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MANILA BULLETIN:

No TRO issued by SC to stop enforcement of EO 62 on reduced tariff on imported rice, other agri products

BY

Jul 10, 2024 03:00 PM

The Supreme Court (SC) did not issue a temporary restraining order (TRO) that could have stopped the enforcement of Executive Order No. 62 which reduced the tariff on imported rice and other agricultural commodities from 35 to 15 percent.

Instead, the SC required the respondents in the petition filed by several farmer and other cooperative groups to comment on both the petition and the plea for TRO within 10 days from receipt of the resolution.

“The Court, without giving due course to the Petition and prayer for TRO, required the respondents to file their comments within a non-extendible period of 10 days from notice,” the SC said during its full court session on Wednesday, July 10.

This means that the pleaded TRO to stop enforcement of EO 62 has not been denied and will be resolved once the comment is filed.

The action by the SC on the petition challenging the constitutionality of EO 62 was announced in a press conference on Wednesday afternoon, July 10, by SC Spokesperson Atty. Camille Sue Mae L. Ting.

Those who filed the petition include the officers and members of the Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura (Sinag), Inc.; Federation of Free Farmers, Inc. (FFFI); United Broiler Raisers Association 1, Inc.; Sorosoro Ibaba Development Cooperative (SIDC); and Magsasaka Partylist representative Atty. Argel Cabatbat.

Named respondents in the petition were President Marcos, Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin, National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Secretary Arsenio Balisacan and Tariff Commission Chairperson Marilou Mendoza.

In their petition, the SC was told that EO 62 would make the Philippines dependent on importation contrary to the state policy of self-reliant and independent economy under the Constitution.

They said “the issuance of EO 62 does not make our farmers more competitive; rather it is a threat to our farmers and fishers and to the entire economy.”

“Instead of protecting and supporting our farmers, EO 62 exposes our very own food producers to unfair foreign competition,” they also said.

They pointed out that “the danger of reduced tariffs for the next four years does not in any way make our country self-reliant; rather it makes us dependent on foreign produce.”

Earlier, Malacanang had said that EO 62 could bring down the price of rice in the market by P6 to P7 per kilo.

The petitioners, through Atty. Virgie Lacsá Suarez, raised two substantive grounds to declare EO 62 unconstitutional, namely:

-- EO No. 62 violates the limitation/conditions set forth in the Flexible Clause of Republic Act 10863 which makes its issuance invalid and the its exercise tantamount to undue delegation of legislative powers.

-- EO 62 violates the state policy to develop a self-reliant and independent national economy effectively controlled by Filipinos and violate the constitutional mandate to protect the farmers from unfair competition and trade practices.

They stressed that EO 62 violates RA 10863, the Flexible Clause of Customs Modernization and Tariff Act, which requires proper consultation, investigation, hearings and reports prior to the issuance of an order on tariff reduction.

They said: “Despite the clear procedure that ensures the exercise of the petitioners of their constitutional right to due process, the issuance of EO 62 was issued in clear violation of the due process. This is tantamount to undue delegation of the delegated rule-making power of the President.”

At the same time, the groups told the SC that the lowering tariffs on products, specifically staple foods like rice and corn, poses significant challenges for local farmers as this could lead to an influx of cheaper imported goods, undermining domestic producers' and farmers' sales and products.

“This is clearly detrimental to the farmers, who may struggle to compete with the lower prices of imported products. As a result, their livelihoods and the agricultural sector in general may suffer, which can exacerbate rural poverty and further drag economic disparity,” they stressed.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/7/10/no-tro-issued-by-sc-to-stop-enforcement-of-eo-62-on-reduced-tariff-on-imported-rice-other-agri-products>

MANILA BULLETIN:

BOI clears P9.6-billion investment for agriculture sector

BY

Jul 10, 2024 10:17 AM

The Board of Investments (BOI) has granted approval for agricultural projects totaling nearly P10 billion to bolster the country's food security and resilience.

In a statement, the Department of Trade and Industry's (DTI) investment promotion agency said the Department of Agriculture (DA) endorsed these agricultural projects, valued at P9.59 billion, as Tier II agri-based projects.

"We are transforming the agricultural sector in the Philippines," Trade Secretary and BOI Chairman Alfredo E. Pascual said on Wednesday, July 10.

"The synergy between the BOI and the DA is already yielding significant benefits as these projects will certainly drive the adoption of new technologies and enhance food security in the Philippines—ensuring the sustainability and resilience of our agricultural systems," he added.

Among the approved projects was the Metro Pacific Dairy Farms Inc.'s facility in Bay, Laguna. It is an integrated dairy farm and processing facility that can produce over nine million liters of dairy and plant-based beverages annually.

The facility is set to utilize dairy farming principles and techniques based on the Israeli model, incorporating artificial intelligence and state-of-the-art equipment powered by a solar power plant.

With these advancements, the BOI said the facility aims to achieve four times the average milking yield of the local industry.

In San Rafael, Bulacan, the Metro Pacific Fresh Farms Inc. will be producing 1,620 metric tons of vegetables annually.

This project, in partnership with Innovative Agro-Industry (IAI), an affiliate of Israel's LR Group, will employ technologies developed for growing high-quality vegetables in challenging desert climates.

The project will also utilize the Nutrient Film Technique (NFT), a hydroponic method for leafy greens that maximizes productivity while minimizing water and nutrient usage.

SL Agritech Corp. is also planning to become a new producer of hybrid rice seeds and palay in Tabuk City, Kalinga.

Once completed, the facility will be capable of producing 17.5 million kilograms of hybrid rice seeds and 3.5 million kilograms of palay annually.

The BOI said the use of hybrid rice technology is expected to help local farmers increase their production and remain competitive against imported rice.

In Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, Vifel Ice Plant and Cold Storage, Inc. is set to build a cold and dry storage facility with a capacity of 5,824 pallets (2.1 million pallet-days) for cold storage and 2,606 pallets (951,190 pallet-days) for dry storage.

Additionally, Chick Haven, Inc. will operate a hatchery facility in Toril, Davao City, with an annual capacity of 18.2 million eggs.

Raquel Echague, Resource-Based Industries Service (RBIS) director, said these projects are expected to create thousands of jobs—both direct and indirect—in various regions of the country, as well as rural employment opportunities, and help increase farmers' incomes.

“Close coordination with lead agencies such as the DA greatly helps in promoting the growth of the agricultural sector as it improves understanding of the needs of the industry and the interventions that government should be providing,” Echague said.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/7/10/boi-clears-p9-6-billion-investment-for-philippine-agri-sector>

MANILA BULLETIN:

'Hindi nagpapahinga': Speaker's office distributes cash, rice aid to 3,000 Leyte folk

BY

Jul 10, 2024 09:52 AM

AT A GLANCE



House Speaker Martin Romualdez (File photo/ Speaker's office)

The office of House Speaker Martin Romualdez has facilitated the release of cash and rice assistance to a total of 3,167 beneficiaries in Leyte, in compliance with President Marcos' directive on the continuous delivery of public service.

Romualdez said Tuesday, July 10 that these beneficiaries received financial aid from the Cash and Rice Distribution (CARD) Program of the DSWD and from the Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers (TUPAD) Program of the DOLE.

“As instructed by President Ferdinand ‘Bongbong’ Marcos Jr., the delivery of public service continues. Tuloy-tuloy po ito at hindi nagpapahinga. At natutuwa ako na ang mga kababayan natin sa Tacloban at Babatngon sa Leyte ang nabigyan ng ayuda ngayong araw,” said the leader of the 300-plus-strong House of Representatives.

(This is continuous, it doesn't rest. I'm happy to see that our countrymen in Tacloban and Babatngon in Leyte received assistance today.)

“Ito ang nais ng ating Pangulong Bongbong Marcos, ang ilapit ang serbisyo sa mga mamamayan. Ipinadarama sa atin ng administrasyon na hindi ito nakakalimot sa sinumpaang tungkulin na isaayos ang kalagayan ng bawat mamamayan ng ating bansa,” added the Leyte 1st district congressman.

(This is what President Bongbong Marcos wants, to bring government service closer to the people. The administration is showing that it hasn't forgotten its sworn duty to take care of its people.)

Lawyer Mark Stephen Reyes--Romualdez's his district chief-of-staff--represented the House leader during the distribution of the aid packages in Leyte,

Reyes led the distribution of P5,000 in cash and P1,000 worth of rice to a total of 1,167 beneficiaries under the CARD Program that was held at the People's Center in Tacloban City.

"The CARD Program is a program instituted by Speaker Romualdez to help other sectors of Philippine society not covered by the 4Ps or other assistance programs. It seeks to aid the vulnerable sectors such as indigent senior citizens, PWDs, single parents, indigenous peoples (IPs) and near-poor families," Reyes said.

District coordinators Arlan Sequito and Abet Eviota, also representing Romualdez, alongside Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) officials led by North Leyte Field Chief Emmanuel de la Cruz and former Babatngon Mayor Marife Galafon-Rondina facilitated the distribution of P4,100 in financial aid to 2,000 qualified beneficiaries under the TUPAD Program at the Pagsalhugon Gym in Babatngon, Leyte.

"In line with President Ferdinand 'Bongbong' R. Marcos Jr.'s directive, Speaker Romualdez remains committed to delivering public service to support various sectors of society struggling with daily expenses and the cost of living," Reyes stated.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/7/10/hindi-nagpapahinga-speaker-s-office-distributes-cash-rice-aid-to-3-000-leyte-folk>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

BOI OKs P9.59 billion agriculture investments

Louella Desiderio - The Philippine Star

July 11, 2024 | 12:00am



Farmers harvest rice using sickles in Bocaue, Bulacan on January 2, 2024.

STAR / Jesse Bustos

MANILA, Philippines — The Board of Investments (BOI) has approved P9.59 billion worth of investments for projects in the agricultural sector that are expected to help achieve food security.

In a statement, the DTI said the investments approved in the first semester were endorsed by the Department of Agriculture (DA) as Tier II agri-based projects under the 2022 Strategic Investment Priority Plan pursuant to the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises Act.

“The synergy between the BOI and the DA is already yielding significant benefits as these projects will certainly drive the adoption of new technologies and enhance food security in the Philippines – ensuring the sustainability and resilience of our agricultural systems,” Trade Secretary and BOI chairman Alfredo Pascual said.

Among the projects approved by the BOI is Metro Pacific Dairy Farms Inc.’s integrated dairy farm and processing facility in Laguna.

The facility, which will use artificial intelligence and state-of-the-art equipment, has a capacity to produce more than nine million liters of dairy and plant-based beverage products annually.

Also approved was Metro Pacific Fresh Farms Inc.'s project in Bulacan being undertaken in collaboration with Innovative Agro-Industry, an affiliate of Israel's LR Group.

The project, which will use technologies developed to cultivate high-quality vegetables even in challenging desert climates, will produce 1,620 metric tons of vegetables annually.

The BOI said it also approved SL Agritech Corp.'s hybrid rice seeds and palay production project in Tabuk City, Kalinga.

With an annual capacity of 17,500,005 kilograms of hybrid rice seeds and 3,500,000 kilograms of palay, the project's use of hybrid rice technology is expected to help increase farmers' output.

The approved investments in the agricultural sector also include Vifel Ice Plant and Cold Storage Inc.'s cold and dry storage facility in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, with a capacity of 5,824 pallets (2,125,760 pallet-days) for cold storage and 2,606 pallets (951,190 pallet-days) for dry storage.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/07/11/2369200/boi-oks-p959-billion-agriculture-investments>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

MVP buying out dairy farm in Bukidnon for P700 million

Jasper Emmanuel Arcalas, Elijah Felice Rosales - The Philippine Star

July 11, 2024 | 12:00am



Manuel V. Pangilinan

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — Business titan Manuel V. Pangilinan is dipping further into the dairy business as he will buy out for around P700 million a Bukidnon-based milk company to increase the supply of his ice cream venture.

Pangilinan confirmed to The STAR that he will be acquiring Bukidnon Milk Co. to raise the dairy supply for premium ice cream brand Carmen's Best of The Laguna Creamery Inc., where he has a controlling stake.

“Sales of our ice cream products have been growing exponentially and we are slowly running out of milk supply from our dairy farm in Bay, Laguna,” Pangilinan said.

“We are buying another dairy farm in Bukidnon to supplement the supply. Maybe we could ship some of the milk to Manila because we want to expand our fresh milk supply and we want to get into yogurt and cheeses,” he added.

Sources privy to the buyout told The STAR that the transaction is estimated to cost at least P700 million. This would make it larger than Pangilinan’s P198 million acquisition of a majority stake in The Laguna Creamery in 2022.

Sources said Metro Pacific Agro Ventures (MPAV), a subsidiary of Metro Pacific Investments Corp., is wrapping up negotiations with Bukidnon Milk with the goal to close the deal this July, in time for Pangilinan’s birth month.

Pangilinan said Bukidnon Milk has a capacity three to four times bigger than MPAV’s dairy farm in Bay, Laguna.

Based on data from the US Department of Agriculture’s Foreign Agricultural Service in Manila, the Philippine market for ice cream products is estimated to reach \$408 million, of which \$105.3 million is imported.

Pangilinan made his first dip into the dairy business in 2022 when MPAV took on a 51-percent share in The Laguna Creamery, the maker of Carmen’s Best. Pangilinan views his entry into the dairy industry as another step toward food sufficiency.

Apart from this, MPAV partnered with Israel’s LR Group Ltd. to put up the Metro Pacific Dairy Farms through a 60:40 sharing in favor of the Metro Pacific Group. The facility can produce as much as 6.5 million liters of milk every year once it begins operations in 2025.

MPAV hopes to grow the revenue of its dairy business to P500 million by 2025 and P1 billion by 2027.

In earlier interviews with reporters, Pangilinan aired his frustration over the dairy supply in the Philippines, lamenting that 99 percent of the demand is served by imported milk and 70 percent of the supply is powdered, not fresh.

Pangilinan said this import dependency is caused by low yields in dairy farming, as farmers are unable to go beyond traditional practices.

This is where Bukidnon Milk pours into the glass. The company runs a 460 hectare grazing farm in Maramag, Bukidnon—the first and biggest of its kind in Mindanao—where cows are allowed to wander freely.

Bukidnon Milk practices a kind of dairy farming that gives cows a stress-free landscape, opposed to the usual confined animal feeding operations method. The company also boasts that it neither enriches nor fortifies its milk products, doing

nothing more to them than light pasteurization and homogenization to retain its natural nutrients.

In its facility, Bukidnon Milk uses RFID readers and automated sensors for safety and sanitation, and it also employs indigenous peoples in the community to provide them jobs.

To date, Bukidnon Milk sells its milk products in select outlets of Balai ni Fruitas, Landers, S&R and SM, and supplies dairy items for coffee shops in Mindanao.

Bukidnon Milk takes care of around 2,000 cows in its land and the company supplies to at least 50 businesses nationwide.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/07/11/2369215/mvp-buying-out-dairy-farm-bukidnon-p700-million>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

SC: No TRO vs rice tariff cut

Jasper Emmanuel Arcalas - The Philippine Star

July 11, 2024 | 12:00am



Customers visit the Paco Market in Manila to check on the goods that are put up for sale on April 6, 2024.

STAR / Ryan Baldemor

MANILA, Philippines — The Supreme Court (SC) did not issue a temporary restraining order (TRO) against Executive Order (EO) 62, which reduced the tariffs on imported rice and other agricultural products from 35 percent to 15 percent.

Instead, the High Court ordered Malacañang to comment on the petition filed by farmers that sought to declare as unconstitutional the EO, also known as “Modifying the Nomenclature and rates of Import Duty on Various Products.”

The petition, filed by several farmer and other cooperative groups, sought a TRO against the EO to hold its implementation while the high tribunal deliberates on the matter.

Respondents named in the petition were Marcos, Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin, National Economic and Development Authority Secretary Arsenio Balisacan and Tariff Commission Chairperson Marilou Mendoza.

The SC gave the respondents 10 days from the receipt of the resolution to file their comment.

“The Court, without giving due course to the Petition and prayer for TRO, required the respondents to file their comments within a non-extendible period of 10 days from notice,” SC spokesperson Camille Sue Ting said at a press briefing yesterday.

The petitioners include the Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura (SINAG) Inc., Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) Inc., United Broiler Raisers Association Inc., Sorosoro Ibaba Development Cooperative and Magsasaka party-list Rep. Argel Joseph Cabatbat.

Sought for comment, Solicitor General Menardo Guevarra said they are currently studying the legal issues involved. He said the Office of the Solicitor General has received a copy of the petition but not the resolution requiring their comment.

“We do not know whether the SC will issue a TRO or not in the days to come. As far as the government is concerned, however, the EO will be implemented unless temporarily restrained by the SC,” he told reporters.

In their 27-page petition, farmers and other cooperative groups claimed EO 62 would make the country dependent on importation, contrary to the policy of self-reliance and independent economy provided under the Constitution.

The EO will also prohibit farmers from being “more competitive” as it threatens them, along with the fishers and the entire economy.

For its part, SINAG called on the government to defer action on EO 62 as the High Court has yet to rule on the petition questioning its constitutionality.

“Considering that the matter of the constitutionality/validity of EO 62 is now pending before the SC, the pendency of this legal action should be respected by the respondents; defer any action in relation to EO 62 and give due respect to the SC,” SINAG legal counsel Virgie Lacsua Suarez said.

“SINAG and the whole agri sector welcome the order of the Supreme Court in requiring the respondents to file their comments within 10 days,” SINAG chair Rosendo So said.

Lower tariff takes effect

The reduction of rice tariffs to 15 percent – the lowest in the country’s history – under President Marcos’ EO 62 took effect last July 5, based on the circular issued by the Bureau of Customs (BOC).

Customs Commissioner Bienvenido Rubio issued Customs Memorandum Circular (CMC) 118-2024 for the implementation of EO 62.

“Thus, the tariff rates on rice shall take effect on 05 July 2024,” the CMC read, noting that the EO was published in the Official Gazette on June 20.

Meanwhile, the tariff rates for the other goods under EO 62 would take effect on July 20, according to the CMC.

Earlier this week, Finance Secretary Ralph Recto said he would meet with the BOC for the issuance of the CMC for the implementation of the EO 62. The BOC usually issues a counterpart circular for any tariff adjustments or modifications in order for such measures to take effect.

Recto said the tariff cut would pull down retail rice prices to between P44.17 and P49.56 per kilo by December.

The current average price for imported well-milled rice is P53.45 per kilo while its locally produced counterpart averages P51.25 per kilo.

Former agriculture secretary Leonardo Montemayor lauded the action of the SC after it directed respondents led by President Marcos to comment on the petition of farmers’ groups against EO No. 62.

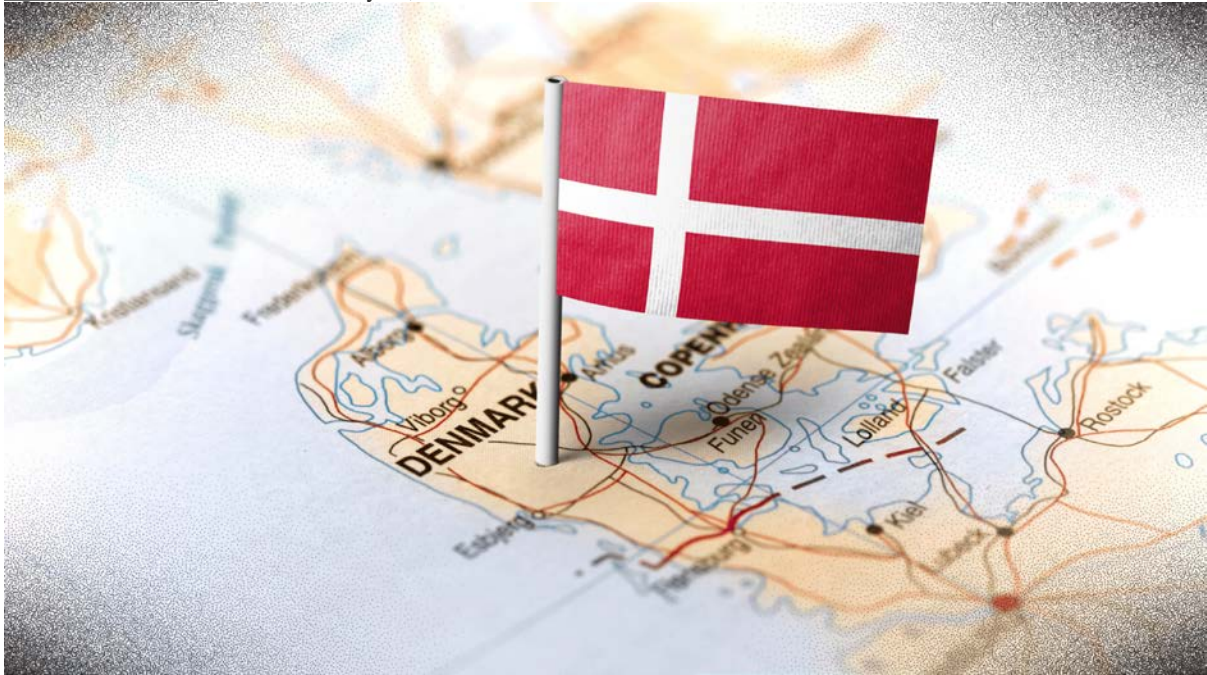
“We welcome the Supreme Court’s quick response by requiring the President and other respondents to reply to our petition within ten days. Of course, we would have hoped for the issuance of a temporary restraining order (TRO) against EO No. 62 in the interim,” Montemayor said in a message to The STAR. — **Bella Cariaso**

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/07/11/2369294/sc-no-tro-vs-rice-tariff-cut>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Denmark to introduce world's first livestock carbon tax

Agence France-Presse / 04:06 PM July 10, 2024



INQUIRER FILE PHOTO

Copenhagen, Denmark — Denmark will introduce the world's first carbon tax on livestock, a unique measure designed to bring the Scandinavian country closer to its goal of carbon neutrality by 2045.

From 2030, methane emissions caused by flatulence from cattle and pigs will be taxed at a rate of 300 kroner (\$43) per tonne of CO₂ equivalent.

This amount will rise to 750 kroner in 2035 under the terms of an agreement reached at the end of June between the government, part of the opposition and representatives of livestock farmers, industry and trade unions.

The text still has to be approved by parliament which will examine it after the summer.

For Christian Fromberg, a campaign leader at Greenpeace Nordic, the text “offers hope... in a situation where a lot of countries are backpedalling on climate action.”

“While the carbon tax should have been both higher and implemented sooner, it does marks a significant milestone,” he told AFP.

At the same time, Fromberg deplored the “missed opportunity” to bring about “a new direction for Danish agriculture”.

This is despite the fact that its practices remain highly intensive and discharges a lot of nitrogen, which is responsible for deoxygenating the water.

Without oxygen, marine flora and fauna disappear.

‘A sad day’

For the Danish Association for Sustainable Agriculture, however, the agreement is “useless”.

It is “a sad day for agriculture”, it said in a press release.

“As a farmer, I feel uncomfortable because we are taking part in an uncertain experiment” that could threaten “the security of the food supply”, said the association’s president Peter Kiaer, recalling New Zealand’s abandonment of a similar proposal in the face of farmers protesting.

To soften the bill for Danish farmers, the plan proposes a 60 percent tax deduction.

The true cost to farmers is expected to be 120 kroner per tonne from 2030, rising to 300 kroner five years later.

However, projections by the economy ministry estimate that up to 2,000 jobs could be lost in the sector by 2035 as a result of the agreement.

The revenue generated by the tax will be reinvested in the ecological transition of the agricultural industry.

Over 60 percent of the country's surface area is devoted to agriculture.

In addition, the fallowing of 140,000 hectares (346,000) should help to increase carbon storage in the soil, thereby reducing the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

“We have a great myth in Denmark of being a green frontrunner,” said Fromberg.

“It is very hard to make the case, that this agreement is historic. It is a continuation of the path of intensification that Danish agriculture has occurred for the last 70 years. And the deal incentivises that Danish agriculture will continue to be the most intensive meat-producing country in the world.”

Denmark is one of the world's leading exporters of pork, which accounts for almost half of the country's agricultural exports, according to the Danish Agriculture and Food Council.

<https://business.inquirer.net/467986/denmark-to-introduce-worlds-first-livestock-carbon-tax>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

BOI gives go-signal to P9.6B agriculture investments

By: [Alden M. Monzon](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 02:10 AM July 11, 2024

The Board of Investments (BOI) has approved P9.59 billion worth of investments in the agriculture sector during the first five months of the year, all of which were endorsed by the Department of Agriculture (DA).

Trade Secretary Alfredo Pascual, who also sits as BOI chair, said on Wednesday the government is currently in the process of transforming the agriculture industry in the Philippines.

“The synergy between the BOI and the DA is already yielding significant benefits as these projects will certainly drive the adoption of new technologies and enhance food security in the Philippines, ensuring the sustainability and resilience of our agricultural systems,” he said in a statement.

These projects include the Metro Pacific Dairy Farms, Inc.’s facility in Bay, Laguna, an integrated dairy farm and processing facility that can produce more than 9 million liters of dairy and plant-based beverage products per year.

The facility will use milk production and processing techniques developed by Israel, which uses artificial intelligence and state-of-the-art equipment supported by a solar power plant. Further, the BOI said that the facility would be able to produce four times the average milking yield of the local industry today.

Another notable project is the farm project of the Metro Pacific Fresh Farms, Inc. in San Rafael, Bulacan, which is expected to produce 1,620 metric tons of vegetables annually.

In collaboration with Israel's LR Group affiliate, the Innovative Agro-Industry, the farm will use hydroponics to grow leafy greens to maximize productivity while minimizing water and nutrient use.

Also on the list is the SL Agritech Corporation's project in Tabuk City, Kalinga, which will produce hybrid rice seeds and palay. This facility will have an annual capacity of 17.5 million kilograms of hybrid rice seeds and 3.5 million kg of palay, according to the BOI.

Another notable project is the cold and dry storage facility of the Vifel Ice Plant and Cold Storage, Inc. in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental. The facility will have a capacity of 5,824 pallets for cold storage and 2,606 pallets for dry storage.

The roster also includes a hatchery facility in Davao with an annual production capacity of about 18.25 million eggs operated by the Chick Haven, Inc.

<https://business.inquirer.net/468023/boi-gives-go-signal-to-p9-6b-agriculture-investments>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Lower vegetable prices seen this week as harvest season begins

By: [Jordeene B. Lagare](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:44 AM July 11, 2024



Vendors tend to fresh vegetable produce at their stalls in Mega Q Mart in Cubao, Quezon City. —Inquirer file photo/Grig C. Montegrando

MANILA, Philippines — The retail prices of vegetables are expected to decrease this week with the start of the harvest season, the Department of Agriculture (DA) said on Wednesday.

“Prices will start to decline within the week because farmers have already begun harvesting their produce,” Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said, citing in particular the expected gradual drop in the price of tomatoes which southern Tagalog farmers have started gathering.

De Mesa, also the DA’s spokesperson, said that vegetable prices in public markets have gone up in the past weeks due to heavy rains and the El Niño phenomenon which delayed the beginning of the harvest season in some areas.

“This is probably an effect of shifting weather conditions ... In the case of tomatoes, the commodity was severely affected by El Niño,” he added.

Another factor aside from erratic weather conditions was the oil price hikes.

Fuel subsidies eyed

“If the vegetables come from faraway areas such as Baguio, Benguet or southern Tagalog, there are additional expenses since gasoline is expensive,” he added.

Last week, the DA announced that it might release P510.447 million in fuel subsidies to farmers this month as fuel prices continue to go up. The financial assistance of P3,000 would go to approximately 160,000 farmers who own or rent machinery used in crop, livestock and poultry production.

The fuel subsidy grant is activated upon the Department of Energy’s certification that the average monthly price of Dubai crude has reached or exceeded \$80 per barrel. As of this writing, the price of Asian bellwether Dubai crude is pegged at around \$86 a barrel.

Based on the DA’s monitoring of agri-fishery commodities in Metro Manila markets, a kilogram of bittergourd (ampalaya) ranged from P70 to P150 as of Tuesday, the same as a year ago.

Per kg, string beans (sitaw) were sold from P70 to P160, slightly higher than last year’s P70 to P100.

Tomatoes (kamatis) hovered between P140 and P220 per kg, much higher than the previous P50 to P95 per kg.

Cabbage retailed from P60 to P100 a kilo, lower than P95 to P160 per kg last year while carrots were sold from P100 to P180 per kg, also lower than last year’s P140 to P180 per kg.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1959916/lower-vegetable-prices-seen-this-week-as-harvest-season-begins>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Gov't think tank backs Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund extension

July 10, 2024 | 8:56 pm



PHILSTAR FILE PHOTO

THE Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) needs to be extended for another six years, with the rice industry yet to show significant improvement in RCEF's first six years of operation, the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) said.

“To introduce flexibility, (we) suggest that, upon the proposal of the President as stated in the National Expenditure Program, we must enable the Congress to alter the allocations of the fund through the General Appropriations Act,” PIDS senior research fellow Roehlano M. Briones and project technical assistant Amerah C. Azis said in a brief.

Under Republic Act No. 11203 or the Rice Tariffication Law of 2019, RCEF receives P10 billion a year from rice import tariff collections to modernize the rice industry by supporting the procurement of machinery, seed, and fertilizer as well as the provision of credit and rice farming know-how.

The RCEF expired last month, but lawmakers are seeking to extend its term and increase its annual allocation.

If extended, RCEF must also include underfunded programs like small water impounding systems, small farm reservoirs, and organic-based fertilizer production by farmer cooperatives and associations, PIDS said.

The government must also create a revolving fund for RCEF's credit component, it added.

Rice stocks nearly expired but still fit for consumption should also be auctioned off, with its proceeds funding palay (unmilled rice) procurement from domestic farmers, PIDS said.

"This way the NFA (National Food Authority) does not have to rely 100% on the General Appropriations Act budgeting for palay procurement," it said.

On Monday, Finance Secretary Ralph G. Recto said boosting agricultural productivity is still the government's long-term solution to the rice industry's chronically weak performance.

The government lowered rice import tariffs to 15% from 35% via Executive Order (EO) No. 62, as an inflation-containment measure.

As a result, tariff collections for rice are expected to decline by P9.42 billion, PIDS said.

Palay output is expected to decline to 19.14 million tons with the tariff cuts from 19.57 million tons under the previous tariff system, PIDS said.

Farmers have challenged the EO before the Supreme Court, saying they were not consulted properly before its issuance. — **Beatriz Marie D. Cruz**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/07/10/607342/govt-think-tank-backs-rice-competitiveness-enhancement-fund-extension/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

BoI-approved agri investments hit P9.59B

July 10, 2024 | 8:55 pm



REUTERS

THE Board of Investments (BoI) said it approved P9.59 billion worth of agricultural projects in the first six months of 2024.

In a statement on Wednesday, the BoI said the projects were endorsed by the Department of Agriculture as Tier II agri-based projects covered under the Strategic Investment Priority Plan.

Trade Secretary and BoI Chairman Alfredo E. Pascual said that the growing number of approved agriculture-related projects “will certainly drive the adoption of new technologies and enhance food security in the Philippines, ensuring the sustainability and resilience of our agricultural systems.”

These projects include Metro Pacific group’s dairy farm in Laguna and a vegetable greenhouse in Bulacan.

Also on the list are the rice seed and palay project of SL Agritech Corp., the cold and dry storage facility of Vifel Ice Plant and Cold Storage, Inc., and the hatchery of Chick Haven, Inc.

Resource-Based Industries Service Director Raquel Echague said that the projects are expected to generate thousands of jobs.

Between Feb. 2 and June 11, the BoI said it approved six projects with investments ranging from P1 billion to P15 billion, with agricultural projects accounting for P6.05 billion and transportation and storage proposals valued at P3.95 billion. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/07/10/607341/boi-approved-agri-investments-hit-p9-59b/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Tomato harvest starts coming in, promising relief from high prices

July 10, 2024 | 8:54 pm



PHILSTAR FILE PHOTO

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said it expects tomato prices to drop this week with the harvest from provinces near Metro Manila start arriving.

“Areas in Southern Tagalog have already started harvesting, and we are expecting tomato prices to gradually decline,” Agriculture Assistant Secretary and Spokesperson Arnel V. de Mesa said.

According to DA price monitors, tomatoes in Metro Manila markets sold for between P140 and P220 per kilogram as of July 9. The month-earlier price range was P55-P95 per kilo.

“*Ito siguro ay epekto ng mga pabago-bago ng panahon natin sa ngayon* (This might be the result of the variable climate). In the case of tomatoes, the crop experienced El Niño, then it rained. But it is gradually recovering,” he added.

He said that increasing fuel prices could also be behind the rise in prices.

“When the source is far away, such as Benguet or Southern Tagalog, there are additional expenses incurred,” Mr. De Mesa said.

Fuel companies on Tuesday raised gasoline prices by P1.60 per liter. For diesel the corresponding hike was P0.65, while kerosene prices rose P0.60.

Last week, the DA said that it had approved the disbursement of P510.447 million in fuel subsidies to about 160,000 farmers.

Each registered farmer owning or renting agricultural machinery will receive P3,000 this month.

“We are just waiting for the certification from the Department of Energy. The condition to release the subsidy is for Dubai crude oil to hit \$80 per barrel,” he added. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/07/10/607340/tomato-harvest-starts-coming-in-promising-relief-from-high-prices/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Barriers thrown up against Abra hogs, pork after ASF outbreak

July 10, 2024 | 8:52 pm



PHILSTAR

BAGUIO CITY — The government of Kalinga province has barred the entry of live hogs, pork, and pork-based products from Abra following an outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF) there.

According to reports, more than 200 hogs have died, with the presence of ASF later confirmed in Manabo, Abra.

Laboratory samples were found positive for ASF on July 4. They had been collected from San Juan, Manabo.

Manabo Mayor Darell Domasing has since ordered a ban on the trade of hogs, pork, and other pork products.

The ban imposed by Kalinga applies to hog shippers, meat vendors, meat shops, and other establishments dealing in meat products.

“The Office of the Provincial Veterinarian (OPV) will provide further information and instructions regarding this outbreak, and the public is advised to exercise extreme caution when purchasing and consuming processed pork meat products. Only products sourced from areas not affected by ASF should be consumed,” the Kalinga government said in announcing the ban.

The Department of Agriculture’s (DA) Cordillera regional office said it provided disinfectants to hog growers in Manabo.

The DA also said the Manabo government needs to reapply for a Recognition of Active Surveillance on African Swine Fever certification from the Bureau of Animal Industry. — **Artemio A. Dumlao**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/07/10/607337/barriers-thrown-up-against-abra-hogs-pork-after-asf-outbreak/>

MANILA STANDARD

SC orders Palace to answer petition vs. rice tariff EO

By Manila Standard

July 11, 2024, 12:30 am

The Supreme Court (SC) on Wednesday ordered Malacañang and other concerned government offices to comment on a petition filed by several agriculture sector organizations seeking to have Executive Order No. 62 declared unconstitutional

The EO, which was issued on June 20, lowers tariffs on imported rice and other issued agricultural products.

SC spokesman Camille Sue Mae Ting said the magistrates issued the order during its en banc session held on Tuesday.

The high court also deferred taking action on the prayer of the petitioners led by Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura (SINAG) Inc., for the issuance of a temporary restraining order (TRO) to immediately suspend the implementation of the E.O 62.

“The Court without giving due course to the petition and prayer for TRO, required the respondents to file their comments within a non-extendible period of 10 days from notice,” the SC said.

The petitioners immediately welcomed the Court’s decision to compel respondents to comment on their petition and urged President Marcos and the other respondents to halt the implementation of the order pending the SC decision on the merits of the case.

“SINAG and the whole agri sector welcome the order of the Supreme Court in requiring the respondents to file their comments within 10 days,” SINAG chair Rosendo So said.

“Considering that the matter of the constitutionality of EO 62 is now pending before the SC, the pendency of this legal action should be respected by the respondents; (and they should) defer any action in relation to EO 62 and, give due respect to the SC,” SINAG’s leader added.

The Office of the Solicitor General (OSG), which serves as the chief government counsel, said it has yet to receive a copy of the Court’s resolution requiring it to comment on the petition but it is already studying the legal issues raised in the actual petition.

Solicitor General Menardo Guevarra, however, said EO 62 will continue to be implemented unless a TRO is issued by the Court.

“We do not know whether the SC will issue a TRO or not in the days to come. I suppose the SC justices are also presently evaluating whether any injunctive relief is necessary as far as the government is concerned, however, the EO will be implemented unless temporarily restrained by the SC,” the Solicitor General stressed.

Besides SINAG, other petitioners in the case are Federation of Free Farmers Inc. (FFFI), United Broiler Raisers Association (UBRA), Sorosoro Ibaba Development Cooperative (SIDC), and Magsasaka Partylist representative Argel Cabatbat.

President Marcos, Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin, National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Secretary Arsenio Balisacan and Tariff Commission chairperson Marilou Mendoza were named as respondents in the petition.

The petitioners argued that EO 62 should be scrapped for being unconstitutional as it was hastily issued without proper consultation with the affected stakeholders.

They added that EO No. 62 violates the limitations and conditions set forth in the Flexible Clause of Republic Act 10863, which makes its issuance invalid and the exercise tantamount to undue delegation of legislative powers.

The order also violates the state policy to develop a self-reliant and independent national economy effectively controlled by Filipinos and violates the constitutional mandate to protect the farmers from unfair competition and trade practices, according to the petitioners.

<https://manilastandard.net/news/national/314470143/sc-orders-palace-to-answer-petition-vs-rice-tariff-ao.html>

Biggest dam project in 50 years on stream



WAWA DAM. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. leads the ceremonial pressing of the button closing the bottom valve of Wawa Dam, the biggest water source project in 50 years. The President is joined by Special Assistant to the President Secretary Anton Lagdameo (left) with Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga. Prime Infrastructure Capital Inc. (Prime Infra) President and CEO Guillaume Lucci (right) joined the President in the event.

By [Manila Standard](#)

July 11, 2024, 12:45 am

President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. directed dam operators nationwide to optimize their facilities for both water provision and renewable energy generation.

Speaking at the Wawa Bulk Water Supply Project impounding ceremony on Wednesday, the President emphasized the importance of multi-purpose dams to meet growing water demands and support sustainability.

“I also call on our stakeholders, particularly those operating other dams nationwide, to maximize the use of your facilities by integrating other uses for the captured water, such as for the generation of renewable energy,” Mr. Marcos said.

“Let us work together in this endeavor to create a more sustainable and energy-efficient future for our nation,” he added.

He stressed the need for dams to support the public’s various needs such as potable water, irrigation, power generation, and flood control.

President Marcos also called for public efforts to conserve water resources, highlighting that it is a shared responsibility.

“We will continue to address water security challenges to ensure that every Filipino has access to sufficient and clean water. At the end of the day, water remains at the core, not only for human survival but also for national development Filipinos,” the chief executive said.

President Marcos also highlighted the significance of the project, completed ahead of schedule despite the COVID-19 pandemic, as a major infrastructure achievement.

“It is commendable that it was completed with remarkable speed despite the COVID-19 pandemic which slowed down the progress of projects and industries during the time that this was being built,” he noted.

Construction of the dam component was completed on March 30, with initial water impounding beginning May 30, 2024.

The PHP26.5 billion Public-Private Partnership with Prime Infrastructure Capital, Inc. and San Lorenzo Ruiz Builders and Developers Group is slated for full operation by December 2025.

Upon completion, the dam will boost the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) supply from 80 million liters per day (MLD) to 438 MLD, potentially reaching 710 MLD.

This increase will support 2.2 to 3.5 million consumers within the MWSS service area.

Additional project components, including a pump station, access tunnel, and conveyance pipeline were 69.68 percent complete as of May 31, 2024.

The Wawa Dam is the largest water source built in the country in over 50 years, second only to the Angat Dam.

<https://manilastandard.net/news/top-stories/314470153/biggest-dam-project-in-50-years-on-stream.html>

H1 agri project approvals hit P9.59B

[By Janine Alexis Miguel](#)

July 11, 2024

THE Board of Investments (BoI) reported an increase in the value of agricultural projects approved as of end-June, following the endorsement of projects by the Department of Agriculture (DA).

Projects under the farming sector totaled P9.59 billion in investments in the first half of the year. These projects, as endorsed by the DA, are classified as Tier 2 agri-based under the 2022 Strategic Investment Priority Plan and are in line with the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises Act.

Among the projects that were endorsed include the Metro Pacific Dairy Farms Inc.'s facility in Bay, Laguna. With an initial cost of more than P2 billion, the dairy farm and processing facility can produce over 9 million liters of dairy and plant-based beverages annually.

Using artificial intelligence, advanced equipment and solar power, and inspired by the Israeli model, the facility aims to produce four times the average milking yield of the current local industry.

In partnership with Israel's LR Group affiliate Innovative Agro-Industry (IAI), Metro Pacific Fresh Farms Inc.'s farm in San Rafael, Bulacan, aims to produce 1,620 metric tons of high-quality vegetables annually.

This project also aims to use advanced technologies to grow vegetables and employ the Nutrient Film Technique, a hydroponic method for leafy greens that maximizes productivity while minimizing water and nutrient use.

Trade Secretary and BoI Chairman Alfredo Pascual said that the projects aim to transform the agricultural sector in the Philippines.

"The synergy between the BoI and the DA is already yielding significant benefits as these projects will certainly drive the adoption of new technologies and enhance food security in the Philippines — ensuring the sustainability and resilience of our agricultural systems," he added.

The BoI also approved SL Agritech Corp.'s project to produce hybrid rice seeds and palay (unmilled rice) in Tabuk, Kalinga, with an annual capacity of 17.5 million kilograms of (kg) seeds and 3.5 million kg of palay.

"The synergy between the BoI and the DA is already yielding significant benefits as these projects will certainly drive the adoption of new technologies and enhance food security in the Philippines — ensuring the sustainability and resilience of our agricultural systems," he added.

The BoI also approved SL Agritech Corp.'s project to produce hybrid rice seeds and palay (unmilled rice) in Tabuk, Kalinga, with an annual capacity of 17.5 million kilograms of (kg) seeds and 3.5 million kg of palay.

Meanwhile, Vifel Ice Plant and Cold Storage Inc. will set up a facility with cold storage for 5,824 pallets and dry storage for 2,606 pallets following approval from the BoI. Chick Haven Inc. will operate a hatchery in Toril, Davao City, with a yearly capacity of 18.2 million eggs.

BoI said that the DA endorsed the projects that are seen ensuring food security and supporting sustainable agriculture.

Resource-Based Industries Service (RBIS) Director Raquel Echague, meanwhile, said that the projects are expected to create thousands of jobs nationwide, boost rural employment and increase farmers' incomes. The RBIS is an agency under the BoI.

"Close coordination with lead agencies such as the DA greatly helps in promoting the growth of the agricultural sector as it improves understanding of the needs of the industry and the interventions that the government should be providing," Echague said.

The BoI reported a surge in agricultural investments following the issuance of the Fiscal Incentives Review Board Resolution 003-24 on February 2. The resolution enabled the BoI to approve agricultural projects with up to P15 billion in capital.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/07/11/business/top-business/h1-agri-project-approvals-hit-p959b/1956498>

Pigmented rice production gets boost

[By Leander C. Domingo](#)

July 11, 2024

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) through the Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) has turned over to the Cagayan Seed Producers Multipurpose Cooperative (CSPMPC) assistance worth P45.9 million for the milling and marketing of pigmented rice.

Through the Regional Project Coordination Office 2 (RPCO2), the DA turned over a facility that houses a rice mill and recirculating grain, and areas to store grains in Barangay Gadu in Solana, Cagayan province.

Rose Mary Aquino, DA-Region 2 (Cagayan Valley) Field Office director, said the enterprise was funded under Additional Financing 2 of the PRDP with P23.3 million for civil works and P11.6 million for enterprise development. About P10.5 million was for the proponent group counterpart.



Photo shows the facility turned over to the Cagayan Seed Producers Multipurpose Cooperative for the drying, milling and marketing of pigmented rice. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOCONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Also the RPCO2 project director, Aquino said the completed project will see the CSPMPC produce, consolidate, mill, and markets aromatic and pigmented rice based on its approved business plan.

"The CSPMPC shall assist their farmer members in producing aromatic and pigmented rice by providing seeds and farm inputs including land preparation services," she said, adding that clustering of farmers shall be employed for easier plant management to ensure quality of harvest.

Compared to white rice, pigmented rice has various colors and is regarded as a healthy option. Natural food colorants can also be extracted from pigmented rice.

Thanking stakeholders for their support in the fast completion of the subproject within 16 months, Aquino said "the project represents our unified effort in efficiently implementing programs for our clients."

She also challenged the cooperative's officials and members to continue producing quality rice at P30 per kilo.

"We need to get our acts together in producing affordable rice in support of the government's goal in the welfare of our general consumers," Aquino said.

"We need to get our acts together in producing affordable rice in support of the government's goal in the welfare of our general consumers," Aquino said.

CSPMPC Chairman Nestor Bautista thanked the DA-PRDP for the project that will enhance their capacity to produce quality rice and increase their income.

"We thank you for extending us another notable project that will add to our existing and growing list of interventions coming from the agency," Bautista said.

Meanwhile, CSMPC manager Dumon Maborang gave assurance to the Agriculture Department that the cooperative will produce quality and affordable rice for residents also as part of their corporate social responsibility.

"The cooperative will always support the initiatives of the DA. Rest assured that we will take extra care of this and maximize its operation," Maborang said.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/07/11/business/agribusiness/pigmented-rice-production-gets-boost/1956403>

NCPC to conduct research on armyworm control

[By Philippine News Agency](#)

July 11, 2024

BACOLOD CITY — The National Crop Protection Center (NCPC) of the University of the Philippines-Los Baños will conduct various studies on the sound management of fall armyworms in sugarcane currently monitored in different localities in Negros Occidental.

Some 80 hectares of sugarcane plantation and 843 hectares of cornfield in 15 local government units have been infested by armyworms as of July 5, based on the latest report of the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPA) on Tuesday.

In its report, the NCPC team, led by director Barbara Caoili, said they conducted a field visit and assessment from July 3 to 4 to investigate the infestation in sugarcane in the province, in coordination with 5th District Rep. Emilio Bernardino Yulo, focusing on areas in Himamaylan City, as well as Binalbagan and Hinigaran towns.

"In Himamaylan, a specific area showed pest damage at 100 percent," it added.

During the site visit, the team monitored and collected specimens in affected sugarcane and corn fields.

The NCPC report said they will use the collected parasitized eggs and dead larvae covered by fungi to study potential biological control agents against fall armyworms in sugarcane.

It also said armyworms were "found to infest various weeds associated with sugarcane and caused damage to an ornamental plant planted near the sugarcane field."

Among the studies that NCPC will conduct include research on molecular and morpho-cultural identification, susceptibility tests on various insecticides, and identification and mass production of biological control agents collected during the site visit.

Also, the NCPC team presented their research and extension initiatives, and the initial assessment of pest infestation in sugarcane in Barangay Carabalan, Himamaylan City, during the sugar planters' forum with the OPA, Sugar Regulatory Authority and Department of Agriculture-Regional Crop Protection Center.

They also presented the "possible biological control agents obtained during the site visit aside from the existing biological control agents studied by NCPC with confirmed effectiveness in controlling fall armyworms in corn."

Part of the forum aimed at training the farmers on the proper insecticide spraying as Yulo sees the importance of proper insecticide spraying for effective insect management, the report added.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/07/11/business/agribusiness/ncpc-to-conduct-research-on-armyworm-control/1956391>

Edible garden for elderly launched

By Leander C. Domingo

July 11, 2024

THE Philippine-hosted Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (Searca), the Rotary Club of Calamba and the "Bahay ni Maria" have joined forces to design and establish an edible garden for the elderly and children with special needs in a site in Calamba, Laguna.

The Bahay ni Maria, a home for abandoned elderly and children with special needs in Calamba, is the partner-beneficiary of the initiative represented by Sister Maria Immaculate Ancog, head of Missionary Sisters of Our Lady Fatima, during the recent signing of a tripartite agreement.

The agreement was signed by Searca Director Glenn Gregorio and Federic Inion of the Rotary Club of Calamba based in Laguna.



Federic Inion of Rotary Club of Calamba; Sister Maria Immaculate Ancog, head of Missionary Sisters of Our Lady Fatima based in Laguna; and Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture Director Glenn Gregorio during the groundbreaking ceremony for the edible garden project. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Speaking on behalf of the Bahay ni Maria, Ancog thanked Searca and the Rotary Club of Calamba for being chosen as their partner-beneficiary of the edible garden project.

Gregorio said the garden will be a sustainable source of fresh produce to meet the dietary needs of the Bahay ni Maria residents.

"The edible garden project can also function as a venue for collaboration with other stakeholders and recreational activities," he said, adding that the garden will contain a nursery greenhouse for seedlings and planting materials for various crops like lettuce and other high-value crops.

Gregorio said that the garden will have a vertical or container garden utilizing recycled containers; an herbal garden as a source of medicinal plants for immediate aid against common injuries and illnesses; vegetable garden plots and fruit trees; and a composting area for kitchen scraps and garden wastes for the production of organic fertilizer.

During the recently held groundbreaking ceremony of the garden project, Gregorio underscored the importance of gardening in promoting food and nutrition security.

Searca also handed over gardening tools and planting materials as well as food to the Bahay ni Maria residents.

Gregorio also shared the success of Searca's School-plus-Home Garden Project in Laguna and its offshoot projects, which have expanded to Rizal and Palawan, as well as outside the country in neighboring Cambodia.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/07/11/business/agribusiness/edible-garden-for-elderly-launched/1956392>

DA-endorsed projects granted BOI incentives

July 11, 2024

Agriculture projects approved by the Board of Investments (BOI) reached P9.59 billion in the first six months of the year.

The BOI said these projects were endorsed by the Department of Agriculture as Tier II agri-based projects under the Strategic Investment Priority plan pursuant to the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises Act Act.

Of the P13.38 billion approved from February 2 to June 11 by the BOI worth between P1 billion and P15 billion, agriculture sector led with the highest investments at P6.05 billion.

These projects include:

Metro Pacific Dairy Farms, Inc.'s facility in Bay, Laguna for an integrated dairy farm and processing capable of producing more than 9 million liters of dairy and plant-based beverage products annually;

Metro Pacific Fresh's facility for the production of 1,620 metric tons of vegetables annually in collaboration with Innovative Agro-Industry an affiliate of Israel's LR Group. The project will leverage technologies developed to cultivate high-quality vegetables even in challenging desert climates;

SL Agritech Corp.'s production of hybrid rice seeds and palay in Tabuk City, Kalinga. The facility will have an annual capacity of 17.5 million kilograms (kg) of hybrid rice seeds and 3.5 kg of palay;

Vifel Ice Plant and Cold Storage Inc.'s cold and dry storage facility with a capacity of 5,824 pallets for cold storage and 2,606 pallets for dry storage in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental and;

Chick Haven, Inc.'s hatchery facility in Toril, Davao City, with an annual capacity of 18.25 million eggs.

https://malaya.com.ph/news_business/da-endorsed-projects-granted-boi-incentives/

Operators told to use dams for multiple purposes

By Jocelyn Montemayor

July 11, 2024



President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. (center) leads the impounding process ceremony of the Upper Wawa Dam in Rizal on July 10, 2024. With him are (from left) Special Assistant to the President Secretary Antonio Lagdameo Jr., Environment Secretary Ma. Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga, Prime Infra president and CEO Guillaume Lucci, and MWSS administrator Leonor Cleofas. (Prime Infra photo)

PRESIDENT Marcos Jr. yesterday asked dam operators to maximize their facilities not only in ensuring the provision of a steady water supply but also in harnessing captured water for other purposes such as generating renewable energy.

The President, at the impounding process ceremony of the Upper Wawa Dam in Rodriguez in Rizal, urged the private sector to continue working with the government in creating a more sustainable and energy-efficient future for the country.

Marcos said more multi-purpose dams are needed to address the increasing demand for water not just for drinking but also for irrigation, power generation, flood control, aquaculture, “and hopefully other technologies that we may engage in the future.”

He also urged the public to conserve the country’s water resources, as he affirmed his administration’s commitment to address water security woes in the country.

“Rest assured that this Administration remains firm in its resolve to pursue a more transformative endeavor that will champion the optimal health and growth of Filipinos across the country. We will continue to address water security challenges to ensure that every Filipino has access to sufficient and clean water,” he said.

The President led the ceremony for the impounding process of Upper Wawa Dam which is expected to result in the increase in water supply in Metro Manila and the surrounding provinces.

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) said the dam is expected to increase water supply from 80 million liters to 438 million liters per day by the end of 2025, and to 710 million liters per day in the succeeding years which would support the water supply needs of 2.2 to 3.5 million Filipinos in its service area.

Marcos said the Angat Dam, which is the primary source of water supply in Metro Manila and nearby provinces, could no longer meet the needs of around 14 million residents.

“We need a new source of water to ensure the water security of Metro Manila and surrounding areas now and in the decades to come. And that is why we are all very happy to be here today to lead the impounding process ceremony of the Upper Wawa Dam. This significant milestone marks the completion of the construction of the dam component of Phase 2 of the Wawa Bulk Water Supply Project,” he said.

The President said apart from the water supply, the Upper Wawa Dam will also foster climate resilience among Filipinos by protecting communities downstream from flooding and by mitigating the detrimental effects of drought.

The P26.5 billion project includes the construction of the 85-meter-high and 438.5-meter-long roller compacted concrete Upper Wawa Dam in Barangay San Rafael in Rodriguez.

Marcos lauded the completion of the project a year ahead of schedule, and amid the recent coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

Construction works for the project component were completed on March 30 this year, while its initial water impounding started on May 30, 2024. It is expected to be fully completed and operational by December 2025.

The project is led by Prime Infrastructure Capital and its partner Wawa JVCo, San Lorenzo Ruiz Builders and Developers Group and the MWSS.

https://malaya.com.ph/news_business/operators-told-to-use-dams-for-multiple-purposes/

Average rice wholesale price jumps 24% in June

Ada Pelonia

July 11, 2024



THE average wholesale price of regular milled rice jumped by nearly a quarter in June, according to the latest data released by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

Based on the data, the average price of regular milled rice nationwide reached P46.52 per kilo in June 2024, higher than the P37.24 per kilo in June 2023.

The fastest increase in regular milled rice is in the Cagayan Valley, where the price of the staple surged 37.2 percent.

The PSA said this was followed by the National Capital Region (NCR), where regular milled rice prices soared 34.8 percent in June 2024.

Farmers to Executive: Wait for SC ruling on rice tariffs

Joel R. San Juan and Ada Pelonia

July 11, 2024

THE Executive branch should wait for the Supreme Court's decision on a petition against an order that mandated the reduction of rice tariffs to 15 percent, according to farmers' groups.

The groups noted the SC is still asking the President and other members of his Cabinet to respond to the petition they filed against Executive Order (EO) 62.

On Wednesday, the high court directed President Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. and several other government officials to comment on the petition filed by various groups in the agriculture sector seeking to declare unconstitutional Executive Order No. 62 which lowers the tariff on imported rice and other agricultural products.

At a press briefing, SC spokesman Atty. Camille Sue Mae Ting said the magistrates issued the order during their en banc session.

Likewise, the Court deferred acting on the prayer of the petitioners led by Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura (Sinag) Inc., for the issuance of a temporary restraining order (TRO) to immediately enjoin the implementation of the EO 62.

“The Court without giving due course to the petition and prayer for TRO, required the respondents to file their comments within a non-extendible period of 10 days from notice,” the SC said.

The petitioners immediately welcomed the Court's decision to compel respondents to comment on their petition, and urged Marcos Jr. and the other respondents to halt the implementation of the order pending the SC decision on the merits of the case.

“Sinag and the whole agri sector welcome the order of the Supreme Court in requiring the respondents to file their comments within 10 days,” Sinag chair Rosendo So said.

“Considering that the matter of the constitutionality/validity of EO 62 is now pending before the SC, the pendency of this legal action should be respected by the respondents; defer any action in relation to EO 62 and, give due respect to the SC,” the group said.

“The Federation of Free Farmers [FFF] welcomes the Supreme Court’s quick action by requiring the President and other respondents to comment on our petition against EO No. 62 within ten days,” FFF Chairman Leonardo Montemayor said, noting that they would have hoped for the issuance of a TRO in the interim.

The broad agriculture sector coalition Sinag also welcomed the high court’s move, urging the public to support rice farmers, corn growers, hog producers, and poultry raisers.

“Considering that the matter of the constitutionality/validity of EO 62 is now pending before the SC, the pendency of this legal action should be respected by the respondents,” Sinag said in a statement.

“Defer any action in relation to EO 62 and give due respect to the SC,” it added.

EO 62 also known as “Modifying the Nomenclature and Rates of Import Duty on Various Products,” lowered the tariff on rice from 35 percent to 15 percent; and tariffs on other agricultural products.

The order, according to the Palace, could bring down the price of rice to P6 to P7. However, certain economists had said the impact of the lower tariffs on prices in the local market would not be felt right away.

OSG studying legal issues

The Office of the Solicitor General (OSG), which serves as the chief government counsel, said it has yet to receive a copy of the Court’s resolution requiring it to comment on the petition, but is already studying the legal issues raised in the actual petition.

Solicitor General Menardo Guevarra, however, said EO 62 will continue to be implemented unless a TRO is issued by the Court.

“We do not know whether the SC will issue a TRO or not in the days to come. I suppose the SC justices are also presently evaluating whether any injunctive relief is necessary as far as the government is concerned; however, the EO will be implemented unless temporarily restrained by the SC,” Guevarra stressed.

Aside from Sinag, other petitioners in the case are Federation of Free Farmers Inc. (FFFI), United Broiler Raisers Assn. 1 Inc., Sorosoro Ibaba Development Cooperative (SIDC), and Magsasaka Partylist representative Att. Argel Cabatbat,

Marcos Jr., Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin, National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) Secretary Arsenio Balisacan and Tariff Commission chairperson Marilou Mendoza were named respondents in the petition.

The petitioners argued that EO 62 should be scrapped for being unconstitutional as it was hastily issued without proper consultation with the affected stakeholders.

They added that EO 62 violates the limitation/conditions set forth in the Flexible Clause of Republic Act 10863 which makes its issuance invalid and the exercise tantamount to undue delegation of legislative powers.

The order also violates the state policy to develop a self-reliant and independent national economy effectively controlled by Filipinos and violates the constitutional mandate to protect the farmers from unfair competition and trade practices.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/07/11/farmers-to-executive-wait-for-sc-ruling-on-rice-tariffs/>

Climate change, food, energy security on FMJr's mind

Samuel P. Medenilla

July 11, 2024

President Marcos has called on dam operators to go beyond just water distribution and help in ensuring the country's climate resilience as well as food and energy security by upgrading their facilities.

At the inauguration of the impounding process facility of the Upper Wawa Dam in Montalban, Rizal, on Wednesday, the Chief Executive highlighted the importance of increasing the country's multi-purpose dams to efficiently use limited water resources.

“Water is a finite resource while the demand for it is ever increasing. We need to use water wisely, as many times and for as many purposes as possible,” Marcos said.

“We need to build more multi-purpose dams to ensure water supply not only for drinking but also for irrigation, power generation, flood control, aquaculture, and hopefully other technologies that we may engage in, in the future,” he added.

He cited Upper Wawa Dam as an example of such a multi-purpose dam, which has other functions aside from providing for the water needs of the 2.2 million to 3.5 million people within the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) area.

The P26.5-billion facility will generate 600 megawatts of power once it fills up its over 400-hectare reservoir.

It will also enhance the climate resilience of the communities it serves by serving as a flood-control structure and providing them with a reliable source of water during droughts.

The dam is part of the Phase 2 of the Wawa Bulk Water Supply Project, which is being implemented by Wawa JVCo. Inc., a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) between the government and Prime Infrastructure Capital Inc. through a joint venture with San Lorenzo Ruiz Builders and Developers Group.

It is projected to generate 438 million liters of water a day once the dam starts its commercial operation next year and this can increase to 710 million liters per day in the following years.

“The Upper Wawa Dam will be the biggest water source to be built in the country in over 50 years, next to the Angat Dam,” Marcos said.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/07/11/climate-change-food-energy-security-on-fmjrs-mind/>

PHL targets fivefold rise in cacao production

Ada Pelonia

July 11, 2024



Cacao beans processing and sorting at a facility in Panabo, Davao del Norte.

The Philippines is aiming to increase the yield of local cacao plantations as global demand for the crop continues to rise, according to a senior official of the Department of Agriculture (DA).

Agriculture Undersecretary Cheryl Marie Natividad-Caballero said the Department of Agriculture (DA) wants to raise the output of each cacao tree to 1 kilo from the current 0.5 kg. This, she said, will help the Philippines achieve its target of producing 50,000 metric tons (MT) of cacao by 2025.

Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) showed that cacao production reached 10,759.12 metric tons (MT) in 2023, slightly higher than the 10,446.07 MT recorded in 2022.

Caballero also said each tree could produce as much as 3 kilos of beans. This, she said, can be done through proper crop nutrition, integrated pest management, and proper pruning.

An industry roadmap prepared by the DA showed that the 2 kilo per tree yield performance has not been achieved by most farms due to the limited supply of quality planting materials and lack of training on good agricultural practices.

“Other farms have produced as high as 2 to 3 kilograms (kg) per tree. So, this will now boil down to how the farmers can take care of their trees and sustain the pruning and cultural management,” Caballero told the BusinessMirror in an interview.

She said the government is providing cacao farmers with crop nutrition management along with organic and inorganic fertilizers and farm equipment while expanding support toward the fermentation of beans. Demonstration farms have also been set up to assist planters.

“We also do capacity-building activities in partnership with local government units (LGUs) and extension workers. We are working on the quality planting materials and promoting the value addition of the products by giving research support.”

To allow farmers to earn while waiting for a long-gestating crop like cacao to bear fruits, Caballero said the government is encouraging them to consider planting other cash crops.

PSA data indicated that the country had more than 6.6 million fruit-bearing cacao trees last year, 3 percent higher than the previous year’s 6.48 million.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/07/11/phl-targets-fivefold-rise-in-cacao-production/>

Malaysian palm grower ready for tougher ESG rules with IPO

BusinessMirror

July 11, 2024



A worker tends to palm tree saplings at a nursery at the Johor Plantations Group Bhd. Sindora Estate in Johor.

Johor Plantations Group Bhd. (JPG) will use funds raised in its 735 million ringgit (\$156 million) initial public offering (IPO) to build a palm oil operation powered by clean energy, as it navigates increasingly tough regulations in key markets like Europe.

The mid-sized producer is confident about appealing to European consumers thanks to its short, sustainability-certified supply chain and plans to halve its carbon output by next year, Managing Director Mohd Faris Adli Shukery said in an interview ahead of the listing on Tuesday.

The company's shares rose as much as 10.7 percent on its debut and were trading at 0.93 ringgit as of mid-morning in Kuala Lumpur

Growers of the world's most-consumed edible oil are facing heightened global scrutiny over their devastating impact on tropical rainforests, with the most immediate pressure coming from the European Union Deforestation Regulation. Due to come into effect by the end of the year, the law forces companies selling

commodities like [palm oil](#) and cocoa to make sure their products don't come from recently deforested land.

Malaysia is the world's second-largest [palm oil](#) producer and Europe is among its biggest export markets.

For JPG, it's a chance to accelerate its net zero plans, Faris said in the interview in Kuala Lumpur, adding that the company is committed to meeting "whatever developments that have been put by different jurisdictions."

"Given that we have a restricted production volume and we are certified, we are optimizing that opportunity in being able to accommodate" stricter environmental requirements including the EUDR, he said.

Bigger palm oil producers have struggled to completely stamp out deforestation and prove their supply chains are fully-traceable right down to the estate. By comparison, JPG, with a valuation of more than 2 billion ringgit, has around 56,000 hectares of planted area in the southern region of Peninsular Malaysia.

"End-buyers are looking at companies which have got more distinctive characteristics," Faris said. "In our case, you're talking about a shorter supply chain, and a very confined geographical area of production," containing risks, he said.

The IPO is the largest in Kuala Lumpur since the first quarter of 2022, when dairy maker Farm Fresh Bhd. raised \$240 million. Since then, the market for new share sales across Southeast Asia has been slow amid low valuations.

Companies that listed in Malaysia over the past 10 years with offerings larger than \$100 million, rose by 4 percent on average in their opening session, according to data compiled by Bloomberg.

JPG plans to spend its IPO proceeds on building a [palm oil](#) complex powered by renewable energy, replanting old trees, and repaying debt. It also plans to develop new income streams with three bio-methane plants that will be running by the end of the year.

The firm will launch a specialty oils and fats refinery that is a joint venture with global food ingredient manufacturer Fuji Oil Holdings Inc., which when completed in 2026, will boost JPG's revenue by at least 20 percent, Faris said.

Bloomberg News

Image credits: [Bloomberg](#)

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/07/11/malaysian-palm-grower-ready-for-tougher-esg-rules-with-ipo/>

DA asks Vietnamese firm to build fertilizer factory in PHL

Ada Pelonia

July 10, 2024

The Department of Agriculture (DA) is urging a Vietnamese fertilizer manufacturer to put up a factory in the Philippines to make its products more accessible to local planters.

The DA said a delegation led by Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. met executives of Binh Dien Fertilizer Joint Stock Co. in Vietnam to explore areas of cooperation, particularly the potential for the firm to supply, or if viable, to manufacture fertilizer in the Philippines.

During his recent visit to Binh Dien's facilities, Laurel highlighted the need for the Vietnamese fertilizer giant's presence in the Philippines to help increase local farm production.

"We see great potential in partnering with Binh Dien. Our country stands to benefit significantly from their advanced technology and expertise in agriculture," he said in a statement.

Established in 1975, Binh Dien has grown to become Vietnam's leading producer of NPK (a mixture of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium in fertilizers) and a major driver of agricultural and rural development in the country. It has several factories with a combined capacity of 1 million metric tons (MMT) that supply 30 percent of Vietnam's fertilizer requirements.

The agri chief said Binh Dien could initially agree to a distribution agreement that could eventually lead to the transfer of technology and even potential investment in a manufacturing facility in the country.

"We have high expectations following our visit to Binh Dien's factory. Their management and technical team's expertise is impressive and much needed in the Philippines."

The DA said the Vietnamese company sees the Philippine market as “a strategic opportunity” to expand internationally.

to contribute their specialized knowledge to enhance agricultural practices in the Philippines while fostering their growth outside Vietnam.”

The DA noted that discussions concluded with optimism for a fruitful partnership, highlighting mutual benefits and the potential for significant advancements in agricultural technologies between the two countries.

Vietnam is a major exporter of rice and is currently the Philippines’ main source of the staple.

Vietnam earlier agreed to a five-year trade deal to supply through the private sector up to 2 MMT of white rice every year to the Philippines at a competitive and affordable price.

The country relies heavily on imports to meet its demand for various fertilizer grades. Citing data from the Bureau of Customs, the Congressional Policy and Budget Research Department (CPBRD) said imports accounted for almost 87 percent of the fertilizer used by the Philippines in 2021 to 2023.

Last year, the think tank said the country imported a total of 2.54 million metric tons of fertilizer products, mostly from China. Of the volume, more than half consisted of nitrogenous types like urea.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/07/10/da-asks-vietnamese-firm-to-build-fertilizer-factory-in-phl/>

‘Tomato prices to soften as harvest begins in Southern Tagalog’

Ada Pelonia

July 10, 2024

The Department of Agriculture (DA) said Wednesday the public can expect lower tomato prices owing to the incoming volume of harvest.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary and Spokesman Arnel de Mesa told reporters that farmers in Southern Tagalog have started to harvest their crop.

“We expect prices to go down in the coming days,” he said in an interview.

Tomato prices in Metro Manila markets ranged between P140 and P220 per kilo as of July 9, according to the latest price monitoring report of the DA. The figures are higher than the P90 to P160 per kilo recorded on June 25.

De Mesa attributed the hike in tomato prices to weather disturbances, such as typhoons. He said this could also be due to soaring oil prices.

“If the tomatoes would come from Benguet, Baguio, or Southern Tagalog, traders would incur additional expenses because fuel is expensive.”

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. recently issued a memorandum order approving the distribution of P510.447 million worth of fuel subsidies to farmers.

Laurel said the fuel subsidies would be distributed to about 160,000 farmers who own or rent machinery used in crop, livestock, and poultry production. He said they expect the subsidies would alleviate the financial burden on farmers amid the rising fuel cost.

According to the department, farmers who have agricultural machinery and equipment and are listed in the “Registry System for Basic Sectors of Agriculture” (RSBSA) will receive a fuel subsidy of P3,000 each.

DA said the distribution of these subsidies will be facilitated through assistance cards provided by the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) and its financial technology partners.

Laurel said this forms part of several initiatives by the administration to support farmers, “who are integral to ensuring food security and are considered the backbone of the economy.”

“This is just one of the several assistance projects that the Marcos administration provides to ease the burden of our farmers, the unsung heroes of our economy and the main pillar of our food security goal.”

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/07/10/tomato-prices-to-soften-as-harvest-begins-in-southern-tagalog/>

Government wants local farms to produce more garlic

Ada Pelonia

July 10, 2024

The Department of Agriculture (DA) wants to expand the output of native garlic to make it more accessible to consumers.

Agriculture Undersecretary Cheryl Marie Natividad-Caballero issued the statement after the DA's latest price watch report as of July 6 showed that the price of garlic in some markets in Metro Manila jumped to as high as P500 per kilo.

“For our local garlic, we produce only 3 percent of the requirement and 90 percent of that comes from the Ilocos region,” Caballero told the BusinessMirror in an interview.

She said native garlic has become a “prized commodity” because of its superior quality compared to the imported varieties.

The country's self-sufficiency in garlic was 5.5 percent in 2022, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). The Ilocos Region was the top producer as it accounted for a chunk of the national output of 5,884.93 metric tons (MT).

“Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. has given us instructions to prop up the local production of garlic,” Caballero said in a mix of English and Filipino.

She said the department has spoken with provincial officials in the Ilocos region and Mindoro to provide support for the planting materials and access to credit for areas planted with garlic.

“Secretary Laurel was able to approve the proposed financing, the loan package for the garlic production for 300 hectares,” Caballero said, noting that the loan would be around P50 million.

“We work either through organizations or with the local governments, so that has always been the case for the national government’s intervention.”

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/07/10/government-wants-local-farms-to-produce-more-garlic/>

ABANTE TONITE

Kamatis, carrots, iba pang gulay sumisirit presyo

July 10, 2024

Kinalma ng Department of Agriculture (DA) ang publiko sa sumisirit na presyo ng mga gulay sa palengke dahil unti-unti na umanong bababa ito ngayong nagsimula na ang anihan.

“Ang good news dito as I mentioned, nag-start nang mag-harvest ngayon iyong Southern Tagalog Region. And ine-expect natin, unti-unti nang bababa iyong presyo,” ayon kay Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa sa isang panayam.

Ang tinutukoy ni De Mesa ay ang anihan ng kamatis na sumipa ang presyo sa Metro Manila mula P140 hanggang P220 per kilo base sa mga datos. Mas mataas ito kumpara sa nakalipas na dalawang linggo kung saan pumalo ang presyo ng kamatis sa P90 hanggang P160 per kilo.

Kabilang pa sa mga produktong agrikultural na nagkaroon ng taas-presyo ay ang carrots na pumalo sa P180 per kilo mula sa P100, tumaas naman ng P120 per kilo ang talong mula sa P60, habang ang bell pepper ay nasa P350 ang kilo mula sa P200.

Sa kabila nito, naniniwala si De Mesa na bababa ang presyo ng mga gulay.

“Iyong presyo ng gulay parating pabago-bago iyan, iyong presyong nakataas, they are very temporary at kapag bumalik uli iyong malaking harvest, bababa uli iyan,” paliwanag niya.

Sinisi ni De Mesa ang pagsipa sa presyo ng mga gulay sa atrasadong anihan nito sanhi ng pabago-bagong panahon bukod pa sa naging epekto ng El Niño at ng bagyong Aghon.

Maaaring naapektuhan din aniya ang presyo ng mga gulay sa patuloy na oil price hike dahil dagdag gastos din ito sa transportation cost, lalo na ang mga

produktong galing pa sa malalayong probinsya tulad sa Benguet, Baguio, at Southern Tagalog.

“May additional na expenses kapag mahal ang gasolina. Of course, ang lalaki ng increases, P1 to P2 `di ba? So, that would also be the reason for the increase,” ani De Mesa. (PNA)

<https://tonite.abante.com.ph/2024/07/10/kamatis-carrots-iba-pang-gulay-sumisirit-presyo/>

REMATE:

P510-M fuel subsidy sa 160K magsasaka ipamamahagi ng DA

July 10, 2024 15:23



MANILA, Philippines – SINABI ng isang opisyal ng Department of Agriculture nitong Lunes (Hulyo 8) na maglalabas ito ng humigit-kumulang P510.447 na subsidyo sa gasolina sa mga magsasaka ng pananim, hayop, at manok na nagmamamay-ari o umuupa ng makinarya. “That’s about PHP510 million, so at PHP3,000 plus other mga gastusin, about 160,000 farmers iyong makikinabang dito (plus other expenses, about 160,000 farmers will benefit) for this fuel assistance,” ayon kay DA Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa sa interbyu.

Aniya, ang mga magsasaka sa Registry System for Basic Sectors of Agriculture ay tatanggap ng fuel subsidy mula Agosto hanggang Setyembre sa pamamagitan ng mga assistance card mula sa Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP).

Ayon kay De Mesa na ang pamamahagi ay ipatutupad kapag ang average na buwanang presyo ng Dubai crude oil ay umabot sa USD80 kada barrel price, sa pamamagitan ng requirement na itinakda sa ilalim ng 2024 General Appropriations Act.

“Kapag na-reach iyon ang estimate ay within the month, ma-reach iyon within July, August, ready naman nang i-implement ang mga alituntunin,” aniya.

Ayon sa DA, ang market data ay nagpahiwatig ng pare-parehong labis na USD80 kada bariles na presyo mula Hunyo 3 hanggang Hulyo 1, na may mga presyo mula USD78.48 at USD86.50 kada bariles.

Nauna rito, binigyang-diin ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. ang pangangailangang suportahan ang mga lokal na magsasaka upang matiyak ang pagsulong ng mga target ng food security sa bansa.

“Isa lamang ito sa ilang mga proyektong tulong na ibinibigay ng administrasyong Marcos upang mapagaan ang pasanin ng ating mga magsasaka, ang mga hindi sinasadyang bayani ng ating ekonomiya at ang pangunahing haligi ng ating layunin sa seguridad sa pagkain,” ayon sa opisyal sa isang hiwalay na pahayag. *Santi Celario*

<https://remate.ph/p510-m-fuel-subsidy-sa-160k-magsasaka-ipamamahagi-ng-da/>