacklist ko. Because alam ko iyong ginagawa nila and we are just getting proof (You will see in the next few months, I will blacklist many companies. The smugglers, even if they are my friends, I will blacklist them. Because I know what they are doing, and we are just gathering proof),” he said.

When asked how many companies the agriculture department will blacklist, he said, “Mga apat. Isang rice, dalawang fisheries, iyong isa sa asukal’ (Around four. One for rice, two for fisheries, and one for sugar).”

Laurel stated that the DA will blacklist them because their actions amount to economic sabotage.

“Ngayong nasa gobyerno ako, hirap na hirap na nga akong ayusin ‘to, pababain ito. Iyong smugglers are destroying industry by undercutting everybody because of their illegal acts (Now that I’m in the government, I’m struggling to fix this and bring it down. The smugglers are destroying the industry by undercutting everyone with their illegal acts),” he went on.

On May 31, the DA and Bureau of Customs (BOC) seized at least P100 million worth of frozen meat and other agricultural commodities that weigh 98,000 kilograms from a storage facility in Kawit, Cavite.

During the joint operation, ten cold storage facilities were discovered hidden behind a false wall and blocked by a van.

Following the removal of the wall, the composite team discovered cold storage rooms stocked with a range of items, such as assorted meatballs, shabu-shabu ingredients, beef, pork, chicken wings, siomai, various fish, pork belly, boneless pork, beef, and Peking ducks.

An inspection carried out by the Bureau of Animal Industry and the National Meat Inspection Service revealed that certain frozen food products did not meet the standards for human consumption.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/6/27/kahit-kaibigan-ko-laurel-says-da-to-blacklist-4-firms-engaging-in-smuggling>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Marcos assures Antiqueños: Gov't always ready to help

BY RAYMUND ANTONIO

Jun 27, 2024 02:44 PM

President Marcos vowed that his administration will continue extending help to Antiqueños amid the progress being felt by the province in terms of infrastructure and the challenges its people face due to the El Niño phenomenon.



President Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr. speaks at the distribution of government assistance to farmers and fisherfolk in Antique on Thursday, June 27, 2024. (RTVM screenshot)

In his speech during the distribution of presidential assistance to farmers, fisherfolk, and families in Binirayan, San Jose de Buenavista, Antique on Thursday, June 27, the Chief Executive assured Antiqueños that the government will always be ready to answer their call for help.

“Nananatiling bukas ang inyong pamahalaan upang makinig at tumugon sa inyong mga hinaing at upang matulungan kayong makamit ang inyong mga pangarap para sa inyong mga sarili, para sa inyong mga pamilya, at kasama rin para sa buong Pilipinas (The government will remain open to listen and address your concerns and to help you achieve your dreams for yourselves, families, and the whole Philippines),” Marcos said.

“Magtiwala po kayo na sisikapin namin na maabot ang ating mga liblib at malalayong pamayanan sa bawat sulok ng bansa, nang sa gayon ay walang maiiwanan at walang mahuhuli at sama-sama tayong [maglalakbay] sa Bagong Pilipinas, patungo sa Bagong Pilipinas (Trust that we will work hard to reach far-flung areas in every corner of the country, so that no one will be left behind and we will all be together toward a New Philippines),” he added.

The Chief Executive also called on Antiqueños to value the government assistance they received, and to be role models to other nearby towns looking up to them.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/6/27/marcos-assures-antiquenos-gov-t-always-ready-to-help>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Phinma eyes affordable cold storage solutions for farmers

BY JUNEP OCAMPO

Jun 27, 2024 09:09 AM

In a bid to help enhance agricultural productivity and food security in the Philippines, PHINMA Corporation is pushing for the development of affordable cold storage solutions for Filipino farmers and cooperatives.



During a policy forum titled "Achieving Food Security: Advancing Investments for Agricultural Sustainability," on Monday, leaders from PHINMA and its Construction Materials Group (PHINMA CMG), agriculture and government officials, and other industry stakeholders focused on the critical need for cost-effective cold storage facilities to reduce post-harvest losses and improve the livelihoods of local farmers.

"We seek to produce cost-competitive and high-quality products. Our products will be competitive with imports and our goal is to supplant them," said Danielle del Rosario, Chief Operating Officer of Phinma CMG's Union Insulated Panel Corporation (UIPC).



"Customers will be able to access insulated panels at better prices and quality while avoiding volatile logistics and freight costs. Currently, importation costs easily account for 20-25 percent of the total cost. Imagine the savings on time and financial resources, as the panels will be produced onshore, eliminating early payments and idle funds for consumers. This will also allow for reduced construction time and better project planning due to our local presence," she told Manila Bulletin.

Prominent speakers at the forum included PHINMA Director and Executive Vice President for Construction Materials Eduardo Sahagun; Department of Agriculture (DA) Undersecretary Asis Perez; DA Spokesperson Asec. Arnel De Mesa; Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA) Deputy Executive Director Asec. Romeo Montenegro; Cold Chain Association of the Philippines President Anthony Dizon; Stratbase ADR Institute President Dindo Manhit; and Makati Business Club Executive Director Bobby Batungbacal.

Asec. De Mesa highlighted the alarmingly high levels of post-harvest losses in the Philippines, particularly in crops such as rice, onions, mangoes, and bananas, as well as fish.



Del Rosario emphasized that by providing affordable cold storage solutions, the private sector can significantly reduce wastage and increase the value of fresh produce for farmers.

"For companies like PHINMA, our mission is to uplift the lives of Filipinos by providing essential products like construction materials. Ensuring the availability of affordable cold storage solutions is a crucial part of this mission, requiring collaboration between the private sector and government," del Rosario explained.

Anthony Dizon, president of the Cold Chain Association of the Philippines, stressed the need to implement food security laws and policies at the local level. He underscored the importance of maintaining perishable food at appropriate temperatures, even in wet markets.

"Our vision is to empower farmers and fisherfolk to store their products for longer periods, thus reducing wastage and enhancing the value of their goods. Adequate cold chain facilities are essential for proper transport and storage, contributing significantly to food security and safety," Dizon explained.

To tackle these challenges, UIPC recently broke ground on a P700-million insulated panel manufacturing plant in Porac, Pampanga. With an annual production capacity of one million square meters of panels, this facility aims to provide a cheaper alternative to imported insulation panels. This development will support the expansion of cold storage facilities across the country, making them more accessible and affordable for Filipino farmers and cooperatives.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/6/27/phinma-eyes-affordable-cold-storage-solutions-for-farmers>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Tiu Laurel: TRO on tariff to cause rice shortage

[Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

June 28, 2024 | 12:00am



This photo shows two workers passing a sack of NFA rice.

The STAR / Michael Varcas

MANILA, Philippines — Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. warned of a rice shortage if the Supreme Court issues a 60-day temporary restraining order (TRO) against Executive Order 62, which reduces tariff on rice.

At a press conference yesterday, Tiu Laurel said the 15 percent tariff on imported grains would bring down the retail price of the staple.

“If a TRO is issued, no (importers) will import. They will just use their remaining stocks. The buffer stock (of rice) will be sold out by the time the TRO is lifted. We will have a bigger problem,” he pointed out.

Several farmers' groups vowed to file a petition before the high tribunal to stop the implementation of EO 62 that allows a 15 percent tariff on imported rice, down from the current 35 percent, until 2028.

"Hopefully, no TRO is issued. If not, the buffer stock of the industry will be affected," Tiu Laurel said.

Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura (SINAG) legal counsel Virgie Suarez has maintained that the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and the Tariff Commission failed to conduct consultations among the affected farmers' groups. This failure, they said, would become the basis for the filing of an injunction.

But Tiu Laurel countered, saying "the TRO will only hurt us. It was already decided. Once a TRO is filed and assuming a 60-day (TRO) will be granted, the retail prices of rice will not go down. The retail price of rice will really result in cheaper rice once the tariff is brought down to 15 percent."

This early, he said, traders are panicking to unload their rice stocks amid the expected lower price of imported grains once the 15 percent tariff becomes effective.

"I got information that (traders) are panicking. Those who have many stocks are starting to unload. If the TRO is granted, they will again start to hoard their stocks. It will hurt the consumers more," Tiu Laurel said.

According to Tiu Laurel, initially, he was not also consulted on the decision of the NEDA board to approve the 15 percent tariff on rice.

Tiu Laurel said that he supports the tariff reduction on imported rice but not until 2028.

"I think one year is enough and the President has agreed with the recommendation of the industry that there will be an evaluation every four months. I think it is fair so that if we see the need to increase (the tariff), we can increase it. We should also be careful as it might send a mixed message to the international community that we change our decision often and that there is no stability," Tiu Laurel said.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/06/28/2366205/tiu-laurel-tro-tariff-cause-rice-shortage>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Palace propose P6.352 trillion 2025 budget

[Louise Maureen Simeon](#) - The Philippine Star

June 28, 2024 | 12:00am



At a briefing following the 188th Cabinet-level Development Budget Coordination Committee meeting yesterday, Budget Secretary and DBCC chair Amenah Pangandaman said the proposed National Expenditure Program for 2025 is P6.352 trillion.

Philstar.com / Jovannie Lambayan, file

MANILA, Philippines — The Marcos administration is proposing another record budget of P6.352 trillion for 2025 as the government moves to finance its priority programs and achieve its macroeconomic targets.

At a briefing following the 188th Cabinet-level Development Budget Coordination Committee meeting yesterday, Budget Secretary and DBCC chair Amenah Pangandaman said the proposed National Expenditure Program for 2025 is P6.352 trillion.

The record budget level proposed for next year is 10.1 percent above this year's allocation of P5.768 trillion.

“Social sector will definitely, again, get a big chunk of the budget – that's education, health and social protection,” Pangandaman said.

“Agriculture will also remain to be a top priority as we increase our investments for food security. We also have infrastructure development and digitalization as well as climate projects,” she said.

The P6.352 trillion is 2.45 percent higher than the previous proposal of P6.2 trillion last April. Next year's budget is equivalent to 22 percent of the economy.

Pangandaman explained that the increase has taken into consideration the higher budget allocation for local government units (LGUs) – up by almost 20 percent to P1.03 trillion.

The national tax allotment (NTA) for LGUs for 2025 will be up 18.7 percent to P1.03 trillion from this year's level of P871.38 billion.

LGUs will get a higher share as the NTA is based on the 2022 revenue collection, which improved as the economy significantly bounced back from a two-year slump at the height of the COVID pandemic.

“Next year is also an election year so we have to fund that, we increased the allowance for those who will help in the election,” Pangandaman said.

She added that there is also an expansion in the conditional cash transfer program of the government, as well as the higher allowance of P10,000 for teachers.

She noted that the economic team is set to present the NEP to the Cabinet on July 2 and submit it to Congress on July 29, a week after the President's State of the Nation Address. The process will be significantly ahead of schedule as the constitutional deadline for the submission of budget is 30 days after the SONA.

Furthermore, Pangandaman emphasized that the budget will build on the gains from the first two years of the Marcos administration and continue to usher in economic and social transformation for a prosperous, inclusive and resilient society.

In line with the Philippine Development Plan, the proposed budget also aims to protect the capabilities of individuals and families and transform production sectors to generate more quality jobs and produce competitive products.

It also targets to foster an enabling environment encompassing institutions, physical and natural environments.

In evaluating the agencies' budget proposals for 2025, Pangandaman said the Department of Budget and Management considered several factors such as the availability of fiscal space, implementation-readiness of programs and projects, agency absorptive capacity, and alignment with expenditure directions.

The administration's economic team, meanwhile, was less optimistic on the inflation trend in the country, hiking its assumption to three percent to four percent range from the previous target of two to four percent in April. Inflation quickened to a six-month high of 3.9 percent in May, bringing the five-month average to 3.5 percent.

The trend is not expected to significantly impact overall growth, however, according to the economic team.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/06/28/2366217/palace-propose-p6352-trillion-2025-budget>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Frasco's gastronomy dream

BUSINESS SNIPPETS - **Marianne Go** - The Philippine Star

June 28, 2024 | 12:00am



Christina Garcia Frasco. STAR / File

Tourism Secretary Christina Garcia Frasco is determined to put the Philippines on the global gastronomy destination map following her joint effort with the United Nations Tourism this week in hosting the First Regional Gastronomy Tourism for Asia and the Pacific Forum in her home province of Cebu, with almost 600 delegates attending from 43 countries including member countries from as far away as Afghanistan, Argentina, Cameroon, Chile, Fiji, Germany, Iran, Mongolia, the United Arab Emirates and our ASEAN neighbors, China and Japan to name a few.

It was quite clear on Wednesday when the forum opened that Secretary Frasco is a great tourism promoter of her own home province, showcasing Cebu's culture through songs and dance, as well as Cebuano cuisine and other regional food offerings from all regions – from Luzon – the Ilocos, Pampanga, Calabarzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

In her opening speech, Secretary Frasco pointed out that food tourism is a growing and dynamic sector that offers enormous potential for economic growth and advancement. The UN Tourism Regional Forum on Gastronomy Tourism for Asian and the Pacific, she said, “will not only elevate the Philippines as a gastronomic destination, but also provide a platform for collaboration and exchange of knowledge among international culinary experts.”

According to Frasco, “Filipino cuisine is a diverse tapestry of flavors, reflecting regional characteristics from across our beautiful archipelago of 7,641 islands, from the globally renowned Cebu lechon and the comforting tastes of adobo and , to Mindanao’s distinctive dishes like curacha (and) pastil. Our culinary heritage is rich and varied...with delicacies such as balut...halo-halo...and leche flan. Through our food, we tell the story of the Filipino.”

She acknowledged that the Philippines is “deeply honored by the confidence conferred upon our nation by the UN Tourism and its member states to host the inaugural global event that brings together ministers, heads of delegations, heads of missions, experts, stakeholders, enthusiasts from over 40 countries from around the world and Asia Pacific to celebrate gastronomy, to develop and promote tourism and to cultivate the symbiotic relationship of these two sectors that assures our mutual success.”

Frasco said earlier that as the Philippines “ushers in this golden era of tourism under the leadership of President Marcos, we embrace the opportunity to showcase the Philippines to the world.”

Leaving a legacy

UN Tourism Organization Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili, for his part, expressed his appreciation for Filipino food, noting that unless one knows a Filipino diplomat or has a Filipino friend, it is quite difficult to find a Filipino restaurant abroad, thus the need to promote Filipino food. He also admitted that he himself had dreams of also becoming a chef.

However, Pololikashvili cited the need to learn the methodology and educate Filipinos on how to become a gastronomy destination. Thus, he expressed his desire to leave a legacy through a proposal to establish an educational gastronomy center in Cebu, a proposal that Secretary Frasco boldly welcomed and assured support for, even as financing for the possible education center would still have to be formally discussed by the UN Tourism body, the Philippine government and other institutions that would help in teaching the technical skills, such as the Basque Culinary Center that was represented during the Cebu forum by by Idoia Calleja.

The UNTO Secretary-General admitted though that any decision on financing an educational gastronomy center, not only in the Philippines or elsewhere for that matter, would of course eventually fall on the Minister of Finance who would decide on the allocation of funding for such an endeavor.

Calleja, in her own speech, pointed out that gastronomy “is one of the sectors that show the way of life.” She elaborated further that “when we travel, we like to discover the local cuisines, destinations, restaurants, the taste, products, traditions and to be able to have an authentic experience.”

UN Tourism ambassador and well known chef Margarita Fores expressed her support for Frasco’s move to make the Philippines a destination for gastronomy tourism, a goal that she herself had started embarking on in the early 2000s as she collaborated with the Department of Agriculture to attend several international events such as the Slow Food Terra Madre, Indentita Golose, Food on the Edge and the Madrid Fusion where she proudly shared Philippine cuisine, and her participation in the 23rd UNTO General Assembly in Bhutan.

Those experiences, Fores said, gave her the chance to connect with Filipino farmers and artisans from all over the country, “discovering the richness of the produce, culture and heritage.” Gastronomy tourism, according to Fores, is a fast growing trend with more travelers wanting to explore the world, not only by visiting and seeing museums, churches and ruins, but by “also sampling local dishes, taking cooking classes, or even going on farm excursions.”

However, Fores emphasized that gastronomy tourism “has the potential to significantly benefit rural communities, especially those rich in local traditions,” citing that tourists spend on food, accommodations and various activities, which injects funds into local communities. Likewise, she said, gastronomy is also a cultural bridge that “celebrates centuries old recipes, local ingredients and culinary traditions, preserving and enriching cultural heritage for future generations.”

Fores, in her speech, also highlighted the need to approach gastronomy tourism with sustainability in mind, as well as putting in place environment-friendly protocols. She warned against “over-commercialization and irresponsible tourism which can dilute traditional dishes, corrupt traditions and strain infrastructure.”

Thus, she called for the support of everyone, “not just the hospitality and tourism sectors,”but also the involvement of the local communities and government.

Her recommendation, thus, is “build better infrastructure, educate local chefs and food producers, respect tradition, communities and the environment.”

A roster of Filipino chefs

As part of the one-day forum, Secretary Frasco showcased Philippine cuisine for dinner with the help of renowned Filipino chefs that included Fores, Miko Calo, Jessie Sincioco, Reggie Aspiras, Sau del Rosario, Miko Aspirals, Thiridy Dolatre and John Kevin Navoa of Hapag, Carlos Villaflor of Gallery by Chele, Tatung Sarthou of Lore, Aaron Isip of Kasa Palma, Miguel Moreno of Palm Grill, also Mindanao chef Datu Shariff Pendatun III who showcased the cuisine of Mindanao.

The cocktail style lunch featured regional dishes from the Cordillera Administrative Region and from Regions 1 to 12 and featured up and coming chefs.

Following the regional tourism forum, delegates were treated to tours in Camotes Island, Argao and Dalaguete.

Today, the 36th UN Tourism Joint Commission Meeting for East Asia and Pacific and South Asia will be held at the Sheraton Mactan with no less than President Marcos attending the meeting.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/06/28/2366063/frascos-gastronomy-dream>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DA: First border facilities operational by next year

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

June 28, 2024 | 12:00am



Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. on November 6, 2023.

STAR / Jesse Bustos

MANILA, Philippines — The long wait for the country’s strengthened border protection could be over soon as the Department of Agriculture (DA) vowed to make the government’s first border facilities operational by the third quarter next year.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said the three cold examination facility in agriculture (CEFA) would come online by September next year.

The three CEFAs would be located in the ports of Manila, Subic in Clark and General Santos in Mindanao, the agriculture chief said.

Meanwhile, the earlier identified CEFA in Angat, Bulacan would be converted into a private facility focused on laboratory testing and condemnation of smuggled and rejected imported goods.

The Angat facility could be operational ahead of the three CEFAs since it is just awaiting the equipment turnover from the government. The facility may start running between January and February of next year, Tiu Laurel said.

The CEFA, considered as the country's first border facility, is being touted by the government as a state-of-the-art examination facility capable of scrutinizing all imported agricultural commodities.

The facility is part of the government's efforts to curb smuggling and strengthen the state's capacity against animal diseases and pests.

The facilities would also allow various food safety regulatory agencies to conduct mandatory inspections of imported farm products pursuant to their mandates under the Food Safety Act of 2013.

The project was first approved in late 2019 by former president Rodrigo Duterte but has not seen the light of the day until today. Last year, about P2.3 billion was lodged in the DA's budget for the construction of the first border facilities.

The department noted that it has been searching for suitable locations for the CEFAs for at least a decade already.

The call of various industry groups on the government to fast-track the establishment of the first border facilities have been mounting in recent years amid the intrusion and spread of trans-boundary animal diseases such as bird flu and African swine fever in the country.

The construction of the first border facilities has been delayed due to various issues including the COVID-9 pandemic and logistical woes.

The agriculture chief said the government would issue an administrative order (AO) within the next three months that would authorize the pre-shipment inspection of agricultural goods to the country while awaiting for the construction of the first border facilities.

"That is what we will do, we will inspect [the shipments at the countries of origin]. The DOF (Department of Finance) agreed on this from what I understand," Tiu Laurel said.

Tiu Laurel noted that the pre-shipment inspection would be conducted first in select countries.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/06/28/2366068/da-first-border-facilities-operational-next-year>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Phinma: New cold storage plants to cut food waste

The Philippine Star

June 28, 2024 | 12:00am



PHINMA and the Cold Chain Association of the Philippines recently led a panel discussion on addressing the problem of food waste. In photo (from left) are Danielle del Rosario of the Phinma Group's Insulated Panel Corp. and Antonio Dizon, president of CCAP.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — Business leaders, government officials and experts agree on the need to expand the country's cold storage facilities to address the problem of food waste.

They made the statement in a forum on "Achieving Food Security: Advancing Investments for Agricultural Sustainability," co-organized by PHINMA Corp., Stratbase ADR Institute and Makati Business Club, which took place in Makati on Monday.

PHINMA Construction Materials Group executive vice president and PHINMA Corp. director Eduardo Sahagun opened the discussion by highlighting the urgent need for food security in the Philippines amid climate change, rising food and nutrition demands and logistical challenges.

He recalled Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.'s earlier pronouncement that 30 percent of the country's agricultural produce is wasted due to a poor logistics system, while 51 million Filipinos face moderate or severe food insecurity, the highest in Southeast Asia, according to the United Nations.

Danielle del Rosario, chief operating officer of the Union Insulated Panel Corp., a unit of PHINMA, said improved agricultural infrastructure enhances food security by stabilizing and increasing the food supply.

"Investments in modern irrigation systems, cold storage facilities and cold chain logistics networks reduce post-harvest losses, increase crop yields and ensure that fresh produce reaches markets efficiently. This not only stabilizes food prices but also makes nutritious food more accessible to all Filipinos, combating hunger and malnutrition," Del Rosario said.

Stratbase president Victor Manhit said President Marcos declared food security as a top priority on the Philippine agenda and emphasized the importance of investing in infrastructure and logistics to ensure nutritious food reaches people efficiently, similar to a large-scale farm-to-table approach.

"We need to ensure a food-secure Philippines," Manhit said.

The Department of Agriculture, for its part, said developing the logistics system is one of the agency's courses of action, on top of improving agri-fishery areas, modernizing and mechanizing the farming system and enhancing the post-harvest system, and expanding the local and international market.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/06/28/2366069/phinma-new-cold-storage-plants-cut-food-waste>

End hunger in the Phl by 2027



COMMONSENSE - [Marichu Villanueva](#) - The Philippine Star

June 28, 2024 | 12:00am

On the third day in office at Malacañang Palace in July 2022, President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. (PBBM) reminisced being asked in an interview how he wants to be remembered at the end of his six-year term. PBBM admitted he was a bit caught off-guard somehow by the question. PBBM retold this story as he enters the middle of his term that is ending on June 30, 2028 yet.

“And it was a question that I was not prepared for. It is a question that I had not actually thought about. But the answer came to me in an instant: Wala nang gutom. Wala nang gutom na Pilipino. That is my dream, no hungry Filipino,” PBBM quoted his retort in that interview. Digressing from his prepared speech, PBBM shared this to his audience attending the launch of the first “Walang Gutom” Awards launched by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) at Malacañang last Wednesday.

The President issued Executive Order No. 44 in October last year establishing the “Walang Gutom 2027: Food Stamp Program” as a flagship program of the national government. It seeks to primarily address hunger and stunting among children through providing monetary assistance for targeted beneficiaries to purchase food commodities from eligible merchant stores.

The DSWD, in collaboration with the Galing Pook Foundation, picked ten local government units (LGUs) as winners out of 17 finalists that were recognized for their successful anti-hunger initiatives and programs. Winners received P2 million worth of sustainable livelihood program funds while the finalists were given P1 million. For the rest of the 101 LGUs that submitted entries to the program, PBBM

lauded and bestowed them the honorific title as “walang gutom champions” in the hearts and minds of their constituents.

Citing DSWD data, PBBM noted nearly 12 percent of Filipino families, or around three million households, are still experiencing hunger at least once over the last three months of 2022. One in three Filipino children under five years old is still suffering from stunted growth due to malnutrition, he added.

Thus, the Chief Executive lamented the Philippines’ ranking in the Global Hunger Index was “far from ideal.” The Philippines scored 14.8 – a score that categorized our country as where its people are “moderately hungry.” This was even lower than the regional score of East and Southeast Asia of 8.2. The higher the score means more people go hungry in these countries. In the Global Hunger Index, African countries of Somalia, Burundi and South Sudan got 35 to 49.9 which is categorized as “alarming” cases of very high hunger incidence.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), an agency of the United Nations, declares hunger is as much a cause as an effect of poverty. The FAO further sees hunger as the most extreme manifestation of poverty and human deprivation.

PBBM obviously acknowledges this FAO principle when he created last year the Office of Presidential Adviser on Poverty Alleviation, or OPAPA for short. It’s almost a year after PBBM appointed suspended lawyer Lorenzo “Larry” Gadon as the head of this OPAPA. The Presidential Communications Office (PCO) announced the creation of the OPAPA on June 26 last year. Gadon, however, was nowhere in sight at the “Walang Gutom” awarding rites. I was told the OPAPA has its “own parallel anti-hunger programs.” Besides, he was on his regular TV show program at state-run PTV-4 called “Larry Gadon Live” every Wednesday morning.

Fortunately for the PBBM administration, a three-term Valenzuela City Mayor and three-term Congressman-now DSWD Secretary Rex Gatchalian, heads the agency principally tasked to carry out the government’s anti-hunger programs and projects. According to him, the “Walang Gutom” program of the DSWD targets 300,000 beneficiaries who will each get P3,000 “food credits” every month in the first year. The DSWD targets for the second year of the program 600,000 beneficiaries; and one million beneficiaries by the third year.

“They can use that with their electronic benefit cards in accredited retailers – Kadiwa, coops, MSMEs (micro-small-medium enterprises),” Gatchalian explained.

In his speech after handing out the “Walang Gutom” Awards, the Chief Executive made an impassioned plea to help him achieve his dream to end hunger in the Philippines as the legacy of his administration. “I call upon our government and our partners from the private sector, from the non-profit organizations, our friends

from the international community, citizens and Walang Gutom advocates to work together as a united front,” PBBM implored.

“If we are truly to succeed in this endeavor, we must put in a whole-of-nation approach to create a lasting solution to this great challenge,” PBBM urged.

The next day, PBBM embarked on a series of provincial trips to distribute financial aids under the newly created Presidential Assistance to Farmers, Fisherfolk and Families, or PAFFF for short. Accompanied by Gatchalian, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr., Interior and Local Government Secretary Benhur Abalos, and several other Cabinet members, PBBM first flew yesterday one after the other to San Jose, Antique; Bacolod, Negros Occidental; and the final stop in Dumaguete, Negros Oriental.

The PAFFF funds came from the Office of the President (OP), PBBM told his audience. Launched this year, the PAFFF is a direct cash subsidy government intervention program affected during the long drought period caused by the El Niño phenomenon. Each of the beneficiaries, which were pre-identified by the Department of Agriculture, received P10,000 cash subsidy. Farm machineries and equipment, fishing boats were also turned over to farmers and fishermen by PBBM and Agriculture Secretary Laurel.

Each provincial governments also received P50 million grants from the OP but were told they have 30 days to liquidate “for transparency” how they spent their monies. PBBM last week also led the distribution of PAFFF P12.48 million in financial aid to Surigao del Sur; P50 million to Agusan del Sur; P46.84 million to Butuan City; P28.26 million to Agusan del Norte; P10.57 million to Surigao del Norte and P10 million to Dinagat Islands.

It’s a lofty dream to end hunger by 2027, or a year before PBBM steps down from office. But will spending lots of these monies end hunger and alleviate poverty in the Philippines?

<https://www.philstar.com/opinion/2024/06/28/2366083/end-hunger-phl-2027>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DA: 4 importers to be blacklisted

[Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

June 28, 2024 | 12:00am



Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. on November 6, 2023.

STAR / Jesse Bustos

MANILA, Philippines — Four importers of agricultural products will be blacklisted amid their involvement in smuggling activities, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. revealed yesterday.

“We have four (importers to be blacklisted), one for rice, two for fisheries and one for sugar. Blacklisting is the easiest way as, if you charge them, the evidence is not enough. It happened in the past but not in my time,” Tiu Laurel said at a press conference, adding that the blacklisting would be done in the coming months.

“We will see in a few months, many companies will be blacklisted. Those involved in smuggling. Even if they are my friends, I will blacklist them,” he vowed.

He said the Department of Agriculture (DA) is currently gathering evidence against unscrupulous companies.

According to the agriculture chief, he already blacklisted a rice importer after being involved in underdeclaration.

“We cancelled its import permit after we caught it. It only declared 20 percent (of the total volume),” Tiu Laurel said, referring to a rice shipment that arrived in Batangas.

He said he already addressed the loophole in the system of the Bureau of Plant Industry.

“Before the importer only declared 20 percent as we assumed that only 20 percent would be unloaded and it unloaded the rest after arriving at the next destination. When we caught (the importer), he presented an additional Sanitary and Phytosanitary Import Clearance. As the additional SPSICs were prepared, we could not stop them from unloading but they have to pay the 100 percent tax,” Tiu Laurel said.

Under a new DA regulation, Tiu Laurel said the importer would need to declare the volume of the entire shipment.

“I issued a rule that once the ship arrives from the origin, after 24 hours, (the importer) needs to declare to the Bureau of Customs (BOC), to us, the number of valid SPSICs,” he added.

At the same time, Tiu Laurel noted that a meat importer even tried to bribe him after at least 20 container vans were confiscated and ordered burned in the condemnation facility.

“The BOC caught the shipments. They were sent to a condemnation facility for burning. We saw that the contents of the container van were being transferred to a truck to be sold (in the market). They tried to bribe me initially for P250,000 per container. It went up to P1 million (per container). We burned all of them (20 containers). We will not destroy our reputation by that (offer),” he said.

According to Tiu Laurel, smugglers often declare the shipment as processed products but authorities discovered that the farm products like chicken and Peking duck were hidden at the back of the container vans.

“Processed goods are not under DA, its FDA (Food and Drug Administration). So, we will enter an agreement with Director General (Samuel Zacate) within the year, they will deputize the DA to be their enforcement. If that happens, we will further solve smuggling,” he said.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/06/28/2366199/da-4-importers-be-blacklisted>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Government to allow 200,000 MT sugar imports

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

June 28, 2024 | 12:00am



Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) board, which he chairs, would approve the importation program during their meeting next month.

Edd Gumban

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines would import at least 200,000 metric tons (MT) of refined sugar by September to ensure ample stocks and prevent price spikes in the market.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) board, which he chairs, would approve the importation program during their meeting next month.

He said the volume could still increase depending on their deliberations on the country's sugar supply situation.

Nonetheless, he noted that the minimum 200,000 MT import volume is being eyed to plug the foreseen shortfall in sugar stocks by August and tide over the country until the next milling season in October.

“That is for the gap before the harvest and the refining season,” Tiu Laurel said in an interview with reporters late Wednesday.

The importation program has been on the table for six months already with industry stakeholders, including planters, being consulted about the matter, the agriculture chief said.

Earlier this year, no less than President Marcos endorsed the sugar importation proposal of the Private Sector Advisory Council - Agriculture Sector Group during the off-harvest and post-milling season to keep prices of the commodity stable.

The country has already entered its post-milling season with the next sugar crop year set to begin on Sept. 1.

Total refined sugar stocks of the country as of June 9 stood at 492,985.7 MT, about 14 percent higher than the 432,215.05 MT recorded inventory in the same period last year, based on SRA data.

SRA data also showed the country has 436,229 MT of raw sugar stocks, up by 29 percent from last year’s 337,286 MT.

The SRA earlier estimated that the country’s monthly sugar demand is between 180,000 MT and 240,000 MT.

SRA administrator and CEO Pablo Luis Azcona said Tiu Laurel was referring to the import program under the previous Sugar Order (SO) 2 that paved the way for pre-qualification of possible importers for a prospective import program on the condition that would purchase sugar from local farmers at higher prices.

Azcona said the SRA has already pre-qualified and pre-allocated the possible import volume across the participants of SO 2 based on their actual support to local farmers.

“As we said previously, we will activate an import plan should the trigger stock level be reached to ensure a stable supply and stable price for our retail and industrial consumers, as well as to ensure that our farmers will not be affected,” he said yesterday.

The importation would minimize speculation in the market that often leads to price spikes, according to the United Federation of Sugar Producers of the Philippines (UNIFED).

“This will fill in the shortage before harvest season starts on September. Harvest this coming crop year will be delayed due to El Niño and when we were consulted about this matter, we approved the proposal,” UNIFED president Manuel Lamata said yesterday.

Sugar prices skyrocketed previously to record highs because of delays in importations, leaving both retail consumers and industrial users scrambling for supply, according to industry sources.

“When I assumed office the price of refined sugar was P120 per kilogram, now it is P75 per kilogram,” Tiu Laurel said.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/06/28/2366067/government-allow-200000-mt-sugar-imports>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Much to do about food

By: [Peter Angelo V. Perfecto](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:10 AM June 27, 2024

Over 50 years ago, two programs were started in the Philippines by the administration of President Marcos' father. There was the Masagana 99 in 1973, an agricultural program aimed at solving the country's then-worsening rice shortage, and the Nutribun school feeding effort in 1971 to combat child malnutrition as part of the United States Agency for International Development Food for Peace Program.

Fast forward to today, we are now a top importer of rice as we feed 119.1 million Filipinos compared to only 38.4 million in 1971 and we are faced with what economist Ciel Habito calls a ticking demographic timebomb due to a “stunting problem, wherein one in every three Filipino children 5 years old and below is stunted due to chronic malnutrition.”

For as long as I can remember in my 37 years work career that allowed me to join various fora on what ails the country and what can be done, rice sufficiency and hunger and malnutrition were always key priorities—problems that needed urgent, multisector and multiagency coordinated action now to prevent looming disaster. The scale of the problems and the need to bring together many different moving parts to address the problem brought about a now common call for an all-of-nation approach.

I heard this again at last Monday's 2024 Phinma policy forum on food security organized by Phinma and its construction materials group together with the Stratbase ADR Institute and Makati Business Club (MBC). As presentations were made on how to achieve food security and advance investments for agricultural sustainability, the need for collaboration and coordination across sectors and agencies was an oft-repeated call, and yes, an all-of-nation approach was brought up in the ensuing exchange of insights among invited experts. This approach is actually not a Philippine reality invention. When I first heard “all-of-nation,” I was executive director of MBC and best practices of neighbors in Asia were being cited like Taiwan and South Korea.

All-of-nation assumes that there will be dialogue that translates into concrete and collaborative action plans and strategies. It also requires monitoring of outputs and outcomes given clear timelines and it is founded on a shared belief that if we do not come together, the nation will remain gasping for breath in the last place in the global competitiveness race. Our people will remain poor, our children stunted and illiterate, and our demographic dividend, a demographic catastrophe.

What I do not and what I refuse to understand is why our leaders in both the public and private sectors do not see this as urgent enough to make the real dialogue happen. Once upon a time, we tried to bring just one part of the business sector together to agree to pool our resources on one key lever to address our education crisis. Then, it was concluded to be teacher quality. Were we able to bring all corporate social responsibility funds estimated at P2 billion of all companies doing education projects together? No. Everyone else thought that their education project was superior. Hard to blame them but tough on the continuing crisis.

This week's policy forum like many other continuing dialogues and initiatives tried to focus on a segment of the problem—addressing food waste and food costs through investments in agriculture. This aligns with the Department of Agriculture's thrust to develop and improve post-harvest systems and infrastructure. The need for solar-powered cold storage facilities across the country was highlighted as one key intervention. With this one very specific intervention arose considerations and concerns that will likely cut across all possible interventions: who finances, who identifies the need, who maintains, and how do small farmers use and get their produce to these facilities?

Habito has many times brought up the question of devolving agriculture to the local governments so that they can help answer most of these questions. When their capacity and capability are cited as the stumbling block, Habito often challenges national government agencies to take up their role of capacity building. I would hasten to add, and work with nongovernment and community organizations. Oxfam Pilipinas for example has always advocated for strategic partnership models that bring various stakeholders and their resources together to achieve better outcomes including scale.

And where is the private sector in all these? At the very minimum, it must be told what investments are needed and where and the private sector must, in turn, offer possible models for that investment to work that government on national and local levels, as well as people's organizations, can look into as viable options to address once and for all an ages-old gap.

Peter Angelo V. Perfecto, a former executive director of MBC, works with the Phinma group and chairs Oxfam Pilipinas.

<https://opinion.inquirer.net/174749/much-to-do-about-food>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Pre-shipment inspection regime ordered for agricultural imports

June 27, 2024 | 8:44 pm



COURTESY OF BUREAU OF CUSTOMS

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said it will require pre-shipment inspections for selected countries' farm products that are due to be shipped to the Philippines.

“What we will do is release an administrative order (AO), requiring pre-shipment inspection. But we will choose countries,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. told reporters late Wednesday.

He added that the administrative order will be implemented in the next three months.

Mr. Laurel said pre-shipment inspections are necessary as the Philippines still lacks the means to inspect imported farm goods at the border.

The DA's cold examination facilities in agriculture (CEFA) are intended to ensure imported agricultural goods are disease-free and to minimize the risks from smuggling.

Imported agri-fishery products need to undergo examination by food regulators overseeing the animal, plant, meat, and fisheries industries.

He added that the DA has four planned facilities in Bulacan, Manila, Subic, and General Santos.

The Angat, Bulacan facility is set to start operations during the first two months of next year.

“The one in Angat was done by a private company... maybe by January or February next year, it will be running,” Mr. Laurel said.

The DA signed a memorandum of agreement with Pacific Roadlink Logistics, Inc. to construct the facility in Bulacan.

He added that the three other facilities will start construction by September, taking about a year to complete. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/06/27/604740/pre-shipment-inspection-regime-ordered-for-agricultural-imports/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Philippines plans 200,000 metric tons of sugar imports, minister says

June 27, 2024 | 12:29 pm



ALEXANDER GREY-UNSPLASH

MANILA – The Philippines is looking to import up to 200,000 metric tons of sugar by September to fill a projected supply shortfall before the harvest season, its farm minister said late on Wednesday.

“The current stock will fall by August, September, so we have to (cover a gap) of up to 200,000 tons by then,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel told reporters. – **Reuters**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/06/27/604559/philippines-plans-200000-metric-tons-of-sugar-imports-minister-says/>

MANILA STANDARD

DA to blacklist 4 commodity traders for alleged smuggling



Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.

By Othel V. Campos

June 27, 2024, 7:35 pm

Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said he will blacklist at least four agricultural traders for alleged smuggling activities.

Tiu-Laurel said two of the companies import fishery products, while the other two are involve in rice and sugar trade.

He warned errant importers of dire consequences as the DA vowed to go after smugglers, regardless of professional and personal relations.

Tiu Laurel emphasized the damaging effects of agricultural smuggling which is tantamount to economic sabotage.

The DA has not identified the companies, as investigations are ongoing. Being blacklisted will mean the companies' import permits will be revoked, effectively barring them from importing agricultural products.

The agency earlier blacklisted a rice importer for suspicious activity such as misdeclaration of the volume of its imports. Tiu Laurel said the company declared only 20 percent of its actual rice importation.

He said to prevent the recurrence of similar incidents, the DA implemented stricter import declaration procedures.

Importers are now required to declare valid sanitary and phytosanitary import clearance (SPSIC) via email to the Bureau of Customs (BOC) and the DA Inspectorate and Enforcement team within 24 hours of a shipment's departure from the country of origin.

The system is expected to close a loophole and make it harder for smugglers to slip through the cracks, he said.

The DA chief also revealed attempts to bribe him in exchange of allowing entry of smuggled goods for P200,000 per container.

<https://manilastandard.net/business/314464845/da-to-blacklist-4-commodity-traders-for-alleged-smuggling.html>

Marcos gives cash aid to 61K farmers, fisherfolk

By Rjay Zuriaga Castor

June 28, 2024

ILOILO CITY — A total of 61,171 farmers and fisherfolk in Western Visayas severely hit by the El Niño phenomenon received financial assistance from President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Thursday.

The aid is under the Presidential Assistance to Farmers and Fisherfolk (PAFF) program, funded by the Office of the President.

The President, alongside several secretaries of the different agencies, distributed the aid in a ceremony held in Antique for Panay Island beneficiaries and in Bacolod City for Negros Occidental.



EL NIÑO AID President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. (left) is joined by Sen. Loren Legarda and Antique Rep. Antonio Legarda (behind) during the distribution of cash assistance farmers and fisherfolk severely affected by the El Niño phenomenon in Western Visayas at the Binirayan Sports Complex in Antique on June 27, 2024. PHOTO BY RJAY ZURIAGA CASTOR

"What we are doing is whole-of-government-approach. If we have programs like this, we need the assistance of other departments to implement these programs," Marcos said.

The Presidential Communications Office (PCO) reported that 30,632 PAFF beneficiaries were identified in Iloilo, 8,315 in Negros Occidental, 8,293 in Capiz, 7,067 in Antique, 5,023 in Aklan, and 1,841 in Guimaras.

Under the PAFF, beneficiaries each receive P10,000 to help cushion the effect of the dry spell to their livelihood.

"We, in the government, are here to help our farmers and fisherfolk to recover their losses from the El Niño and dry season," Marcos said.

The PCO said the identified beneficiaries were farmers and fisherfolk who officially declared to the Department of Agriculture (DA) that they were severely affected by the prolonged dry spell.

Governors of the province of Aklan, Capiz, Iloilo and Guimaras received the cheques on behalf of the beneficiaries.

"Each province will be given 30 days to distribute the assistance and liquidate and submit it to the Office of the President," said PCO assistant secretary for television Dale de Vera.

De Vera said each province has been allocated a budget of P50 million from the OP and the remaining budget will be sourced from the Department of Social Welfare and other concerned agencies.

Aside from the cash assistance, the DA and Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources also distributed farm and aquaculture inputs worth P12 million.

"This will help in the agricultural productivity of our farmers in Antique since the province is the record holder in the region in having the highest production of rice," he added.

In Bacolod City, first lady Liza Araneta-Marcos extended free medical and laboratory services to at least 1,500 recipients in her "Lab for All" program.

The DA-6 reported that the El Niño caused around P2.9 billion in losses across the region, affecting over 84,181 farmers and about 122,702 hectares of farmland.

Meanwhile, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources said El Niño damage costs in the region amounts to P49 million.

The prolonged dry season led to at least 74 local government units in Western Visayas to declare a state of calamity.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/06/28/regions/marcos-gives-cash-aid-to-61k-farmers-fisherfolk/1953745>

DA eyeing 200,000 MT of refined sugar imports

By Janine Alexis Miguel

June 28, 2024

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) wants to import at least 200,000 metric tons (MT) of refined sugar in September to fill a supply gap.

"We will have sugar importation. By September, we should have at least 200,000 metric tons arriving, refined, to cover the gap before the harvest and refining," Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. told reporters Wednesday evening.

He added that the decision to import sugar was made because the DA expected local stocks to decline by August and September.

"So we need to have gap sugar of at least 200,000 tons by September and October for the milling season," he said.

Tiu Laurel said the DA was scheduled to discuss the plan with the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) on July 10 or 11. The meeting will determine if the importation plan will proceed.

The agriculture chief also said that discussions have been ongoing with other industry stakeholders for the past six months, and he is now confident they would support the importation plan.

SRA Administrator Pablo Luis Azcona said that the plan also included a pre-qualification process for possible importers, which will require them to purchase sugar from local farmers before any imports.

"We have pre-qualified and pre-allocated [them] based on their actual support for the local farmers," Azcona said on Thursday.

"As we said previously, we will activate an import plan should the trigger stock level be reached to ensure a stable supply and stable price for our retail and industrial consumers, as well as to ensure that our farmers will not be affected," he added.

In March, the SRA issued the Sugar Order 2 that helped increase the farmer price to a stable P2,700 to P2,800 per 50-kilo bag of raw sugar and also stabilized refined sugar's retail prices at P73 to P100 per kg.

United Sugar Producers Federation President Manuel Lamata, meanwhile, said a possible sugar importation was "agreeable" as this would compensate for a shortage before the next harvest season.

"Harvest this coming crop year will be delayed due to El Niño and when we were consulted about this matter, we approved the proposal," he said.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/06/28/business/top-business/da-eyeing-200000-mt-of-refined-sugar-imports/1953783>

PH to import 200K MT of sugar

By Jed Macapagal

June 28, 2024

The Philippines will import at least 200,000 metric tons (MT) of refined sugar by September to fill a projected supply shortfall before the harvest season, according to Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, secretary of the Department of Agriculture. (DA).

“The current stock will fall by August, September, so we have to (cover a gap) of up to 200,000 tons by then,” Tiu Laurel told reporters.

In a statement, Pablo Azcona, administrator of the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA), said the importation program by the DA is part of the current crop year’s Sugar Order (SO) 2 which pre-qualified importers for future importation program if they have bought local sugar.

“SO2 increased the farmer price to a stable P2,700 to P2,800 per bag of raw sugar, which also stabilized retail refined prices at P73 to P100 per kg. This program pre-qualified an import volume of almost 200,000 MT of refined sugar and was planned in January and formally signed March 8, 2024,” Azcona said.

SRA said it has pre-qualified and pre-allocated based on importers’ actual support for the local farmers.

“As we said previously, we will activate an import plan should the trigger stock level be reached to ensure a stable supply and stable price for our retail and industrial consumers, as well as to ensure that our farmers will not be affected,” Azcona said.

In a separate statement, the United Sugar Producers Federation of the Philippines (UNIFED) said it is “agreeable” with the importation.

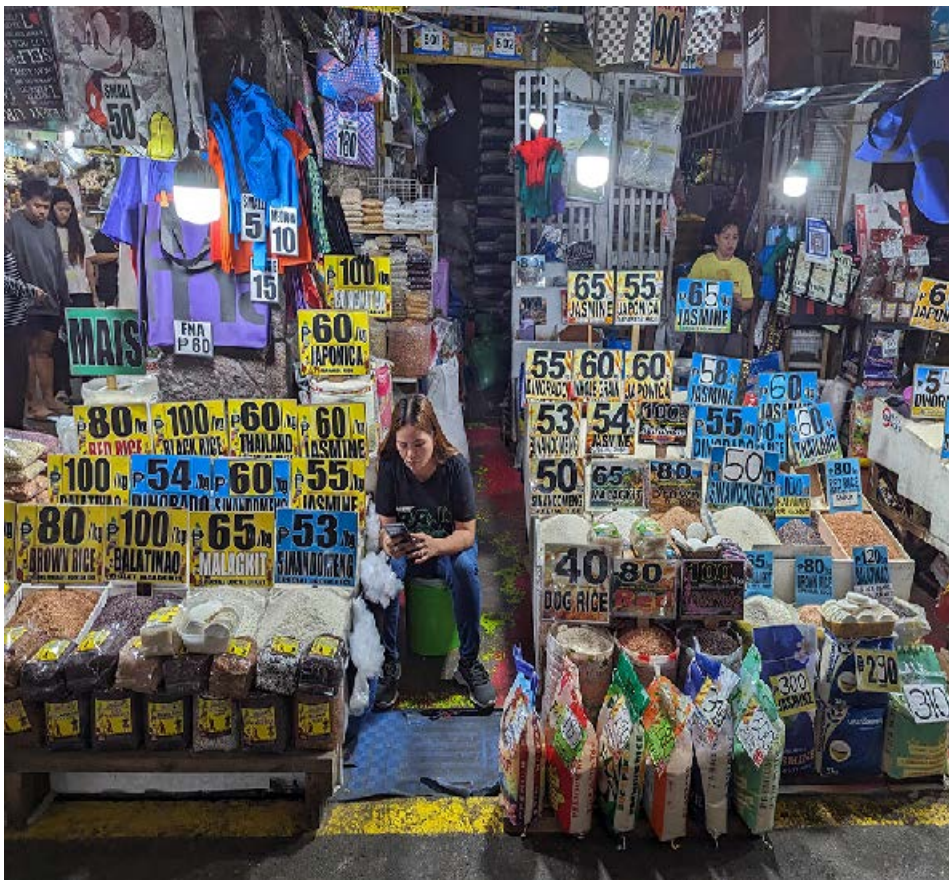
“This will fill in the shortage before harvest season starts on September. Harvest this coming crop year will be delayed due to El Niño and when we were consulted about this matter, we approved the proposal,” said Manuel Lamata, UNIFED president.

https://malaya.com.ph/news_business/ph-to-import-200k-mt-of-sugar/

Lower rice tariff fuels BSP interest rate-cut optimism

Cai U. Ordinario

June 28, 2024



Different varieties of rice are displayed with price tags at the Baguio Public Market. The Philippines, the world's top rice importer, plans to cut tariffs on rice from 35 percent to 15 percent through 2028 to combat inflation. Analysts are concerned this move might benefit foreign producers like Vietnam while leaving Filipino farmers struggling to compete.

The reduction in rice tariffs has boosted the optimism of monetary officials that a rate cut could happen in August, according to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP).

On Thursday, BSP Governor Eli M. Remolona Jr. said the Monetary Board decided to maintain the BSP's Target Reverse Repurchase (RRP) rate at 6.5

percent. The interest rates on the overnight deposit and lending facilities will remain at 6 percent and 7 percent, respectively.

Remolona said the Monetary Board is now “less hawkish” or “more dovish” than before as inflation is expected to slow to the midpoint of the 2 to 4 percent target range.

“We expect inflation to go down this year and maybe even next year then go up again in 2026 but stay within the target range, that’s our expectation. By the way, the reduced tariffs on rice, we consider that a big deal,” he said.

“When the price of rice goes down it can have a significant second round effects especially because the price of rice is a salient price—an important price in the formation of inflation expectations,” he added.

In its statement, BSP said the balance of risks to the inflation outlook has shifted to the downside for 2024 and 2025 due largely to the impact of lower import tariffs on rice under Executive Order (EO) 62.

Based on the BSP’s estimates, the impact of lower tariffs on rice could reduce rice prices by 14.8 percent over a 12-month period.

It can be noted that as the country’s food staple, rice has a weight of 8.87 percent in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for All Income Households and 17.87 percent in the CPI for the Bottom 30 percent of households or the poorest Filipinos.

“We have to remember that the effect of that is largely to change relative prices, the price of rice much lower than prices of the other food items compared to before. Whereas inflation is about a sustained rise in prices,” Remolona said.

“By itself, it’s not a reduction in inflation. It’s a reduction in measured inflation but its not a reduction in inflation as we look at inflation. [But] it will help,” he added.

BSP said the risk-adjusted inflation forecasts have eased to 3.1 percent for both 2024 and 2025 from 3.8 percent and from 3.7 percent, respectively. Based on the BSP’s latest survey of market forecasters, inflation expectations remain well-anchored.

This condition could prompt a total rate cut of 50 basis points (bps) this year. Remolona said the rate cuts could be delivered in two tranches of 25 bps in the second semester of 2024.

The Monetary Board, Remolona said, has also been discussing the reduction of the Reserve Requirement Ratio (RRR) for banks but has not decided yet on its timing.

Nonetheless, the BSP Governor said, “the monetary board is largely in favor of cutting the reserve requirement at some point.”

“The Monetary Board also anticipates price pressures to ease further in the second half of the year with the implementation of EO 62 as well as Administrative Order 20. If sustained, an improvement in the inflation outlook would allow more scope to consider a less restrictive monetary policy stance,” the BSP said in a statement.

Weaker peso

Remolona also said monetary authorities are monitoring the peso and has “occasionally intervened” to prevent sharp depreciations in the Philippine currency.

On Thursday, the peso closed at P58.75 to the US dollar. Remolona said the BSP entered the foreign exchange market on Thursday.

As to the passthrough, Remolona said, there was a 0.36 percent impact on inflation for every one percent depreciation in the peso.

Since the beginning of the year, the peso has depreciated by 5.7 percent. This, Remolona said, leads to an addition of only 0.2 percent in inflation.

“We’ve been active when we sense stress in the market. When the market becomes dysfunctional, in other words there’s only one side, either selling or buying, then we come in the other side. But mostly we come in to slow down the tendency of the peso to depreciate sharply. We don’t come in every day,” Remolona said.

Meanwhile, the decision of the Monetary Board to maintain key policy rates on Thursday was the 6th consecutive meeting when the rates were maintained.

This meant that the 6.5 percent interest rates have been the highest for over 17 years.

Image credits: [BusinessMirror/Nonie Reyes](#)

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/06/28/lower-rice-tariff-fuels-bsp-interest-rate-cut-optimism/>

BUSINESS MIRROR

PHL to import 200,000 MT of refined sugar-DA

Ada Pelonia

June 28, 2024

AGRICULTURE Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said the government will allow the importation of 200,000 metric tons (MT) of refined sugar to ensure ample supply and stable prices.

Laurel said 200,000 MT is the deficit, noting that sugar imports should arrive by September to fill the gap before harvesting and refining.

“The current stocks will go down by August, September, so we have to have gap sugar of 200,000 MT at least by September, October, so that the milling season [can proceed uninterrupted],” Laurel told reporters on Wednesday, speaking partly in Filipino.

The agriculture chief said the Sugar Order can be expected in July, as he is set to talk with the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) in the same month.

The United Sugar Producers Federation (Unifed) said it approves of the Department of Agriculture’s (DA) plan to import refined sugar.

“This will fill in the shortage before harvest season starts in September,” Unifed President Manual Lamata said in a statement.

“Harvest this coming crop year will be delayed due to El Niño and when we were consulted about this matter, we approved the proposal,” he added.

Meanwhile, SRA Administrator Pablo Luis Azcona said the timing for the import plan has yet to be finalized.

“We will meet with [Secretary] Laurel first week of July to discuss and update the Secretary of our stock levels and determine when we need to activate this plan,” Azcona said in a statement.

The SRA administrator said the program that Laurel referred to is Sugar Order No. 2, which prequalified traders in future programs for sugar importation based on their purchase of local raw sugar.

He noted that SO 2 increased the farmer price to a stable P2,700 to P2,800 per bag of raw sugar, which also stabilized retail refined prices at P73 to P100 per kilo.

“This program prequalified an import volume of almost 200,000 [metric] tons of refined sugar and was planned in [January] and formally signed on March 8, 2024.”

He added that the agency has prequalified and pre-allocated based on traders’ actual support for the local farmers.

“As we said previously, we will activate an import plan should the trigger stock level be reached to ensure a stable supply and stable price for our retail and industrial consumers, as well as to ensure that our farmers will not be affected,” Azcona said.

“We also have to bear in mind that the 5 million farmers, farm workers, their families, and people dependent on the sugarcane industry are also 100 percent retail consumers.”

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/06/28/phl-to-import-200000-mt-of-refine-sugar-da/>

FDA to deputize agriculture department in products regulation

Ada Pelonia

June 27, 2024



Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are set to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which would let the latter deputize the DA Inspectorate and Enforcement (DAIE).

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. explained that some smugglers found a “loophole” by branding agricultural products as “processed goods.”

“Ang processed goods are not under DA, they are under FDA. [The FDA regulates processed food products and not DA],” Laurel told reporters on Wednesday.

Earlier, he raised the matter with FDA Director General Samuel Zacate and they agreed to sign the MOU within the year.

“Kapag nangyari iyon, then mas maso-solve natin itong agri smuggling. [If this pushes through, we can solve agricultural smuggling],” he said.

Laurel also noted that smuggling can be considered as economic sabotage.

“Smugglers are destroying [the] industry by undercutting everybody through illegal acts,” he said.

Earlier, Finance Secretary Ralph Recto said the country is now “one step closer” to ending smuggling, misdeclaration, and undervaluation with the Pre-border Technical Verification and Cross-border Electronic Invoicing Systems under Administrative Order (AO) 23, series of 2024, in place. (See: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/06/15/phl-close-to-ending-smuggling-with-pre-border-system-checks/>)

“Grounded by AO 23, series of 2024, we take the first steps today towards achieving a fully digitalized border protection system in the country where no import goes unnoticed and unaccounted for,” Recto said.

Through digital and integrated pre-border technical verification and cross-border electronic invoicing, AO 23, issued by President Marcos and signed by Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin on May 13, 2024, will accelerate the inspection of all imported commodities entering the country.

“It is intended to strengthen national security, safeguard consumer rights, and protect people against substandard and hazardous imported goods,” the Department of Finance (DOF) said.

Agricultural commodities will be covered in phase one of AO 23, followed by non-agricultural goods with health and safety concerns in phase two, and other goods with misdeclaration avoiding tariffs and taxes on phase three.

Image credits: [DA-PhilMech](#)

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/06/27/fda-to-deputize-agriculture-department-in-products-regulation/>

DA: Excess rice tariff take to fund crop tack, cash aid

Ada Pelonia

June 27, 2024



A worker at a rice warehouse on Dagupan Street in Manila carries sacks of rice to be loaded onto a truck. Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco Tiu-Laurel Jr. said that a tariff increase on imported rice might be recommended by November if the retail prices of rice "significantly" decrease. On Wednesday, he said DA plans to use the excess 2023 rice tariff collection for crop diversification, cash assistance, and land titling.

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) plans to use the excess 2023 rice tariff collection for crop diversification, cash assistance, and land titling.

Data from the Bureau of Customs (BOC) showed that tariff revenue collections from rice imports reached P30.02 billion in 2023.

In accordance with Republic Act No. 11203, or the Rice Tariffication Law (RTL), "tariffs collected from rice imports go to the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement

Fund [RCEF]. Collections in excess of the P10-billion fund go to the Rice Farmer Financial Assistance or RFFA.”

The RCEF allocates P10 billion for farm mechanization, inbred seeds, rice credit assistance, and rice extension service. This gives a P20-billion excess from last year’s tariff collection.

“Last year P12 billion [was given under the RFFA Program], so this year we also plan to give P12 billion,” Agriculture Secretary Franciso Tiu Laurel Jr. told reporters during a media forum organized by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) on Tuesday.

Laurel said the balance would be diverted to crop diversification and land titling.

“The P1 billion for land titling will be given to the Department of Agrarian Reform [DAR] so farmers’ lands can be titled. The P7 billion is for crop diversification to high-value crops,” he said.

Laurel said he expects farmers to receive the P12-billion cash assistance by September.

Earlier, the state-run Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) said it had distributed P8.3 billion in cash assistance to rice farmers as of 2023 under the P12-billion RFFA program. (See: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/06/14/farmers-get-p8-3-billion-through-rffa/>)

At a Senate hearing on the Proposed Extension of and Amendments to the Rice Tariffication Law or Republic Act (RA) No. 11203, DBP Senior Vice President Rallen Verdadero reported that the bank has released 1,649,285 cards to rice farmers as of 2023.

Verdadero said that a total of 1.64 million cards and P8.6 billion in RFFA, with a 96.44-percent realization rate, has been distributed to rice farmers in 2022.

For 2021, Verdadero said the DBP released 1.06 million cards and P5.4 billion in cash aid, with a 98.76-percent realization rate.

The DBP, together with the Land Bank of the Philippines, was tapped by the Department of Agriculture (DA) to distribute the cash grants to the farmers.

The state-run bank has partnered with Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas-licensed cash outlets to expedite the release of funds to farmer beneficiaries.

The RFFA is an unconditional cash transfer program to provide compensation for the projected income loss of rice farmers due to the drop in palay farmgate prices caused by the RTL.

It also aims to facilitate the access of rice farmers to timely funds for procurement of needed inputs and enhance farmers' opportunity to improve productivity and profitability.

Image credits: [Nonie Reyes](#)

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/06/27/da-excess-rice-tariff-take-to-fund-crop-tack-cash-aid/>

REMATE:

Importation ng mga kambing mula US, ipinagbawal sa Q fever

June 27, 2024 17:59



MANILA, Philippines – Ipinagbawal muna sa bansa ang pagpasok ng mga buhay na kambing mula Estados Unidos matapos na magpositibo sa human-transmissible Q fever ang ilang imported na kambing mula sa nasabing bansa.

Sa Memorandum Order No. 26 na inisyu noong Hunyo 20, ipinagbawal ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. ang importasyon ng buhay na kambing mula sa US.

Binanggit ni Tiu Laurel ang pagpopositibo sa Q fever ng mga inimport kamakailan na buhay na kambing mula sa US.

Ayon sa Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Animal Industry (DA-BAI), sa 94 na kambing na dumating sa bansa, 19 samples ang nagpositibo sa Q fever.

“There is neither effective treatment nor vaccination available in the country for the animals; thus, there is a need to institute radical measures to contain the spread of this outbreak to protect the local ruminant industry and the health of the general public,” ayon kay Tiu Laurel.

Ipinag-utos din ng agriculture chief ang agarang suspensyon sa pagproseso, evaluation ng aplikasyon at pagbibigay ng sanitary and phytosanitary import clearance (SPSIC) para sa mga kambing na mula US.

“All approved yet unused SPSIC for goats coming from the USA are deemed cancelled upon the issuance of this memorandum,” aniya.

Ang mga goat shipment naman na mula US na in transit, ikinarga o tinanggap sa mga port bago ang opisyal na paglalabas ng kautusan ay papayagan “subject to quarantine rules and testing requirements.” *RNT/JGC*

<https://remate.ph/importation-ng-mga-kambing-mula-us-ipinagbawal-sa-q-fever/>

REMATE:

10K MT ng bigas inihanda ng NFA sa ‘Bigas 29’ program

June 27, 2024 17:46



MANILA, Philippines – Sinabi ng National Food Authority (NFA) na nakahanda na umano ang halos 10,000 metric tons ng bigas para sa distribusyon sa mga bulnerableng sektor sa ilalim ng ‘Bigas 29’ program ng pamahalaan.

Sa QC Journalist forum nitong Huwebes, Hunyo 27 aminado si NFA administrator Larry Lacson na halos 10,000 metric tons ng bigas lang ang kaya nilang ikasa sa unang implementasyon ng programa.

Sinabi pa ni Lacson sa kabila ng pagtantya ng Department of Agriculture na mangangailangan ng 60,000 metric tons kada buwan para i-sustain ang pagbebenta ng murang bigas sa mga PWDs, buntis at iba pang bulnerableng sektor.

Ani Lacson, gagawing per phase ang implementasyon ng programa.

Kaugnay nito, sampung kilo per household ang ibibigay kada buwan sa ilalim ng 'Bigas 29.'

Mabibili umano ang murang bigas sa mga piling Kadiwa stores sa buong bansa.

Aniya, sa initial pilot lang magsusuplay ang NFA sa programa habang ang DA na ang bahalang maghanap ng susunod na supply para sa 'Bigas 29' program.

Titiyakin naman aniya ng NFA na maganda ang kalidad ng ipapamahaging bigas.

Ani Lacson, bagamat aging rice ang ibebenta, gagawa sila ng paraan para magandang klase ang maibebenta sa mga benepisaryo ng programa. *Santi Celario*

<https://remate.ph/10k-mt-ng-bigas-inihanda-ng-nfa-sa-bigas-29-program/>

REMATE:

Pasaway na importers, smugglers ng agri products iba-blacklist ng DA

June 27, 2024 17:07



MANILA, Philippines – Nakatak dang i-blacklist ng Department of Agriculture (DA) ang apat na trader sa pinaigting na crackdown nito laban sa mga pasaway na importer at mga smuggler ng agricultural products.

“You will see in the next few months, marami akong iba-blacklist na kumpanya, iyong mga smugglers, kasi that’s economic sabotage,” sinabi ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. sa mga mamamahayag nitong Miyerkules, Hunyo 26.

Aniya, kabilang dito ang apat na importer ng bigas, isda at asukal.

Ani Laurel, ang DA ay nagpapatupad ng mahigpit na compliance sa deklarasyon ng sanitary at phytosanitary import clearance (SPSIC) bago ito ibagsak sa mga pantalan ng bansa.

“Gumawa ako ng bagong rule na kapag umalis iyong barko mula sa origin, after 24 hours, kailangan i-declare nila, to us, to DA-IE (Department of Agriculture-Inspectorate and Enforcement) kung ano iyong valid SPSIC na pwede nilang gamitin sa barko. Ngayon hindi na sila makakalusot,” anang opisyal.

Naunang ipinag-utos ni Laurel ang kanselasyon ng SPSIC sa rice importer sa Batangas matapos na ideklara lamang ang 20% ng kabuuang kargamento nito.

Ani Laurel, papasok din ang DA sa kasunduan sa Food and Drug Administration (FDA), na magmomonitor ng importasyon ng processed goods, para sa mas mahigpit na border measures para maresolba ang agricultural smuggling.

“Nag-usap na kami ni DG (FDA Director General Samuel) Zacate. We agreed na mag-MOU (memorandum of understanding) na kami dalawa.”

“Doon sa loophole na sinasabi na processed goods ito, tapos ipapasok nila, sa harap processed goods, sa likod agri na Peking duck or whatever kasi ang processed goods are not under DA, it’s under FDA,” aniya. *RNT/JGC*

<https://remate.ph/pasaway-na-importers-smugglers-ng-agri-products-iba-blacklist-ng-da/>

REMATE:

DA: 2.4M rice farmers makatatanggap ng tig-P5,000 sa Setyembre

June 27, 2024 12:20



MANILA, Philippines- Binabalak ng Department of Agriculture (DA) na mamahagi sa Setyembre ng halos P12 bilyong cash aid upang tulungan ang mga magsasaka ng paly na matugunan ang kanilang mga pangangailangan.

Magbibigay ang DA ng tig-P5,000 sa 2.4 milyong rice farmers na kwalipikadong benepisyaryo sa ilalim ng Rice Farmers Financial Assistance (RFFA) program, pinondohan mula sa excess tariff collections mula sa pag-aangkat ng bigas.

Sa ilalim ng Rice Tariffication Law (RTL), naglalaan ang pamahalaan ng P10 bilyon kada taon mula sa tariff revenues para sa Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund, nilalayong pondohan ang pamamahagi ng high-yielding seeds, paghusayin ang mga

magsasaka sa pamamagitan ng iba't ibang training sessions, mamahagi ng farm machinery, at mag-alok ng credit support.

Anumang halagang lalabis dito ay maaaring gamitin para sa RFFA at iba pang programa upang tulungan ang rice farmers.

“We are rushing [the distribution] and hopefully, I’m targeting to provide P12 billion [to our rice farmers] probably by September,” pahayag ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. sa isang event sa Makati City nitong Martes, sinabing ipinalabas na ng Department of Budget and Management noong Disyembre ang P12 bilyon. **RNT/SA**

<https://remate.ph/da-2-4m-rice-farmers-makatatanggap-ng-tig-p5000-sa-setyembre/>

REMATE:

DA sa livestock farmers: Pagkakasakit ng mga alagang hayop iulat

June 27, 2024 09:36



MANILA, Philippines- Hinikayat ng Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Animal Industry (DA-BAI) nitong Miyerkules ang livestock farmers na iulat ang mga nagkakasakit na alagang hayop upang maiwasan ang outbreaks sa bansa.

Kasunod ito ng pag-depopulate ng DA-BAI sa 94 imported goats mula sa United States sa “secluded” farms sa Pampanga at Marinduque, matapos magpositibo sa unang naitalang mga kaso ng Q fever sa bansa.

Ang Q fever ay isang zoonotic disease na maaaring maipasa sa mga hayop sa pamamagitan ng contact sa infected animals o excreta o body fluids ng mga ito.

“Mag-report tayo kapag may kahina-hinalang nangyayari sa ating mga alaga, dahil diyan makatutulong tayong ma-prevent ang sakit sa ating bansa,” wika ni BAI National Veterinary Quarantine Services Division officer-in-charge Dr. Christian Daquigan sa isang panayam.

Sinabi ni Daquigan na maaaring direktang makipag-ugnayan ang local livestock farmers sa municipal offices ng DA sakaling maobserbahan ang mga sintomas sa mga hayop, may kaugnayan man ito sa Q fever o wala.

“Kapag nakakita tayo ng sakit sa ating mga alaga, huwag nating itago. Huwag tayong matakot na sumangguni sa ating mga local veterinarian, provincial vet,” aniya.

Samantala, tiniyak ni Daquigan ang mas mahigpit na border measures at mas malawak na surveillance sa Pampanga at Marinduque.

“Mas pinaigting po natin iyong ating border control, lalo po iyong padating na kambing galing sa US po, may temporary banning na po tayo ng mga kambing na manggagaling sa US,” ayon sa opisyal.

Sa kasalukuyan, walang naiulat ang livestock farmers sa mga apektadong farms sa Marinduque at Pampanga na Q fever infection. **RNT/SA**

<https://remate.ph/da-sa-livestock-farmers-pagkakasakit-ng-mga-alagang-hayop-iulat/>