

## CLIPPINGS FOR TODAY AUGUST 01, 2024

### A. MANILA BULLETIN:

Digital tools to boost LGU's farm-to-market development

Rollout of ASF vaccine to start Q3 2024, DA says

Marcos welcomes Thai firm's additional investment in PH

### B. THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DA lifts import ban on Japanese poultry

Flood control

Rice imports slow down as traders still cautious

Oil spill: 8 Cavite towns declare calamity

Carina, monsoon agricultural damage hits P1.21 billion

P45/kilo rice available in 4 Metro Manila outlets – DA

Rice imports slow down as traders still cautious

### C. PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

US extends P55-M aid to Carina victims

DA-Cordillera: P11.9-M damage from Carina, stable veggie prices

Rice-for-All program available in 4 Kadiwa stores on August 1

Bridges of innovation in a time of war

### D. BUSINESS WORLD:

Congress queries agri, health, social spending funding cuts

4 KADIWA sites chosen for initial sale of subsidized rice to general public

Fishport landed volumes up 54% in Q2

Japan poultry import ban lifted

Congress think tank says inflation still a threat to economic stability

#### **E. REMATE:**

**Tiu Laurel sa BFAR: Mga mangingisdang apektado ng Bataan oil spill tulungan**

**DA, maglulunsad ng P45/kilo 'Rice-for-All' program sa Agosto 1**

**Ban sa pag-import ng mga poultry products mula Japan, inalis na ng DA**

**Walang bird flu outbreak sa Tarlac – BAI**

**Winasak ni Carina sa sektor ng agrikultura umabot na sa P1.17B**

#### **F. ABANTE:**

**PH cacao bumida sa South Korea**

**Kamara pinakilos ni Speaker Romualdez na saklolohan mga apektado ng oil spill**

#### **F. MANILA STANDARD:**

**DA rolls out P45/k rice thru KADIWA stores**

**DA lifts ban on Japanese poultry exports**

#### **G. THE MANILA TIMES:**

**Japan poultry ban lifted by DA**

**RFPs report high fish deliveries in Q2**

**BFAR assists food growers in Siquijor**

**DA, food group explore collaborations**

**IPB boosts Region 2 organic farming**

**8 Cavite localities in state of calamity**

**Oil sheen in Bulacan not from sunken ship**

#### **H. MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT:**

**Rice for All at P45 per kg launched today**

#### **I. BUSINESS MIRROR:**

**Fish unloaded in regional ports up 50% in Q2–PFDA**

**Kadiwa stores to sell cheaper well-milled rice**

**Manila lifts import ban on Japanese poultry products**

**Rise in bird flu cases in Asia Pacific alarms experts**

**Bohol takes farm tourism to the next level**

**J. PILIPINO STAR NGAYON:**

**Tolentino: Mag-ingat sa pagbili, pagkonsumo ng isda, shellfish sa mga apektado ng oil spill**

**'Rice-for-All', aarangkada na!**

**MANILA BULLETIN:**

# Digital tools to boost LGU's farm-to-market development

BY [JUNEP OCAMPO](#) & [MANILA BULLETIN AGRICULTURE](#)

Jul 31, 2024 01:31 PM



A recently finished 5.9-kilometer farm to market road in Bukidnon.

In a major step towards modernizing agricultural infrastructure, the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Agricultural and Fisheries Engineering (DA-BAFE) is leveraging digital tools to streamline the planning and implementation of farm-to-market roads (FMR).

Director Ariodear Rico recently showcased the innovative use of systems like the Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering Management Information System (ABEMIS) and the GEOAGRI map to enhance the efficiency and accuracy of these critical projects.

These innovations were presented during the recent Localization of the National Farm-to-Market Road Network Plan (FMRNP) meetings held at Harbor Lights Hotel in Cagayan de Oro City for Cluster 10 and Cluster 11, with local government officials from Northern Mindanao, including representatives from Lanao del Norte, Iligan City, Misamis Occidental, Camiguin, Bukidnon, Cagayan de Oro City, and Misamis Oriental participating.

The event also saw participation from national and regional offices of key government departments such as the Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of the Interior and Local Government, Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Tourism (DOT), National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), and the Civil Service Commission (CSC), the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR).

During a presentation, Dir. Rico emphasized the user-friendly nature of these digital platforms, designed to simplify the workflow in the era of digitalization.

"We have already made a system to make your life easy in the era of digitalization. Just encode the info, then the map will be produced," he explained. "The system allows for the visual representation of barangays, road conditions, and the connectivity of these roads to key production areas, including rice, corn, and other crops. This comprehensive mapping enables better decision-making and prioritization in infrastructure projects, ensuring that resources are allocated where they are most needed."

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## **INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION**

A crucial aspect of this initiative is the emphasis on inter-agency collaboration. Dir. Rico underscored the importance of data sharing between various government agencies such as the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Tourism (DOT), and Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). This cooperative approach is essential for the effective implementation of the Joint Administrative Order, aligning with the President's directive to enhance agricultural infrastructure.

"Local government units have to prepare their network plan indicating the priority based on the criteria. After three months, we should have a consolidated provincial farm-to-market road network plan with an investment plan," Dir. Rico stated. "This coordinated effort will result in a comprehensive plan that will be presented to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) coordinating committee for planning allocation."

For decades, Filipino farmers have faced numerous challenges, from unpredictable weather patterns to fluctuating market prices. However, one of the most persistent issues has been the lack of reliable transportation infrastructure. In many rural areas, farmers have had to navigate rough, muddy, and often impassable roads to bring their produce to market. This not only increased the cost of transportation but also led to significant post-harvest losses.

With the completion of the FMR, travel time has been significantly reduced. Trucks can now easily access the farms, and the produce reaches markets fresher and in better condition. This has not only increased the income of local farmers but also improved their access to essential services such as healthcare and education.

The economic benefits of FMRs extend beyond individual farmers. By facilitating more efficient transportation, these roads have encouraged the growth of local businesses, from transport services to food processing and retail. Additionally, improved infrastructure attracts investment, as companies see the potential for better logistics and supply chain management.



Local government officials from Northern Mindanao – Cluster 10 (Lanao del Norte, Iligan City, Misamis Occidental, and Camiguin) and Cluster 11 (Bukidnon, Cagayan de Oro City, and Misamis Oriental) - alongside national and regional offices of the Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Tourism (DOT), National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), and the Civil Service Commission (CSC) actively participated at the Localization of the National Farm-to-Market Road Network Plan (FMRNP) 2023-2028 held at Harbor Lights Hotel in Cagayan de Oro City from July 16 to 19, 2024

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/7/31/digital-tools-to-boost-lgu-s-farm-to-market-development>

**MANILA BULLETIN:**

# **Rollout of ASF vaccine to start Q3 2024, DA says**

**BY [AARON RECUENCO](#)**

Jul 31, 2024 12:27 PM

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The vaccine for the African Swine Fever (ASF) will be available by third quarter of this year, the Department of Agriculture (DA) said as the national government vowed to initiate measures to prevent the spread of the contagious viral disease affecting the pig farming industry.

DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, Jr. said they are now finalizing the guidelines with agricultural and veterinary stakeholders for the controlled use of ASF vaccines that will be followed with public consultations.

The DA earlier allocated P350 million to fund the purchase of vaccines, syringes, and other necessities for the ASF vaccine rollout.

“The positive impacts of the (vaccination) rollout—specifically a steep decline in ASF cases as well as market prices for pork and pork products—will be felt by June 2025,” said Laurel.

“This vaccine procurement demonstrates the DA’s commitment to safeguard the swine industry and enhance national food security amid the challenges of ASF. Rest assured that we will always remain dedicated to supporting hog farmers and ensuring the resilience and sustainability of our agriculture sector,” he added.

Based on the initial guidelines, the rollout will be strictly voluntary and will prioritize eligible commercial farms, semi-commercial enterprises, and clustered backyard farms—most likely in the Red and Pink Zones—under strict supervision of the DA-Bureau of Animal Industry.

Red Zones are municipalities or cities with confirmed ASF cases that spread to other barangays in the same municipality or city within 15 days while Pink Zones include the Metro Manila as well as cities and municipalities where ASF is not detected but demarcated immediately around the Red Zone.

As of July 14, the National ASF Prevention and Control Program (NASFPCP) of the DA-BAI reported 403 Red Zones and 737 Pink Zones in the Philippines.

Out of the Department’s target of 600,000 doses, Laurel said around 150,000 doses of A-VAC ASF Live are expected to arrive in the Philippines by the third quarter of 2024.

The vaccine was described as “a freeze-dried, attenuated vaccine that is cultivated on the DMAC [Diep’s Macrophage cell] cell line” and is intended for pigs that are four weeks old and above with a recommended single-dose administration and a protective immunity period of at least five months.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/7/31/rollout-of-asf-vaccine-to-start-q3-2024-da-says>

**MANILA BULLETIN:**

# Marcos welcomes Thai firm's additional investment in PH

BY [ARGYLL CYRUS GEDUCOS](#)

Aug 1, 2024 05:41 AM

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## AT A GLANCE

- Marcos said CP Group has committed an additional \$1.5 billion in investments to the country, starting with a 10,000-hectare modernized mega farm.

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President Marcos has expressed his gratitude to the Thai conglomerate Charoen Pokphand Group (CP Group) for its plans to expand its business operations in the Philippines which would most especially benefit the country's agriculture sector.



**BOOSTING TIES** — President Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr. meets CP Group Chairman Soopakij “Chris” Chearavanont at the Laperal Mansion in Malacañan, July 30, 2024. (Malacañang photo)

Marcos said this as he met with CP Group Chairman Soopakij “Chris” Chearavanont at the Laperal Mansion in Malacañan on Tuesday, July 30, to discuss agriculture projects, among other topics.

In a Facebook post late Wednesday, July 31, the President said CP Group has committed an additional \$1.5 billion in investments to the country, starting with a 10,000-hectare modernized mega farm.



Marcos said this proved that their meetings over the past two years were meaningful and productive.

"I am very pleased with his plans and commitment to expand their business operations here in the Philippines," he wrote.

"I extend my best wishes to my friend Chris, the CP Group, and their Philippine partners for continued success," he added.

CP Group is a Thai conglomerate comprising multiple business entities in different industries under one corporate group.

Before Wednesday's meeting, CP Group already had about \$2 billion in investments in the Philippines, particularly in poultry and swine production.

Marcos first met with CP Group on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, in November 2022, where the latter expressed interest in putting more investments in the Philippines' aquaculture industry, as well as in rice and swine production.

In May last year, CP Group executives paid a courtesy call to Marcos in Malacañan where the President assured the conglomerate of the government's support as it rolled out its plans and programs for the Philippines' agriculture sector.

In response, the CP Group expressed its commitment to helping the country address swine and avian flu and bringing state-of-the-art technology and training to young Filipinos so they can lead in modern farming.

One of the many affiliates in the CP Group, the Charoen Pokphan Foods Public Company Limited (CPF), operates an integrated agro-industrial and food business, including livestock and aquaculture. The CPF's subsidiary, Charoen Pokphand Foods Philippine Corporation (CPFPC), is the largest and most significant Thai investment in Philippine agriculture.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/8/1/marcos-welcomes-thai-firm-s-additional-investment-in-ph>

**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

# DA lifts import ban on Japanese poultry

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

August 1, 2024 | 12:00am



Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. issued Memorandum Order (MO) 31 formalizing the lifting of the temporary ban on the importation of domestic and wild birds their products including poultry eat, day old chicks, eggs and semen from Japan.

AFP, file

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) lifted the temporary import ban on Japanese poultry products, including live birds, after the East Asian country resolved its bird flu cases.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. issued Memorandum Order (MO) 31 formalizing the lifting of the temporary ban on the importation of domestic and wild birds their products including poultry eat, day old chicks, eggs and semen from Japan.

Citing the official self-declaration report submitted by Tokyo to the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), the DA said Japan has resolved all its cases of highly pathogenic avian influenza and it has not recorded any additional outbreaks after June 2.

The DA noted that Japan is now free from HPAI in accordance to the provisions of Chapter 10.4 of the WOAHP Terrestrial Animal Health Code that outline the guidelines on bird flu cases.

“Based on the evaluation of the DA, the risk for contamination from importing live poultry, poultry meat, day old chicks, eggs and semen is negligible,” Tiu Laurel said in his order published recently.

Tiu Laurel imposed a temporary import ban on Japanese poultry products last Jan. 17 after Tokyo confirmed H5N1 HPAI cases in Kashima City, Saga Prefecture last November 2023.

The government imposes a temporary import ban on countries that have confirmed bird flu cases to prevent the entry of diseases, especially transboundary ones like bird flu, in the country and protect the local poultry industry from such threats.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/08/01/2374449/da-lifts-import-ban-japanese-poultry>

**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

# Flood control

**Z-FACTOR** - [Joe Zaldarriaga](#) - The Philippine Star

August 1, 2024 | 12:00am



A bus stalls in the middle of E. Rodriguez Avenue while rescue personnel from the QCDRRMO and Barangay Damayan Lagi in Quezon City ferry stranded commuters and residents across the heavy flood caused by torrential rains brought by Typhoon Carina and the southwest monsoon on July 24, 2024.

The STAR / Miguel de Guzman

Super Typhoon Carina (international name Gaemi) put much of Metro Manila underwater after heavy rains lashed across the country due to enhanced monsoon. Reports say that within a 24-hour period, 458 mm of rain were dumped in the country's capital city and surrounding areas, which effectively resulted in massive flooding and widespread damage to livelihoods and businesses.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) reported that as of July 30, damage to the agri-fishery sector has climbed to P1.17 billion – the total loss recorded was at 18,086 metric tons (MT), with the rice sector incurring the highest damage at P660.60 million. The number of affected farmers and fisherfolk is now at 23,580.

Carina and the monsoon's deadly combination resulted in a death toll of 39, with the number of affected persons rising to 4.8 million, according to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC). Damage to infrastructure is now at P4.26 billion, with Central Luzon again being the hardest hit with P1.6 billion

worth of damage to infrastructure. There were also 2,005 houses that were either partially or totally destroyed, which amounted to P2.6 million in costs.

Government and the private sector efforts have helped ease the impact with joined efforts from across various fronts. President Marcos personally inspected the affected areas to ensure that national agencies and local government units (LGUs) were fulfilling their responsibilities effectively. Bayanihan was in full display- electricity service in the metro was monitored 24/7 despite the heavy rains, with Meralco crews proactively cutting off power in flooded areas to prioritize safety and worked swiftly to restore service as soon as the floods receded.

Several malls offered free parking, WiFi and phone charging to residents who needed shelter. Relief efforts in affected areas were immediately implemented by several private corporations.

While these efforts are commendable, Carina has raised an important question: what solutions are being implemented to end this cycle of heavy rains leading to floods and subsequent disasters, particularly in densely populated Metro Manila, home to 13 million Filipinos?

In a Palace briefing following the typhoon, Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Secretary Manuel Bonoan said 70 percent of the internal drainage system in Metro Manila is blocked by garbage and silt, which caused flooding in some areas. Secretary Bonoan underscored the need to rehabilitate and upgrade the “antiquated” drainage system in Metro Manila, noting that there was running water “trapped” in the metropolis.

In the same discussion, Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) bared a comprehensive drainage masterplan to mitigate the flooding woes in Metro Manila. According to MMDA Chairman Romando “Don” Artes, the agency is working on the approved budget for the agency’s flood control projects amounting to P2.7 billion, of which P2.26 billion is for capital outlay and P396 million for maintenance and other operating expenses for the 71 pumping stations.

Artes said that the comprehensive drainage masterplan will be designed after the system of the Netherlands which has a 50- to 60-year drainage master plan.

The MMDA, in collaboration with the DPWH, is currently implementing the Metro Manila Flood Management Project, which involves the rehabilitation of existing pumping stations and construction of new ones.

Under the MMFMP, six of 26 pumping stations were rehabilitated and four new pumping stations will be constructed by DPWH and will be turned over to MMDA for operations.

Artes also blamed garbage for the widespread flooding in the metropolis, as well as the lack of discipline among residents, particularly those living near waterways, in disposing of their trash. The MMDA chief attributed the massive flooding in NCR to improper waste management practices that affect waterways and clog the drainage system. The presence of informal settlements disposing of waste and debris along rivers and water channels also contributes to the accumulation of obstacles that disrupt the natural flow of water.

“We regularly conduct declogging and desilting of drainage laterals, and dredging of waterways. However, we can only do so much. The problem of flooding must be addressed, not just through the government’s flood management projects, but also through the discipline of the public in their respective waste management efforts,” Artes stressed.

The MMDA has installed trash traps in various strategic locations to capture voluminous solid wastes in waterways leading to pumping stations. Additionally, the MMDA has initiated community-based solid waste management programs that include strategies targeting changes in people’s behaviors and practices in solid waste management introduced to various barangays.

Addressing Metro Manila’s perennial flooding problem requires a multifaceted approach that includes upgrading infrastructure, improving waste management practices, and fostering community cooperation.

Only through sustained and collective efforts can we hope to mitigate the devastating impacts of future typhoons and heavy monsoon rains.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/08/01/2374450/flood-control>

**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

# Rice imports slow down as traders still cautious

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

August 1, 2024 | 12:00am



Workers unload sacks of rice from a delivery truck along Dagupan Street in Tondo, Manila on January 22, 2024.

STAR / Ernie Penaredondo

MANILA, Philippines — Rice import arrivals have slowed down as traders and importers are still unloading their previous imported stocks while others remain cautious in bringing in new shipments pending the Supreme Court resolution of a petition against Executive Order (EO) 62, which lowered rice tariffs.

Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) data as of July 20 showed that rice imports levied with lower 15 percent tariff rate have reached 56,073 metric tons – nowhere near the average monthly import arrival of about 400,000 MT from January to June.

Department of Agriculture (DA) Assistant Secretary and spokesman Arnel de Mesa said it is possible that rice importers and traders are still unloading their earlier stocks, which were imported at a higher tariff rate of 35 percent, before bringing in new stocks under the lower tariff regime.

De Mesa noted that some rice traders and importers were hesitant to import pending the decision of the Supreme Court on the case filed by certain groups against EO 62. The reduction of rice tariffs to 15 percent until 2028 is part of EO 62 earlier issued by President Marcos.

The agriculture official said the DA expects the import arrivals to pick up in the coming weeks, with a substantial volume entering this month that would have a “significant” effect on pulling down retail rice prices in the market.

In an earlier interview, De Mesa said the DA estimates that prevailing rice prices would fall below P50 per kilogram once the imported rice stocks with lower tariff rates start to be sold in the market.

The USDA’s Foreign Agricultural Service unit (USDA-FAS) in Manila earlier noted that there might be “some motivation” for rice traders and importers to sell their current stocks to prevent losses from the arrival of “lower priced” supplies as a result of the tariff reduction.

“But industry sources report that traders are holding steady on stocks, particularly as they bought at a higher price and are still hoping for better margins,” the USDA-FAS Manila said in a report.

From January to July 20, nearly 2.4 million MT of rice arrived in the country, latest BPI data showed.

The retail price of imported well-milled rice in Metro Manila ranges from P51 to P53 per kilogram while regular-milled rice is sold between P47 and P48 per kilo, based on the latest price monitoring report of the DA.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/08/01/2374468/rice-imports-slow-down-traders-still-cautious>



**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

# Oil spill: 8 Cavite towns declare calamity

[Evelyn Macairan](#) - The Philippine Star

August 1, 2024 | 12:00am



An oil spill boom was installed at the floodgates of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority in Barangay Tanza Uno, Navotas yesterday. The PCG has denied reports that an oil spill from Terra Nova had reached the shores of Manila.

Michael Varcas

MANILA, Philippines — Cavite Gov. Jonvic Remulla yesterday declared a state of calamity in the towns of Bacoor, Kawit, Noveleta, Rosario, Tanza, Naic, Maragondon and Ternate following the sinking of oil tankers in the neighboring province of Bataan.

A no-catch zone has been implemented for all shellfish in the province.

The provincial government is meeting for the immediate distribution of relief goods for 25,000 affected fisherfolk, Remulla said.

Meanwhile, a seven-man team of marine environment and weather experts from the US will arrive this weekend to assist the Philippines in responding to the oil spill in Manila Bay, according to the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG).

Experts from the US Coast Guard (USCG) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) will visit the site of the oil spill in Limay, Bataan, PCG spokesman Rear Admiral Armand Balilo said yesterday.

On July 25, oil tanker Terra Nova, carrying 1.4 million liters of industrial fuel, submerged 3.6 nautical miles off Lamao Point in Limay.

“They will be going to ‘ground zero’ probably on Aug. 5. If I am not mistaken, this is composed of the marine environmental protection team of the USCG and NOAA,” Balilo said.

“They intend to lend their expertise on the conduct of the salvage operations,” he added.

There is no information on whether the USCG would bring any equipment with them, Balilo said.

“It might just be small equipment that they could use for testing,” he noted.

The experts’ presence does not mean that salvaging operations would be faster, he maintained.

“They will lend their expertise, maybe in the aftermath of the oil spill and the coastal management. NOAA will advise us on the kind of weather and what would be the best strategy to apply, given the kind of weather that we have in the country. They will be the ones that could help us in these aspects,” Balilo said.

Divers of salvor Harbor Star have not yet completed the sealing and capping of all 24 valves and pipes of the 65-meter Terra Nova, according to PCG Bataan station commander Lieutenant Commander Michael John Encina.

He said that a barge carrying the siphoning equipment, as well as Terra Nova’s sister ship MT Helena Marie, are already at the site.

Around 300,000 liters of industrial fuel would be transferred from Terra Nova to Helena Marie, which would be enough for the sunken ship to float and be towed to shore.

The siphoning process would then continue, removing around 50,000 to 60,000 liters of industrial fuel a day.

It could take seven to 10 days.

As for reports that MV Mirola 1 is leaking after it ran aground in Mariveles, Bataan, Encina said Terra Nova is their primary concern.

Mirola 1 is only carrying its working fuel, diesel, which dissipates on water or sunlight exposure, he noted.

Based on a GMA News Online report, the National Bureau of Investigation said Mirola 1's crew allegedly pilfered more than 30,000 liters of diesel last year.

Since Terra Nova's oil leak has been minimal, or less than one liter per hour, Encina said that oil spill booms intended for Terra Nova had been placed around Mirola 1 as a precaution.

As for MT Jason Bradley, which sank in Mariveles, Bataan, authorities are waiting for the arrival of a tugboat that would siphon 5,500 liters of diesel.

### **Oil spill boom**

In Bataan, the towns of Samal and Abucay are seeking donations of coconut husks, corn hair, human hair and other materials to assemble an organic oil spill boom.

Samal is known for its tahong or green mussels, oysters and capiz shells while Abucay has a huge tahong farm in Manila Bay.

Samal Mayor Alex Acuzar on Sunday called for an emergency meeting to discuss Gov. Jose Enrique Garcia III's instruction to be alert and prepare for the oil spill.

There are around 3,000 fishermen in Samal.

### **Oil spill to reach Batangas**

The oil spill will reach Barangay Quilitisan in Calatagan, Batangas on Friday, according to the University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute.

It might reach Malabon City on Friday.

The oil spill will reach today Noveleta and Corregidor Island in Cavite and Barangay Luyahan in Lian, Batangas.

### **Fuel subsidy**

Fishers affected by the Bataan oil spill will be provided with fuel subsidies, the Department of Agriculture (DA) said yesterday.

There is enough fish supply in the country despite the oil spill and the recent onslaught of monsoon rains enhanced by Typhoon Carina, DA Assistant Secretary and spokesman Arnel De Mesa said at a press conference.

“We have fuel assistance for the affected fishermen. They can do their fishing activities far from the oil spill and then we have the Quick Response Fund for the alternative livelihood for our fishers,” he said.

“The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) did not issue a (fishing) ban. We let the local government units and the coast guard declare if there will be a ban,” he added.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) will also assist affected farmers, De Mesa noted.

A minimal increase in the retail price of fish is expected despite the oil spill, he said.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. has ordered the BFAR to assist fishers.

The BFAR, he said, is currently assessing damaged areas to determine what assistance will be provided to fishers.

The agency also engaged third-party laboratories to test water samples around Terra Nova to determine the presence of oil and grease, including harmful contaminants called polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons.

“For now, we can only give fuel vouchers so fishermen can go to nearby fishing grounds. I also asked the BFAR to coordinate with DSWD so the agency can also give food packs to affected fisherfolk,” Tiu Laurel said.

Dispersants are also being provided by the BFAR to help treat the oil spill. — **Bella Cariaso, Ric Sapnu**

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/08/01/2374609/oil-spill-8-cavite-towns-declare-calamity>

**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

# Carina, monsoon agricultural damage hits P1.21 billion

[Jose Rodel Clapano](#), [Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

August 1, 2024 | 12:00am



A bus stalls in the middle of E. Rodriguez Avenue while rescue personnel from the QCDRRMO and Barangay Damayan Lagi in Quezon City ferry stranded commuters and residents across the heavy flood caused by torrential rains brought by Typhoon #CarinaPH and the southwest monsoon on July 24, 2024.

STAR / Miguel De Guzman

MANILA, Philippines — The amount of damage caused by Typhoon Carina and the southwest monsoon to the agriculture sector has reached P1.21 billion, according to the Department of Agriculture (DA).

Data from the DA's operations center showed that among the most affected regions are the Cordilleras, Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon), Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan), Bicol, Western and Eastern Visayas, Zamboanga peninsula, Soccsksargen (South Cotabato, Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani and General Santos) and Caraga.

The bad weather destroyed rice, corn, high-value crops and livestock as well as irrigation facilities and aquaculture equipment.

The DA said that rice accounted for the majority of damage with 52 percent or P635.17 million, covering 39,785 hectares of farms.

The fishery sector incurred losses amounting to P361 million or 30 percent of the total amount of damage.

Corn and high-value crops incurred losses amounting to P114 million and 89 million, respectively.

The livestock sector logged P10.4 million worth of damage including P1.6 million worth of infrastructure, machinery and equipment.

The DA said at least P326.79 million worth of rice and corn seeds as well as biocontrol equipment would be distributed to affected farmers.

It said the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources would distribute fingerlings, fishing gear and paraphernalia to fishermen displaced by the bad weather.

Farmers may avail themselves of financial assistance being offered under the survival and recovery loan program of the agricultural credit policy council.

Up to P1 billion from the quick response fund is available for the rehabilitation of affected areas.

The DA said the Philippine Crop Insurance Corp. is ready to indemnify the farmers.

The combined strength of Carina and the monsoon as well as Tropical Depression Butchoy increased the number of affected people to 5.2 million yesterday, according to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council.

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2024/08/01/2374622/carina-monsoon-agricultural-damage-hits-p121-billion>

**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

## **P45/kilo rice available in 4 Metro Manila outlets – DA**

[Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

August 1, 2024 | 12:00am



Individuals line up for affordable rice sold at P29 per kilo at the Kadiwa store inside the National Irrigation Administration Office in Quezon City on July 5, 2024.

The STAR / Michael Varcas

MANILA, Philippines — Starting today, the Department of Agriculture will sell well-milled rice for P45 per kilo at four Kadiwa outlets in Metro Manila as part of the Rice-for-All program of the government, a DA official said. At a press conference yesterday, Agriculture Assistant Secretary and spokesman Arnel de Mesa said the P45/kilo rice would be sold at the Food Terminal Inc. (FTI) Kadiwa in Taguig; Caloocan City; Potrero, Malabon and the Bureau of Plant Industry main office in Manila.

“These are good quality well-milled rice being sold in the markets, unlike the P29 per kilo aging NFA stocks,” De Mesa said, referring to the National Food Authority.

Each buyer will be limited to 25 kilos daily to prevent abuses.

“That is why we set a limit of 25 kilos. We as a group decided to set 25 kilos (as a limit) to prevent people from buying a huge volume and probably reselling it,” De Mesa said.

The new scheme is in tandem with the existing P29 (per kilo of rice) program.

“Initially, the Rice-for-All will be available at four Kadiwa sites. As of now, we have 17 Kadiwa sites for the P29 (per kilo of rice),” De Mesa added.

He said the P45/kilo of well-milled rice would be cheaper compared to the existing retail price of imported well-milled rice of P51 to P51/kilo and local well-milled rice of P45 to P55/kilo.

He said the Kadiwa outlets would be open every Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

The stocks would come from participating commercial stakeholders.

De Mesa said the DA would not provide subsidy for the P45/kilo of rice in the Kadiwa outlets.

“We don’t have procurement (for P45/kilo of rice). The arrangement is between the DA, the FTI and traders,” he added.

According to De Mesa, selling the P45/kilo rice aims to influence the retail prices of rice.

“We need an impetus. It is part of the government’s program to bring down the retail price of rice as there are trigger points like the P29 per kilo and this Rice-for-All,” he said.

“You have affordable and quality rice and traders are willing to participate. This is what the Secretary wants, to influence the retail prices (of rice in the markets),” De Mesa added, referring to Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2024/08/01/2374630/p45kilo-rice-available-4-metro-manila-outlets-da>



**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

# Rice imports slow down as traders still cautious

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

August 1, 2024 | 12:00am



Workers unload sacks of rice from a delivery truck along Dagupan Street in Tondo, Manila on January 22, 2024.

STAR / Ernie Penaredondo

MANILA, Philippines — Rice import arrivals have slowed down as traders and importers are still unloading their previous imported stocks while others remain cautious in bringing in new shipments pending the Supreme Court resolution of a petition against Executive Order (EO) 62, which lowered rice tariffs.

Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) data as of July 20 showed that rice imports levied with lower 15 percent tariff rate have reached 56,073 metric tons – nowhere near the average monthly import arrival of about 400,000 MT from January to June.

Department of Agriculture (DA) Assistant Secretary and spokesman Arnel de Mesa said it is possible that rice importers and traders are still unloading their earlier stocks, which were imported at a higher tariff rate of 35 percent, before bringing in new stocks under the lower tariff regime.

De Mesa noted that some rice traders and importers were hesitant to import pending the decision of the Supreme Court on the case filed by certain groups against EO 62. The reduction of rice tariffs to 15 percent until 2028 is part of EO 62 earlier issued by President Marcos.

The agriculture official said the DA expects the import arrivals to pick up in the coming weeks, with a substantial volume entering this month that would have a “significant” effect on pulling down retail rice prices in the market.

In an earlier interview, De Mesa said the DA estimates that prevailing rice prices would fall below P50 per kilogram once the imported rice stocks with lower tariff rates start to be sold in the market.

The USDA’s Foreign Agricultural Service unit (USDA-FAS) in Manila earlier noted that there might be “some motivation” for rice traders and importers to sell their current stocks to prevent losses from the arrival of “lower priced” supplies as a result of the tariff reduction.

“But industry sources report that traders are holding steady on stocks, particularly as they bought at a higher price and are still hoping for better margins,” the USDA-FAS Manila said in a report.

From January to July 20, nearly 2.4 million MT of rice arrived in the country, latest BPI data showed.

The retail price of imported well-milled rice in Metro Manila ranges from P51 to P53 per kilogram while regular-milled rice is sold between P47 and P48 per kilo, based on the latest price monitoring report of the DA.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/08/01/2374468/rice-imports-slow-down-traders-still-cautious>

## PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

14 CONFIRMED DEAD; AGRICULTURAL DAMAGE ESTIMATED AT P1.2B

# US extends P55-M aid to Carina victims

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

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:40 AM August 01, 2024



FLOODING. A flooded road in Mangatarem, Pangasinan on July 26, 2024. The province recorded P247 million in initial damage to agriculture and infrastructure due to Supertyphoon Carina. —official Facebook page of Pangasinan DRRMO

MANILA, Philippines — The United States has donated P55 million (\$1 million) to assist communities affected by Supertyphoon Carina (international name: Gaemi) in Bulacan, Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao del Norte, Maguindanao del Sur, Pampanga and Metro Manila.

Flood victims will also receive food aid, hygiene kits, emergency shelter kits, clean water, and onetime cash transfers through the US Agency for International Development (USAID) funding to “allow them to recover from the disaster safely and with dignity,” the US Embassy said in a statement on Wednesday.

“We are committed to working with the Philippine government and people as they rebuild and recover from this disaster,” USAID acting mission director Betty Chung said. Fourteen people have been confirmed dead after Carina and the southwest monsoon (habagat) caused heavy rains which resulted in widespread flooding last week, according to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council

## **DA damage report**

The Department of Agriculture (DA) estimated the damage to agriculture at P1.21 billion as of Wednesday. It said Carina affected 46,625 farmers and fisherfolk in the regions of Cordillera, Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Mimaropa, Bicol, Western and Eastern Visayas, Zamboanga Peninsula, Soccsksargen and Caraga. Rice comprised 52.47 percent or P635.17 million of the overall damage as the typhoon wiped out 10,639 metric tons on 39,785 hectares of land.

Fisheries incurred P360.80 million in losses, equivalent to 29.8 percent of the total.

The DA also recorded damage in corn, high-value crops, livestock and poultry, and irrigation facilities.

“Best possible efforts are also being undertaken to carry out assistance and appropriate interventions to affected farmers and fisherfolk,” it said.

These include 77,496 bags of rice and corn seeds and biocontrol measures totaling P305.33 million; 1,500 kilograms or 63,494 packs of vegetable seeds and 4,240 cans of biocontrol measures worth P21.46 million.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources is also distributing fingerlings, fishing gear and paraphernalia while the Agricultural Credit Policy Council’s Survival and Recovery Loan Program is prepared to extend up to P25,000 in loans payable in three years at zero interest.

### ***Support Typhoon Carina Victims***

*The Inquirer is extending its relief and fund drive to help families affected by Typhoon Carina. Donate to Inquirer Foundation Corp. at BDO Current Account No: 007960018860. For inquiries, email [foundation@inquirer.com.ph](mailto:foundation@inquirer.com.ph).*

**<https://globalnation.inquirer.net/244255/us-extends-p55-m-aid-to-carina-victims>**

**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:**

## **DA-Cordillera: P11.9-M damage from Carina, stable veggie prices**

Philippine News Agency / 02:09 PM July 31, 2024



Crops affected by Typhoon Carina. | PHOTO: Official Facebook page of the Department of Agriculture-Cordillera

BAGUIO CITY — Prices of vegetables from the Cordillera region remain stable as of Tuesday amid the P11.93-million crop damage by Super Typhoon Carina, the Department of Agriculture in the Cordillera Administrative Region (DA-CAR) said.

The DA-CAR's Disaster Risk Reduction Management Information Service reported at 4:30 p.m. on Monday an initial P11.93 million worth of 24.39 metric tons of high-value crops from 129.78 hectares of plantations damaged by Carina.

Minimal damage was logged on rice, corn, and cassava.

At least 402 farmers were affected by the typhoon, which enhanced the southwest monsoon and brought continuous rains even after the bad weather.

Despite the damage, data on Tuesday show that wholesale prices of vegetables decreased compared to Monday.

The price of cabbage declined by P2 to P3 per kilogram, with an average price of P15 to P18; carrots by P15 to P20, with an average of P50 to P65 per kilo; and potato-granola by P2, with an average of P58.

A kilo of sayote remained stable at P15, while the first-class Chinese cabbage was higher by P3 from its previous price of P9 per kilo.

Aida Pagtan, Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Information Service (RAFIS) chief of DA-CAR, said current monitoring in the local market shows enough supply of vegetables.

“Based on market monitoring in Baguio City and La Trinidad, there is sufficient supply as residents have not yet gone out to buy volumes for the family,” she said.

Local governments in the Cordillera have posted on their official social media pages calling on farmers to report the situation on the farm, specifically, the area planted, the kind of crop, and the stage of the plant, and to submit photo documentation to make reporting faster.

“As of now, we cannot give the actual supply data, but looking at the trend in pricing, it is fluctuating. We need to wait for a while, but rest assured that reporting is being fast-tracked,” Pagtan said.

Lawyer Jennilyn Dawayan, DA regional director and head of the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, said the Department is ensuring the provision of rice, corn, and vegetable seeds to farmers affected by the recent calamity and has a Quick Response Fund (QRF) that would cover the rehabilitation of affected farms.

“We are gathering and assessing reports on crop damage and losses in the region, including affected livestock from the local government units. The regional field office

will then have to jointly validate the reports for DA-CAR to identify what specific intervention may be provided to the affected farmers,” she said.

DA-CAR has repositioned its seed reserve to include 204,564 kilos of hybrid, inbred registered, and inbred certified rice seeds; 45,000 kilos of white and yellow corn seeds, and 564.70 kilos of upland and lowland seeds that may be distributed to the affected farmers in the region.

The supply is part of the La Niña preparedness plan of the DA, which was laid out during the height of El Niño.

DA also has the Survival and Recovery loan program from the Agriculture Credit Policy Council and the crop insurance that the Philippines Crop Insurance Corporation will provide. (PNA)

### ***Support Typhoon Carina Victims***

*The Inquirer is extending its relief and fund drive to help families affected by Typhoon Carina. Donate to Inquirer Foundation Corp. at BDO Current Account No: 007960018860. For inquiries, email [foundation@inquirer.com.ph](mailto:foundation@inquirer.com.ph).*

**<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1967924/da-cordillera-p11-9-m-damage-from-carina-stable-veggie-prices>**

**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:**

# **Rice-for-All program available in 4 Kadiwa stores on August 1**

By: [Dianne Sampang](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 05:42 PM July 31, 2024

MANILA, Philippines — The Rice-for-All program will be available in four Kadiwa stores on August 1, Thursday, the Department of Agriculture announced Wednesday.

Under this program, rice will be sold to the public at P45 per kilo and initially offered in Food Terminal Incorporated in Taguig City, the Bureau of Plant Industry in Manila, Potrero in Malabon, and Caloocan. Each customer is limited to 25 kilos of purchase per day.

“It will be adjusted depending on the movement of rice prices, but it will definitely be lower than retail prices in general,” said Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. in a statement.

According to Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa, the program aims to help Filipinos cope with the impact of inflation on the prices of goods.

De Mesa also said that the ‘Program 29’, the selling of rice at P29 per kilo for vulnerable households, is extended to Sta. Rosa Hall in Sta. Rosa, Laguna and Antipolo City, Rizal. The rice program is currently operating in 17 Kadiwa stores.

“Both the P29 Rice and Rice-for-All programs are designed to make this essential staple more accessible and affordable for every Filipino, in line with President Marcos’ vision of ‘Walang magugutom sa Bagong Pilipinas,’” said de Mesa.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1968022/rice-for-all-program-available-in-4-kadiwa-stores-on-august-1>



**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:**

# Bridges of innovation in a time of war

By: [Michael Lim Ubac](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 05:00 AM August 01, 2024



Amidst the backdrop of a raging war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon, Israeli Ambassador to the Philippines Ilan Fluss is continuing his engagement in the Philippines, quietly working with private and government agencies to strengthen what he calls “bridges of innovation and technology” between the Philippines and Israel.

“This is what we are preaching, this is what we are calling for—we have to work together to develop a better world for us all,” said Fluss, 58, who was recently interviewed by this columnist following Israel’s 76th Independence Day.

In 1947, the Philippines was the only Asian nation to vote for the creation of a separate Jewish state, which was established the following year. Since then, Israel has waived visa requirements for Filipino tourists and pilgrims who visit the Jewish homeland, which is home to some of Christianity’s most sacred sites and the birthplace of Jesus Christ.

Our conversation focused on what’s keeping Fluss busy these days, besides praying for the return of the 115 Israelis kidnapped by Hamas during the terror attack in Israel

last Oct. 7. Fluss outlined the ongoing cooperation in agriculture, water and food security, cybersecurity, labor, and education between our two nations.

For Fluss, Israeli innovation, including the coronary stent used in heart operations, components of iPhones, and the development of Viber and Waze, helps advance the good of humanity. As the so-called “startup nation,” Israel has a global hub of innovation that is considered the third most successful startup per capita in the world, after Silicon Valley and New York in the United States.

**Desert vs archipelago.** How can Israeli technologies assist in dealing with the “different challenges in the Philippines” that Fluss is referring to?

The odds were stacked against Israel in 1948. Compared to the Philippines, half of Israel is desert, but the Jewish state has become a leader in agrotechnology due to its highly developed agriculture sector. For instance, Israeli cows can produce 38 to 40 liters of milk a day compared to the average of eight to nine liters in the Philippines. This is why our dairy industry is still underdeveloped: We only produce a measly 1 percent of the 2.5 billion-liter milk demand of the Philippine domestic market, forcing us to import the 99 percent from countries like New Zealand, Germany, and Australia.

Fluss credited the high milk yields of Israel’s cows to “best practices, technology, and management,” principles that our departments of agriculture, environment, and trade can surely learn from.

In contrast, the Philippines is an archipelago with lots of forests and too much rainfall, which is exacerbated by the monsoon season (*habagat*) from June to October and our usual visitors, storms that sometimes develop into supertyphoons.

But if we fail to store rainwater and surface runoff during the wet season, how can we expect our farmers to fare well during the dry season—and El Niño? In Israel, the Netafim company invented the modern drip irrigation technology to grow crops in the ’60s. The technology addresses water usage and land shortages, producing high-value crops that have ended food scarcity in Israel.

Fluss believes that sharing agrotechnology with the Philippines cannot be a copy-paste approach, but rather done together through “partnership.” He explained that Israel is

willing to share an “ecosystem of innovation, which is really the secret of how Israel became a leader in innovation” in technology (software, communications, biotechnology, and nanotechnology), manufacturing, agriculture and food processing, pharmaceuticals, and cybersecurity. (Israel receives 40 percent of global cybersecurity investments).

But for this to happen, the government should not simply be satisfied with the thriving business process outsourcing model, which is service-oriented. What we should be focusing on is the development—funding and incentivizing—of local innovators and developers. Fluss is telling us that we have a strong human capital in the Philippines, which includes proficiency in English, high literacy, and a young population. A local manufacturing base for Israeli companies in the Philippines is growing, but Fluss said it can grow much more.

Therefore, our capacity for developing advanced industries can grow further if we have the proper mindset. It is important for us to innovate collectively as a nation. A paradigm shift from a fragmented approach to development, which relies on private capital to fuel growth, to a collaborative model underpinned by government support and direction is needed. This holistic approach entails a quantum leap in research and development, and the valuing of individual talents and skills is made central to the whole enterprise.

Fluss also addressed the elephant in the room during the interview—the resolution of the Israel-Hamas War. To find out how he responded to the high death toll and ongoing humanitarian crisis, download the new Inquirer Mobile app and watch the highlights of the exclusive interview.

<https://opinion.inquirer.net/175656/bridges-of-innovation-in-a-time-of-war>

## **BUSINESS WORLD:**

# **Congress queries agri, health, social spending funding cuts**

July 31, 2024 | 8:51 pm



A CHAPEL was converted into an intensive care unit for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) patients as hospitals struggled with a surge in infections in August 2021. — PHILIPPINE STAR/MICHAEL VARCAS  
THE Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) will be asked to explain to Congress the reduction in proposed budgets for agriculture, health, and social welfare, Deputy Speaker and Quezon Rep. David C. Suarez said at a briefing.

“This will be tackled as we progress into the budget hearings,” “We have a DBCC briefing next week, and we will surely ask the Executive department to explain these deductions,” Mr. Suarez said.

On Monday, the administration proposed a P6.352-trillion national budget for 2025, equivalent to 22.1% of gross domestic product.

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) said the reductions are apparent when comparing the proposed 2025 budget with the funding approved by Congress in the budget bill it passed for 2024, known as the General Appropriations Act (GAA).

Budget Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman said, however, that comparing on a like-for-like basis — the budgets proposed by the government in 2024 and 2025, known as the National Expenditure Program (NEP), “you will notice that there is actually an overall increase for the agencies concerned,” adding that government-proposed allocations are mostly higher across the board.

Ms. Pangandaman, responding via Viber to queries about the budget adjustments, said the 2024 GAA reflects changes made by legislators “and therefore does not reflect the original criteria the DBM used to evaluate agency proposals.”

“Furthermore, changes such as (project completions) or shifting priorities, as requested by agencies, contribute to what seems like a decrease in funding,” she added.

Next year’s NEP allocation for the Department of Health is P223.19 billion, against the 2024 GAA funding level of P246.75 billion. The 2025 NEP proposal remains higher than the P204.6 billion the DBM submitted to Congress last year.

The budget for agriculture, which includes the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Agrarian Reform, is P211.38 billion, lower than the 2024 GAA total of P221.7 billion and the P221.86 billion proposed in the 2024 NEP.

The House of Representatives will begin its budget deliberations next week, legislators said on Tuesday.

The 2025 proposed budget for the Department of Social Welfare and Development of P230.1 billion reflects a 7.2% decline compared to the GAA level of P248.1 billion this year.

Manila Rep. Ernesto M. Dionisio said he is not alarmed by the funding adjustments, noting the opportunity to make changes when the GAA is legislated.

“It’s only a proposal, and sometimes the reductions don’t necessarily mean anything negative,” he said at the same briefing Mr. Suarez spoke at. “Sometimes, we have projects that were accomplished... that don’t need to be funded anymore.”

The House will look at augmenting the proposed funds for the agencies concerned if they deem it necessary, Surigao del Norte Rep. Robert Ace S. Barbers said in the same briefing. “If we see programs that need more funding based on our scrutiny, then we’ll augment the funds.”

Meanwhile, it remains uncertain whether a provision in the 2024 budget authorizing the government to claim unutilized funds from government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) will be included in next year’s budget.

“We can’t say until the process is done. It will undergo a long and thorough process (before we can say if it’ll be included),” said Mr. Suarez.

However, Mr. Suarez is “very supportive of that principle” as funds remitted by GOCCs due to the so-called cash sweeps could help fund unexpected projects. “The Chief Executive has to be given enough elbow room to address these unforeseen events that might require funds to address.” — **Beatriz Marie D. Cruz, Kenneth Christiane L. Basilio**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/07/31/611519/congress-queries-agri-health-social-spending-funding-cuts/>

## **BUSINESS WORLD:**

# **4 KADIWA sites chosen for initial sale of subsidized rice to general public**

July 31, 2024 | 8:50 pm



A man arranges sacks of rice at a storage facility in Marikina City. — PHILIPPINE STAR/WALTER BOLLOZOS

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said on Wednesday that the sale of government-subsidized rice to the general public will be launched at four KADIWA centers in Metro Manila starting Aug. 1.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary and Spokesperson Arnel V. de Mesa said that the so-called Rice for All program will launch at KADIWA outlets in Malabon, Caloocan, Food Terminal, Inc. in Taguig, and the Bureau of Plant Industry in Manila.

“The stocks will come from commercial sources and can be imported or domestically grown depending on which traders participate,” Mr. De Mesa said at a briefing.

Well-milled rice will sell for P45 per kilogram, with premium rice fetching P52 kilo. Purchases are limited to 25 kilos per person per day.

Commercial outlets sell imported well-milled rice prices in Metro Manila for between P51-P53 per kilo, while domestically grown well-milled rice fetched between P45 and P55 as of July 30, according to DA price monitors.

Imported premium rice in Metro Manila markets was selling for P53-60 per kilo, while the domestically grown equivalents were priced at P50-P58.

Prices at KADIWA outlets “will be adjusted depending on the movement of rice prices but will definitely be lower than retail prices in general,” Mr. De Mesa added.

He said that more outlets will be added later in August.

Mr. De Mesa said the government could also extend the P29 subsidized-rice program for 34 million vulnerable individuals, including persons with disabilities, solo parents, and senior citizens, as well as those below the poverty line.

“The objective of this Rice for All program is to make cheaper rice available. This is one of the initiatives of government to lower the impact of food items on inflation,” Mr. De Mesa said.

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority, inflation eased to 3.7% in June, with rice inflation accounted for 42.5% of overall inflation. Rice inflation eased to 22.5% from a month prior.

To lower rice prices the government reduced the import tariff on rice to 15% until 2028, via the issue of Executive Order (EO) No. 62.

Mr. De Mesa said that the DA is expecting prices to drop by August, judging from the higher import volumes approved by the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI).

He said that the tariff cut itself is expected to lead to a P6 to P7 per kilo price reduction.

As of July 20, rice imports amounted to 2.39 million metric tons (MT), according to the BPI. For July, as of the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month, rice imports totaled 56,118 MT.

He said that traders are currently taking a “wait and see attitude” pending a Supreme Court’s decision on EO 62, the legality of which is being contested by farmers, who claim the order was issued without the consultation needed to implement tariff adjustments. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/07/31/611517/4-kadiwa-sites-chosen-for-initial-sale-of-subsidized-rice-to-general-public/>

**BUSINESS WORLD:**

# Fishport landed volumes up 54% in Q2

July 31, 2024 | 8:49 pm



Buckets of fish are sold at the Navotas fish port in this file photo. — PHILIPPINE STAR/MICHAEL VARCAS

THE volume of catch landed at regional fishports rose 54.1% year on year during the second quarter, according to the Philippine Fisheries Development Authority (PFDA).

In a report, the PFDA said the landed catch was 186,557.96 metric tons (MT) during the three months, up from 121,062.55 MT a year earlier.

“During the months of April to June, the PFDA, through its Regional Fish Ports (RFP), showed immense growth in fish unloading,” it added.

On a quarter-on-quarter basis, fish volumes fell 38.5% compared with the first quarter.

The daily average volume rose 54.1% to 2,050.09 MT.

Vessel arrivals fell to 19,919, against the 24,050 reported a year earlier.

It said that the opening of various fishing grounds lead to the greater use of the PFDA’s port facilities.  
— **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/07/31/611515/fishport-landed-volumes-up-54-in-q2/>



**BUSINESS WORLD:**

# Japan poultry import ban lifted

July 31, 2024 | 8:48 pm



DA.GOV.PH

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said on Wednesday that it lifted a temporary ban on imports of poultry and poultry by-products from Japan.

In Memorandum Order No. 31, the DA said the ruling follows an official report by the Japanese government to the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH).

“This order is hereby issued to lift the temporary ban on importing domestic and wild birds and their products, including poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs and semen originating from Japan,” the DA said.

It added that all reported Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) cases have been resolved, with no additional outbreaks reported after June 2.

“The H5N1 strain could spread rapidly among bird population, including poultry that is a multibillion-peso industry in the Philippines,” the DA added.

In January, the DA barred Japanese poultry imports following a reported outbreak.

Japan’s Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries reported the HPAI outbreak to the WOAH on Nov. 28.

“Based on the evaluation of the DA, the risk of contamination from importing live poultry, poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs and semen is negligible,” it added. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/07/31/611513/japan-poultry-import-ban-lifted/>

## BUSINESS WORLD:

# Congress think tank says inflation still a threat to economic stability

July 31, 2024 | 8:47 pm



PHILIPPINE STAR/RYAN BALDEMOR

INFLATION remains a threat to economic stability despite an easing consumer price index (CPI) growth in recent months, according to a congressional think tank.

In a report on Tuesday, the Congressional Policy and Budget Research Department (CPBRD) said inflation could revive if the agriculture and manufacturing sectors fail to meet rising demand amid an increase in money in circulation.

“The observed easing of inflation rates in recent months belies the full extent of the existing and burgeoning inflation problem,” the CPBRD said in the report, written by David Joseph Emmanuel Barua Yap, Jr., Jhoanne E. Aquino, Jubels C. Santos, and Marielle R. Belleza.

“Major concerns on the domestic side include anemic growth in the agricultural sector and weaker-than-expected growth in the industrial sector — particularly in manufacturing,” it added. “These contribute, in no small part, to the inability of supply to meet rising demand.”

Inflation eased to 3.7% in June due to a slower rise in electricity and transport costs, the Philippine Statistics Authority said.

For the first six months of 2024, headline inflation averaged 3.5%, higher than the central bank’s 3.3% full-year forecast.

In its low-inflation scenario, the think tank sees CPI growth at 3.8% in the second quarter, easing to 2.4% in the third quarter, and rising again to 3.64% in the fourth quarter.

On the other hand, the CPBRD's high-inflation scenario contemplates an acceleration to 4.13% in the second quarter, a decline to 2.47% in the third quarter, and then reviving to 3.89% in the fourth quarter.

"The forecasts suggest that inflation will accelerate in the second quarter (3.80% to 4.13%) of 2024 before tapering off in the third quarter (2.45% to 2.47%)," it said. "The seasonality of inflation manifests itself as it is projected to increase in the last quarter of 2024 (3.64% to 3.89%)."

Money supply growth outpaced the actual production of goods and services in the economy, the CPBRD said, noting the compound annual growth rate (CAGR) in the money supply of 11.43% between 2010 and 2023.

"Compared with the annual average of quarterly real GDP growth (i.e., CAGR of 4.99%), it appears that M2 grew at a much faster pace than the actual production of goods and services in the economy," according to the CPBRD.

"An increase in the money supply can lead to higher overall demand for goods and services. If this demand exceeds the economy's capacity to produce, it can result in demand-pull inflation," it added.

However, enhancing industrial and agricultural productivity could help stifle inflation, the CPBRD said, also noting that a disciplined monetary policy could help absorb excess liquidity.

The think tank also noted that oil price hikes, energy and food costs, and government subsidies pose potent inflationary risks for the economy.

It added that international inflationary risks include efforts by some countries to replace the dollar as global tender, a Fed decision not to move on rates, an uptick in election spending for the upcoming US presidential elections, and a recession originating from China or the US. — **Kenneth Christiane L. Basilio**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/07/31/611511/congress-think-tank-says-inflation-still-a-threat-to-economic-stability/>

**REMATE:**

# Tiu Laurel sa BFAR: Mga mangingisdang apektado ng Bataan oil spill tulungan

July 31, 2024 19:56



A thick layer of oil can be seen across the water's surface approximately four kilometers from the coastline in Tibaguin Island, Hagonoy Bulacan. The oil spill from capsized tanker MT Terranova which was carrying 1.4 million liters of oil is now affecting the municipal waters of several areas, including Bulacan, Cavite, and Bataan. Greenpeace is calling on President Marcos Jr. to make oil and gas companies pay for polluting our waters and fueling the climate crisis. Fishing nets coated in oil show the de

MANILA, Philippines – IPINAG-UTOS ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. sa Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), araw ng Miyerkules na tulungan ang mga mangingisda na naapektuhan ng oil spill mula sa tumaob na motor tanker na Terra Nova sa Bataan.

Sinabi ni Tiu Laurel, kasalukuyan na ngayong ina-assess ng BFAR ang mga nasirang lugar upang madetermina ang uri at lawak ng tulong na ipagkakaloob sa mga apektadong mangingisda.

Nakipag-ugnayan na ang BFAR sa third-party laboratories para suriin ang water samples sa paligid ng tumaob na motor tanker para madetermina ang presensiya ng langis at grasa, kabilang na ang mapaminsalang contaminants gaya ng polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons.

“For now, we can only give fuel vouchers so fishermen can go to nearby fishing grounds,” ayon kay Tiu Laurel.

“I also asked BFAR to coordinate with DSWD (Department of Social Welfare and Development) so the agency can also give food packs to affected fisherfolk,” dagdag na pahayag nito.

Tinuran pa ng Kalihim na magbibigay din ang BFAR ng dispersants para makatulong na maayos ang tumagas na langis mula sa MT Terranova, lumubog sa may Bataan noong Hulyo 25.

Ang MT Terranova ay may kargang 1.4 million litro ng industrial fuel nang ito’y tumaob. **Kris Jose**

<https://remate.ph/tiu-laurel-sa-bfar-mga-mangingisdang-apektado-ng-bataan-oil-spill-tulungan/>

**REMATE:**

# DA, maglulunsad ng P45/kilo ‘Rice-for-All’ program sa Agosto 1

July 31, 2024 17:44



MANILA, Philippines – INANUNSYO ng Department of Agriculture (DA), araw ng Miyerkules na nakatakda itong maglunsad ng bagong inisyatiba na naglalayong gawing affordable ang presyo ng bigas para sa mga Filipino consumer.

Sinabi ng DA na nakatakda nitong ilunsad ang Rice-for-All program, araw ng Huwebes, Agosto 1, 2024.

Ang bagong programa ay ‘follow up’ sa P29 Rice Program, na naging available para sa pagbebenta ng mas murang bigas sa halagang P29 per kilo lamang para sa vulnerable sectors.

“Rice under the Rice-for-All program will initially be sold at P45 a kilo. It will be adjusted depending on the movement of rice prices but it will definitely be lower than retail prices in general,” ayon kay Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.

Sinabi pa ng DA na ang Rice-for-All program ay magbebenta sa general public ng well-milled rice na kukunin mula sa rice importers at local traders na limitado lamang sa 25 kilo kada customer kada isang araw.

Sa kabilang dako, sinabi naman ni DA Assistant Secretary at spokesperson Arnel de Mesa na ang Rice-for-All program ay unang iaalok sa apat na Kadiwa outlets — FTI sa Taguig City, Bureau of Plant Industry sa Maynila, Potrero sa Malabon, at sa Caloocan.

Idinagdag pa ni De Mesa na ang bagong programa ay naglalayon na tulungan ang mas maraming Filipino consumers na makayanan ang epekto ng mataas na presyo ng pagkain, naimpluwensiyahan ang inflation at interest rates.

Gayunman, sinabi ni Tiu Laurel na ang Rice-for-All program ay magiging panibagong hakbang tungo sa pagsasakatuparan ng hangarin at vision ni Pangulong Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. na tiyakin ang availability ng ‘affordable food.’

“President Marcos wants to ensure that every Filipino has access to affordable food during these trying times,” ayon sa Kalihim.

“In line with this, we will continue to expand the Kadiwa network and make available more basic goods to the general public,” ang sinabi pa rin ni Tiu Laurel.

Samantala, sinabi naman ni De Mesa na ang Rice-for-All program ay makatutulong din sa DA na patagalin ang P29 Rice Program.

Sinabi pa niya na P29 Rice Program ay I-extend sa dalawa pang lugar gaya ng Sta. Rosa City sa Laguna at Antipolo City sa Rizal, itinaas ang network covered ng programa sa 17 sites.

Ang 17 Kadiwa outlets na operational para sa P29 Rice Program ay matatagpuan sa susunod na lugar: Bureau of Animal Industry and National Irrigation Administration sa Quezon City; Bureau of Plant Industry sa Manila; Food Terminal Inc. sa Taguig City; PhilFIDA sa Las Piñas; Prang Covered Gym sa Marikina City; Llano, Caloocan City; Valenzuela City; PFCC sa Malabon; Navotas Institute sa Navotas City; Brgy. Fortune at BF City sa Marikina City; San Jose del Monte City sa Bulacan; Bacoor, Cavite; San Pedro City Hall sa Laguna; Sta. Rosa City Hall sa Laguna; at Antipolo City, Rizal.

“Both the P29 Rice and Rice-for-All programs are designed to make this essential staple more accessible and affordable for every Filipino, in line with President Marcos’ vision of ‘Walang magugutom sa Bagong Pilipinas,’ ayon kay De Mesa. *Kris Jose*

<https://remate.ph/da-maglulunsad-ng-p45-kilo-rice-for-all-program-sa-agosto-1/>



**REMATE:**

# Ban sa pag-import ng mga poultry products mula Japan, inalis na ng DA

July 31, 2024 16:41



MANILA, Philippines – Inalis na ng pamahalaan sa pamamagitan ng Department of Agriculture (DA) ang temporary ban na ipinatupad sa importasyon ng wild at domestic birds, kabilang ang poultry products mula Japan dahil sa mga kaso ng bird flu.

Sa pahayag nitong Miyerkules, Hulyo 31, sinabi ng DA na nag-isyu si Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. ng Memorandum Order No. 31 na pumapayag sa pagbabalik ng importasyon ng birds at poultry products, kabilang ang day-old-chicks at hatching eggs mula Japan.

Matatandaan na noong Enero ay nag-isyu ng importation ban ang DA matapos na iulat ng Japan Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries ang outbreak ng Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) o bird flu sa World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) noong Nobyembre 28, 2023.

Ayon sa DA, ang pag-aalis ng ban ay dahil sa sinabi ng Japan na naresolba na nito ang mga naunang kaso ng HPAI at wala nang iniulat na karagdagang kaso ng bird flu mula pa noong Hunyo 2, 2024.

Iniulat ng Japan ang kauna-unahang kaso ng H5N1 subtype ng bird flu virus noong Nobyembre 8, 2023. *RNT/JGC*

<https://remate.ph/ban-sa-pag-import-ng-mga-poultry-products-mula-japan-inalis-na-ng-da/>

**REMATE:**

# Walang bird flu outbreak sa Tarlac – BAI

July 31, 2024 07:37



MANILA, Philippines – Sinabi ng Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) na walang kumpirmadong resulta sa laboratoryo ang naiulat na bird flu sa Tarlac.

Gayundin, wala ring natanggap mula sa lokal na awtoridad ang ahensya na ulat ukol sa outbreak.

“The BAI Animal Diagnosis and Reference Laboratory is the sole authority to officially detect and confirm positive cases of bird flu through standardized testing protocols,” saad sa pahayag.

“The BAI takes the health and safety of our poultry industry very seriously. We urge the public and media to rely on verified information and official statements from the BAI,” dagdag pa nito.

Sinabi ng bureau na kung mayroong anumang kumpirmadong kaso ng bird flu, ito ay “maagap” na ipaalam sa publiko at gagawa ng mga kinakailangang hakbang upang mapigilan at matugunan ang sitwasyon.

Nauna nang ipinagbawal ng Department of Agriculture (DA) ang pag-angkat ng mga poultry at poultry by-products mula sa Minnesota at Michigan sa United States, dahil sa mga kumpirmadong kaso ng High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (HPAI) H5N1. **RNT**

<https://remate.ph/walang-bird-flu-outbreak-sa-tarlac-bai/>

**REMATE:**

# Winasak ni Carina sa sektor ng agrikultura umabot na sa P1.17B

July 31, 2024 07:25



**MANILA** – Iniulat ng Department of Agriculture (DA) nitong Martes na umakyat sa P1.17 bilyon ang pinsala sa sektor ng agri-fishery dahil sa pananalasa ng pinalakas na habagat at Super Typhoon Carina.

Ayon sa DA-Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Operations Center Bulletin No. 13, 40,904 na magsasaka at mangingisda ang naiulat na apektado sa 12 rehiyon kabilang ang Cordillera at Ilocos Regions, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Mimaropa, Bicol, Western at Silangang Visayas, Zamboanga Peninsula, Soccsksargen, at Caraga.

Sa volume, ang kabuuang pagkawala na naitala ay nasa 18,086 metric tons (MT), kung saan ang sektor ng bigas ang nakakuha ng pinakamataas na pinsala na nasa PHP660.60 milyon.

Ang pagkalugi sa palaisdaan ay sumunod sa P360.80 milyon na nakaapekto sa 3,334 na mangingisda; high-value crops na nagkakahalaga ng P79.35 milyon; produksyon ng mais sa P65.40 milyon; pinsala sa imprastraktura na nagkakahalaga ng P1.6 milyon; at P1.32 milyon na halaga ng pagkawala para sa 5,593 ulo sa sektor ng paghahayupan.

Una rito, tiniyak ng DA ang pamamahagi ng 72,174 bags ng rice seeds, 39,546 bags ng corn seeds, 59,600 pouch, at 1,966 kg. ng mga buto ng gulay sa mga apektadong magsasaka.

Dagdag pa rito, maaari ring ma-access ng mga mangingisda ang tulong mula sa Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), na kinabibilangan ng fingerlings, gamit sa pangingsda, at iba pang kagamitan.

Ang mga apektadong magsasaka at mangingisda ay maaari ding makakuha ng P25,000 na halaga ng pautang sa ilalim ng Survival and Recovery (SURE) Loan Program mula sa Agricultural Credit Policy Council, na walang interes at babayaran sa loob ng tatlong taon, gayundin ang pag-activate ng mga pondo sa ilalim ng Quick Response Fund at Philippine Crop Insurance Corp. *RNT*

<https://remate.ph/winasak-ni-carina-sa-sektor-ng-agrikultura-umabot-na-sa-p1-17b/>

**ABANTE:**

## PH cacao bumida sa South Korea

- Abante News
- July 31, 2024



BUMIDA sa World Chocolate Day sa Seoul, South Korea ang Philippine Cacao bilang bahagi sa selebrasyon ng ika-75 anibersaryo ng matibay na diplomatikong relasyon sa pagitan ng Pilipinas at Korea.

Naisakatuparan ito dahil sa paanyaya ng Philippine Embassy sa Korea kung saan pinangunahan ito ng Chocolate Queen of Cebu na si Raquel T. Choa na miyembro ng The Chocolate Chamber.

Ibinahagi dito ang tatlong uri ng inuming tsokolate mula sa Pilipinas para sa chocolate pairing na dinaluhan ng mga Filipino at Korean community.

Ipinares ang tsokolateng inumin sa white at red wine, keso at hamon.

“Chocolate was paired with white and red wine, cheese, and ham, creating a variety of flavors for guests to enjoy. Each combination allowed for a unique tasting experience, highlighting the rich and nuanced profiles of the chocolate, the complexity of the wines, and the savory notes of the cheese and ham,” ani ng TCC.

Kaakibat din ng nasabing pagdiriwang ang pakikibaka para sa pagkamtan ng sustainable tourism at farming practices sa Pilipinas.

Ang cacao ay tumutukoy sa mga buto ng puno ng cacao na kilala sa lokal na tawag bilang kakaw.

Ito ay isang mahalagang produkto sa bansa at karaniwan itong ginagawang tsokolate.

“It was more than just a chocolate pairing event; it was a moment to connect with #katsokolate (friends of chocolate), appreciate the value of Philippine cacao, and pay tribute to the dedication of cacao farmers,” dagdag pa ng TCC. (Moises Caleon)

<https://www.abante.com.ph/2024/07/31/ph-cacao-bumida-sa-south-korea/>

**ABANTE:**

## **Kamara pinakilos ni Speaker Romualdez na saklolohan mga apektado ng oil spill**

- Abante News
- July 31, 2024



Kaagad na pinakilos ni Speaker Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez ang kanyang mga kapwa mambabatas upang tulungan ang libu-libong mangingisda sa apat na lalawigan na naapektuhan nang pagtagas ng langis.

“Hindi na natin hihintayin na humingi sila ng tulong sa atin. Tayo na ang lumapit sa kanila para alamin kung ano ang tulong na kailangan nila sa atin at sa gobyerno,” aniya.

“The livelihood of our fisherfolk is at stake. We must act quickly to mitigate the damage and provide the necessary support,” pahayag pa ng lider ng may 300-miyembro ng House of Representatives.

Hinikayat rin niya ang kanyang mga kasamahan mula sa Bataan, Pampanga, Bulacan, at Cavite na makipag-ugnayan sa mga apektadong mangingisda upang tukuyin ang mga tulong na kanilang kinakailangan.

“We will tap all available resources, including the TUPAD and AICS programs, to provide immediate relief and support to our fisherfolk,” pagtiyak pa ni Speaker Romualdez.

Hiniling rin niya sa mga mambabatas sa mga apektadong lugar na i-assess, sa tulong ng mga local government units, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Philippine Coast Guard at iba pang concerned agencies, ang pinsalang dulot ng oil spill, gayundin ang lawak nito.

Matatandaang napaulat na tumagas ang industrial fuel at diesel mula sa dalawang barko na lumubog sa Bataan at sa Manila Bay area noong nakaraang linggo.

Ang isa sa mga barko, na MT Terranova, ay may kargang 1.4 milyong litro ng industrial oil.

Patuloy namang nagsusumikap ang mga awtoridad na pigilan ang pagtagas ng langis.

Nabatid na ang mga mangingisda na apektado ng oil spill ay kinabibilangan ng mga nagmula sa Bulacan, na nasa 11,000 na may estimated combined monthly income na P83 milyon; 8,000 sa Bataan na kumikita ng P63 milyon sa isang buwan, at libu-libong iba pa mula sa Pampanga at Cavite.

Sa Cavite, binalaan na ng mga local officials ang apat na bayan, “Oil spill alert. Coastal barangays of Ternate, Maragondon, Naic, and parts of Tanza will be affected.”

Sa pagtaya ng Marine Science Institute ng University of the Philippine, ang oil spill ay maaaring tumagas patungong norte, at makaapekto sa Bulacan, gayundin sa coastal areas sa Cavite.

Tinataya naman ng Philippine Space Agency na nasa 93.74 square kilometers ang nasakop ng langis sa Manila Bay.

<https://www.abante.com.ph/2024/07/31/kamara-pinakilos-ni-speaker-romualdez-na-saklolohan-mga-apektado-ng-oil-spill/>



# **DA rolls out P45/k rice thru KADIWA stores**

By Othel V. Campos

August 1, 2024, 12:30 am

The Department of Agriculture is set to launch today (Thursday) its “Rice-for-All” program in hopes of offering all Filipinos equal access to affordable, high-quality well-milled and fancy rice varieties at below-market prices.

“President Marcos wants to ensure that every Filipino has access to affordable food during these trying times. In line with this, we will continue to expand the KADIWA network and make available more basic goods to the general public,” said Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel. Under the Rice-for-All Program, well-milled rice sourced from importers and local traders will be sold initially at P45 per kilo.

The price may be adjusted based on market fluctuations, but it will consistently remain lower than prevailing retail prices. Each customer can purchase up to 25 kilos of rice per day.

The program follows the success of the P29 Rice Program introduced in June 2024 and is a significant step towards Mr. Marcos’ vision of ensuring accessible and affordable food for everyone.

For his part, DA spokesperson Arnel de Mesa said the program aims to mitigate the impact of high food prices on consumers, which significantly influence inflation and interest rates.

The Rice-for-All Program will initially be available at four KADIWA outlets — in FTI Taguig City, the Bureau of Plant Industry in Manila, Potrero in Malabon, and Caloocan.

In addition, the P29 Rice Program is being expanded to two more locations to Sta. Rosa City in Laguna and Antipolo City in Rizal, bringing the total number of outlets to 17.

<https://manilastandard.net/news/314478952/da-rolls-out-p45-k-rice-thru-kadiwa-stores.html>

# **DA lifts ban on Japanese poultry exports**

By Othel V. Campos  
July 31, 2024, 8:50 pm

The Department of Agriculture said Wednesday it lifted the temporary ban imposed on the importation of wild and domestic birds, including poultry products, from Japan over the recent cases of bird flu.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. issued Memorandum Order No. 31 that would allow the resumption of day-old chicks and hatching eggs importation from Japan.

Japan earlier reported to the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) that cases of the high pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI) had been resolved and that no additional cases had been reported since June 2, 2024.

Japan first reported cases of the H5N1 subtype of the bird flu virus on Nov. 8, 2023.

WOAH noted that the H5N1 virus could spread rapidly among bird population, including poultry which is a multibillion-peso industry in the Philippines.

“Based on the evaluation of the Department of Agriculture, the risk of contamination from importing live poultry, poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs and semen is negligible,” Tiu Laurel said.

Meanwhile, the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) said it did not receive confirmed laboratory results of bird flue outbreak in Tarlac province. The last officially confirmed case in the province was recorded in December 2023.

The BAI, through its Animal Diagnosis and Reference Laboratory (ADDRL), is the sole authority responsible for detecting and confirming positive cases of bird flu using standardized testing protocols.

Emphasizing its commitment to the health and safety of the poultry industry, the BAI urged the public and media to rely on verified information and official statements from the agency.

The BAI said that in the event of any confirmed bird flu cases, it would promptly inform them and take necessary measures to contain and address the situation.

<https://manilastandard.net/business/314478861/da-lifts-ban-o-n-japanese-poultry-exports.html>

# Japan poultry ban lifted by DA

By Janine Alexis Miguel

August 1, 2024

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) has lifted a temporary ban on domestic and wild birds, including poultry products, originating from Japan.

Under Memorandum Order 31, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said that the importation of live poultry, poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs and semen would be allowed as there were no cases of avian influenza (AI) in Japan.

"Based on the evaluation of the Department of Agriculture, the risk of contamination from importing live poultry, poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs and semen is negligible," the agriculture chief said in the order.

Based on reports submitted by Japan to the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), previous cases of high pathogenicity avian influenza had been resolved and no additional cases were reported since June 2.

Japan first reported cases of the H5N1 subtype of the bird flu virus on Nov. 8, 2023. The Philippines imposed the ban in January.

The H5N1 subtype can spread rapidly among bird populations, including poultry, which is a multibillion-peso industry in the Philippines.

The DA order, signed on July 23, took effect immediately.

Lifting of the ban was supported by an official self-declaration report of the Animal Health Division to the WOAH.

A meat import report from the DA's Bureau of Animal Industry showed that there has been no importation of poultry meat from Japan since last year.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/01/business/top-business/japan-poultry-ban-lifted-by-da/1961121>

# RFPs report high fish deliveries in Q2

By Janine Alexis Miguel

August 1, 2024

REGIONAL fish ports (RFPs) in the country recorded higher fish deliveries in the second quarter (Q2) of 2024 compared to the same period last year, the Philippine Fisheries Development Authority (PFDA) said.

In a quarterly report, PFDA said that fish unloaded during the April-June period totaled 186,557 metric tons (MT), up by over 54 percent from the 121,062 MT of fish delivered in the same period of 2023.

Likewise, fish deliveries were higher by 38.4 percent from the 134,746 MT unloaded in the first quarter of this year. The average daily unloading was equivalent to 2,050 MT of fish.

In April, the PFDA reported that 60,256 MT of fish across all regional fish ports was delivered to consumers, 9 percent higher compared to 55,277 MT in the same month last year.

Fish deliveries in May were the highest at 66,587 MT, a 55.5-percent jump compared to the 42,814 MT delivered in the same month last year. June's fish delivery, meanwhile, totaled 59,259 MT.

In addition, PFDA said that the opening of various fishing grounds influenced the utilization rate of various port facilities the second quarter. Piers and quays recorded a 267-percent usage in the second quarter.

"Nevertheless, the PFDA firmly believes that, with the help of ongoing rehabilitation and improvement projects in PFDA RFPs nationwide, this high utilization rate could soon be addressed," it said.

The utilization of market halls and building spaces, commercial and industrial areas was logged at 85 percent. Meanwhile, utilization of cold storage facilities reached 75 percent; ice making plants usage reached 71 percent; and processing areas logged a 56-percent utilization rate.

Meanwhile, port construction and rehabilitation are ongoing, while seven regional ports are being completed.

The Davao Fish Port Complex, which is 99.89-percent completed, can now cater to more clients and stakeholders not only in the region but also in nearby provinces.

PFDA also reported that the Sual fish port complex in Quezon province is 97.53-percent complete; the upgrading of the fish port in Iloilo City is at 91.68- percent completion; Navotas fish port in Metro Manila logged a 70.22-percent completion; and the Zamboanga fish port in Zamboanga del Sur complex is 46.41-percent finished.

The Camaligan fish port in Camarines Sur is under rehabilitation but will continue to deliver marine products, the PFDA said.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/01/business/top-business/rfps-report-high-fish-deliveries-in-q2/1961120>

# PHilMech assures no 'decaying' farm machines

By The Manila Times  
August 1, 2024

THE Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (PHilMech) gave assurances that no farm equipment it distributed to qualified beneficiaries are in a "decaying" state.

PHilMech Director Dionisio Alvindia Jr. said that the agency continues to deploy monitoring teams to identify farmers' cooperatives and associations (FCAs), and local government units (LGUs) that misuse or underutilize the agricultural equipment given to them under the program. The misused and underutilized machines are reallocated by PHilMech or given to another FCA and LGU.

So far, PHilMech has reallocated 82 units of farm equipment deemed underutilized or unutilized by their original recipients.



The Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (PHilMech) is sustaining its distribution of farm machines in the country. Photo shows a representative of a farmers' group in Pagadian receiving a four-wheel tractor from PHilMech. PHILMECH PHOTO



Alvindia made the statements amid false reports that a few of the machines distributed under the program in Leyte are "decaying" because these allegedly were unutilized or improperly used.

He added that a PHilMech representative joined a monitoring and validation conference convened by the Philippine Council for Agriculture and Fisheries, and Fishery Council of Eastern Visayas. This took place on July 15 to 18 and the exit conference on July 19.

"During the two-day conference and the exit conference, there were no concerns raised on the agricultural equipment and machines delivered by PHilMech under RCEF to qualified beneficiaries across Eastern Visayas, including the province of Leyte," Alvindia said.

"There was no mention during the conferences of 'decaying' farm equipment as reported by a columnist of a national daily to whom we are making an emphatic appeal to be more responsible in his reporting of facts," he added.

The recipients are from the municipalities of Babatngon, Barugo, Carigara and Merida in Leyte.

Besides Leyte, PHilMech is also receiving false reports of "decaying" farm machines distributed under the program from other areas.

Alvindia explained that PHilMech always makes sure that the recipients of the RCEF-Mechanization Program have a shed or a facility where they can park the farm machines given to them.

Also, the agency trains all FCAs and LGUs who are recipients of the program on how to operate and maintain the agricultural equipment and farm machines given to them.

"We also have to give credit to all FCAs and LGUs who have so far received their agricultural equipment under the program for becoming responsible custodians, learning not only to maintain

their farm machines but also to value these as investments given to them by the government," Alvindia said.

PHilMech also reallocates misused or underutilized farm machines to more deserving FCAs and LGUs.

"The memorandum of agreements executed by an FCA or LGU with PHilMech have provisions that the recipient should properly utilize the equipment given to them. If there is a case of clear misuse or underutilization, the equipment is reallocated to another FCA or LGU," Alvindia said.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/01/business/agribusiness/philmech-assures-no-decaying-farm-machines/1961041>

# **BFAR assists food growers in Siquijor**

August 1, 2024

THE Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) Phase II implemented by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) in Siquijor is actively assisting the tilapia culture project of the Canlasog Samahang Mag-uuma (Casama), an association of farmers and fisherfolk composed of 33 members established in 2009.

They now operate 11 tilapia fishponds.

SAAD aims to contribute to poverty reduction and improve the living conditions of vulnerable fisherfolk and their communities by providing sustainable livelihood opportunities and support for poor fishing sectors.

According to BFAR development officer II Ronie Malinis, Casama will receive P424,472.79 worth of inputs and materials for the operation of 11 tilapia fishponds in the second year of SAAD program's implementation.

In 2023, the association received inputs and materials valued at P313,160 in total, including feeds and tilapia fry, high-density polyethylene hose, bamboo poles, ropes, nails and cement.

Malinis said BFAR will help the recipients by offering technical support by introducing suitable feeding practices and strategies to reduce mortality as well as a quick demonstration on how to properly store fry.

Casama President Edgar Tamiat, who is also a barangay official and tricycle driver, is thankful for the support and assistance provided to their association.

"I am very grateful that they have assisted us with the needs of our association. We are very thankful to BFAR-SAAD because they have supported us with all our needs, such as tools, materials and seedlings, he said in the vernacular.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/01/business/agribusiness/bfar-assists-food-growers-in-siquijor/1961039>

# DA, food group explore collaborations

By The Manila Times

August 1, 2024

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Philippine Chamber of Food Manufacturers Inc. (PCFMI) discussed possible areas for collaboration in a meeting at the DA Central Office, Quezon City, on July 23.

Guided by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s directives to strengthen public-private partnerships to achieve nationwide food accessibility, affordability and security during his third State of the Nation Address last July 22, DA Assistant Secretary for Consumer and Legislative Affairs Genevieve Velicaria-Guevarra welcomed the PCFMI's openness for collaborating with the Agriculture Department.

"Definitely, we look forward to partnerships with private corporations, especially with the expansion of our Kadiwa Program, as well as the expansion also of our institutional partners for farmer- and fisherfolk-cooperatives that we are supporting," Velicaria-Guevarra said.

Among the potential areas for cooperation that were initially determined during the meeting were the formation of market linkages between local food producers and PCFMI's member-companies, the conduct of training sessions for agri-youths and cooperatives through the DA's Young Farmers Challenge Program and the promotion of a healthy diet.

The two institutions also explored the potential expansion of the DA's Kadiwa Program by tapping PCFMI member-companies as suppliers of affordable, safe and nutritious produce, thus allowing for a wider variety of products to be sold at the Kadiwa centers nationwide. Should this materialize, the partnership will be crucial

in attaining the department's goal of establishing 1,500 Kadiwa centers nationwide by 2028.

"We really would like to help these public-private partnerships, especially since agriculture is an input to our processes," PCFMI Chairman and President Marites Director said.

Founded on Dec. 5, 1958, the PCFMI envisions to be the lead and voice of the food industry and advocates for safe, nutritious and sustainable supply of food that are compliant to local, national, and international laws and regulations.

To date, it is composed of 102 member-companies that are engaged in the local manufacture and distribution of essential commodities of various food categories.

With its strategic focus being on innovation, food safety and nutrition, robust and scientifically-based regulations, and sustainability and food security, the PCFMI has been partnering up with different stakeholders, including the government sector, for a more sustainable and resilient food industry.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/01/business/agribusiness/da-food-group-explore-collaborations/1961038>

# IPB boosts Region 2 organic farming

By Leander C. Domingo

August 1, 2024

IN a move to boost the organic farming in Cagayan Valley (Region 2), the Institute of Plant Breeding (IPB) under the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) held a training on organic vegetable breeding and organic seed production in Ilagan City, Isabela province.

Conducted at the Department of Agriculture-Cagayan Valley Research Center (DA-CVRC) in Barangay San Felipe in Ilagan City from July 24 to 25, the training targeted organic vegetable farmers, local government units, and farmers cooperatives and associations.

Funded by Life Bank Microfinance Foundation Inc., Jovy Jane Ganat of the DA Regional Field Office 2 said the event was in collaboration with the Organic Agriculture (OA) program of the DA-CVRC.



Photo shows the training on organic vegetable farming conducted at the Department of Agriculture-Cagayan Valley Research Center in Barangay San Felipe in Ilagan City from July 24 to 25, 2024. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Ganat said the training is part of the project titled "OrganiKong Lahi, Binhi at Ani: A Leap Toward Formal and Informal Organic Seed System" aimed at providing farmers and DA-CVRC technical staff with advanced knowledge on organic crop varietal improvement and seed production.

Ganat explained the initiative seeks to "enhance organic vegetable production in the Philippines by making vegetable varieties bred under low-input organic conditions more accessible."

During the training, IPB scientist Rodel Maghirang and project leader Maria Cielo Rodriguez provided an overview of organic breeding in the Philippines and detailed discussions on organic vegetable breeding and seed production.

UPLB researcher Villamor Ladia Jr. also demonstrated experimental yield trials while Jhelyn Reyes, IBP agricultural technician at the vegetables-legumes section, conducted hands-on sessions on seed processing and saving.

Ganat said the participants also engaged in practical demonstrations of vegetable breeding processes, postharvest handling and good agricultural practices in seed production during their field visit to the DA-CVRC Organic and Tourism Farm in Barangay Baligatan in Ilagan.

For his part, George Caday, DA Region 2 OA program coordinator, expressed strong support for the project and thanked IPB and Life Bank Microfinance Foundation for their efforts in supporting Isabela's vegetable farmers.

Caday also encouraged the participants to apply their new knowledge to produce high-quality organic vegetables and reduce farming costs.



"Applying what they have learned will pave the way for additional sources of income and entrepreneurship opportunities within their communities," he added.

Alongside the IPB project team, Rickson Baldugo, DA-CVRC OA focal person, led the awarding of certificates to the participants.

Created through Presidential Decree 729, the IPB is the premier plant breeding research institute in the country. It is one of the 10 units under the UPLB's College of Agriculture and Food Science.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/01/business/agribusiness/ipb-boosts-region-2-organic-farming/1961042>

DUE TO OIL SPILL

## 8 Cavite localities in state of calamity

By Dennis Abrina

August 1, 2024

**NOVELETA, Cavite** — The provincial government of Cavite has declared a state of calamity in at least eight coastal municipalities due to the oil spill that emanated from MT Terranova that sank on July 25 due to Typhoon "Carina."

The oil spill-affected municipalities are Bacoor, Kawit, Noveleta, Rosario, Tanza, Naic, Maragondon and Ternate.

The province has also declared a no-catch zone for all shellfish (mussels, crabs, crabs and halaan) in the vicinity, according to Gov. Jonvic Remulla on his official social media page on Wednesday.



Fishermen carry onto a shore an oil-stained wooden boat at a fishing village in Ternate, Cavite province, Philippines, 30 July 2024. Oil spill from the sunken oil tanker 'MT Terranova' has reached the Cavite province. The oil spill from the capsized tanker, which was carrying 1.4 million liters of oil is now affecting the municipal

waters of several areas, including Bulacan, Cavite, and Bataan. Environmental organizations are calling on President Marcos Jr. to make oil and gas companies pay for polluting waters and fueling the climate crisis. The 'MT Terranova' tanker ship sank on 25 July off the Manila Bay. EPA-EFE/FRANCIS R. MALASIG

The Cavite government is currently meeting for the immediate distribution of relief goods for the around 25,000 affected fishermen from the eight localities of the province.

On Monday, the provincial government conducted a Marine Science Investigatory Force from Marine Environment Protection Command of water samplings to identify if the coastal waters of the said towns are contaminated with oil spills.

Various agencies, including the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, have been in constant coordination with the provincial government of Cavite regarding the serious ill effects of the disaster to the livelihood and the economy.

The Philippine Coast Guard Auxiliary, the Philippine National Police Maritime Group and the PCG deployed an improvised oil spill boom with the goal of protecting marine resources in the marine zone in the town of Ternate.

According to Mayor Dino Chua, Noveleta is ready to provide livelihood assistance to affected fishermen.

For everyone's safety, the public is advised, especially the beachside residents, to be careful in consuming fish and seafood until the tests done on seawater come out.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/01/regions/8-cavite-localities-in-state-of-calamity/1961110>

# Oil sheen in Bulacan not from sunken ship

By Frederick Silverio  
August 1, 2024

THE Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office (PDRRMO) in Bulacan confirmed that the alleged oil slick found on the province's coastline did not come from the Terra Nova tanker that sank off the coast of Bataan.

Manuel Lukban Jr., head of the Bulacan PDRRMO, told The Manila Times that oil found floating in the Pamarawan area in the city of Malolos is said to have come from passing ships, including ships carrying barges of the P740-billion New Manila International Airport project located in a 2,500-hectare property in Taliptip, Bulakan, Bulacan.

According to Gov. Daniel Fernando, what the fishermen observed in the province's coastline were minimal oil sheens and not oil slicks from the sunken Terra Nova.



**RESPONSE TO OIL SPILL** Gov. Daniel Fernando reports to Interior and Local Government Secretary Benjamin Abalos Jr. the actions taken by Bulacan, including the issuance of memorandum addressed to the concerned local chief executives in the province to prevent and mitigate the oil spill, which may affect some

coastal areas in Bulacan during the Joint NDRRMC-RDRRMC3 emergency meeting at the RDC Hall, NEDA Region III, DMGC, Maimpis, city of San Fernando, Pampanga, on July 29, 2024. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

"It's not in Bulacan yet, I think it's detoured to Cavite, which should be to our province. What [was] seen in Pamarawan will be tested whether they came from the sunken ship or from the waste of the ships that passed by Bulacan," said Fernando.

"But, I will assure you that right now there is no oil slick in Bulacan," stressed Fernando.

Lukban said the airport management, San Miguel Aerocity Inc., a subsidiary of San Miguel Holdings Corp., is taking action here to clean up the oil sheens.

The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) also said the oil sheens were "very minimal and unnoticeable."

According to the PCG, no signs of oil spill were found except for very thin pockets.

Following the oil spill incident from capsized tanker MV Terranova, Fernando issues memorandum to local chief executives (LCEs) in the province and activates incident command posts in Bulacan.

On Monday, Fernando announced the issuance of the memorandum for the LCEs in the province regarding the mandate for the immediate action in response to the potential oil spill threat along the coast of Bulacan from the capsized tanker MT Terranova in Limay, Bataan, during the Joint National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council-Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council Region 3 (NDRRMC-RDRRMC 3) emergency meeting on the oil spill Incident in the province of Bataan held at the RDC Hall, NEDA Region III, DMGC, Maimpis, city of San Fernando, Pampanga.

In the Memorandum DRF-07292024 addressed to the LCEs of the cities of Malolos and Meycauyan, Bulakan, Hagonoy, Calumpit, Marilao, Paombong and Obando, Fernando advised that all fishpond operators should harvest their fish, crabs, shrimp, prawns and other seafood as soon as possible before they become contaminated by the oil, as recommended by the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council.

Fernando has also activated the province's incident command post a day after the reports on the oil spill incident headed by Bulacan Environment and Natural Resources officer Julius Victor Degala and PDRRMO officer Manuel Lukban to oversee the ongoing monitoring and assessment of the affected areas.

He also advised fishermen to avoid sailing on areas affected by the oil spill while fishpond owners with dikes should ensure that contaminated water does not enter their ponds and should keep the check gates or sluices closed.

Based on the report of Degala, the PCG has also deployed 70 personnel and two pickup trucks, one boom truck, one JAC truck and one rigid hull inflatable boat stationed at the staging area at CGSS Obando and at Bulacan PDRRMO.

The PCG has also gathered 600 coconut logs, 11- to 25-meter segment fence booms, 10 packs of oil snare booms, six bale of absorbent pads and five bale of absorbent booms positioned at CGSS Obando.

In the meeting presided by Interior and Local Government Secretary Benjamin Abalos Jr., various agencies including the PCG, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, NDRRMC, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Social Welfare and Development, and other local government units provided their situation reports and the actions taken to prevent and mitigate the spread of the industrial fuel oil spilling off the fuel tanker.

Together with the council, Abalos also suggested conducting daily testing and monitoring of the water quality of the affected areas and the creation of a core group responsible for coordinating and managing the response to the local government units affected by the oil spill.

"What is important is you do your report and everyday testing [of water quality], give it immediately to the governor, the mayors," said Abalos.

Recent reports said that the Marine Science Institute has observed some oil sheens and oil slicks near the waters of Barangay Taliptip in Bulakan; Barangay Tibagin in Hagonoy; and vicinity waters of Barangay Pamarawan, city of Malolos.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/01/regions/oil-sheen-in-bulacan-not-from-sunken-ship/1961107>

# **Rice for All at P45 per kg launched today**

By **Jed Macapagal**

August 1, 2024

The Rice for All program which will sell subsidized rice to the general public will be launched today in four Kadiwa sites.

“Rice under the Rice-for-All program will initially be sold at P45 a kilo. It will be adjusted depending the movement of rice prices but it will definitely be lower than retail prices in general,” said Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel. The Rice-for-All Program would sell to the general public well-milled rice sourced from rice importers and local traders at a limit of 25 kg per customer per day.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said the program seeks to help more Filipino consumers cope with the impact of high food prices, which significantly influence inflation and consequently interest rates.

“In addition to the existing P29 Rice, the Rice-for-All Program will be offered initially in four Kadiwa outlets: FTI in Taguig City, the Bureau of Plant Industry in Manila, Potrero in Malabon, and in Caloocan,” said de Mesa.

The Department of Agriculture said the P29 Rice Program for the vulnerable sector will still continue in tandem with the Rice for All program.

DA said the P29 Rice Program will be extended to two more areas particularly in Sta. Rosa city, Laguna and Antipolo city, Rizal which will increase the network covered by the program to 17 sites.

Based on DA’s monitoring of public markets in the National Capital Region, the price last Monday of local well-milled rice was between P45 and P55 per kg and regular milled, P45 to P50 per kg.

The price of imported well-milled rice is at P51 to P53 per kg, while the price range of imported regular milled rice is at P47 to P48 per kg. Imported rice ranges from P55 to P65 for the special variety and P53 to P60 for premium. For local rice, the special variety costs P58 to P61 per kg and premium, P50 to P58 per kg.

[https://malaya.com.ph/news\\_business/rice-for-all-at-p45-per-kg-launched-today/](https://malaya.com.ph/news_business/rice-for-all-at-p45-per-kg-launched-today/)



# Fish unloaded in regional ports up 50% in Q2–PFDA

Ada Pelonia  
July 31, 2024



This BusinessMirror file photo shows the catch of the day by fishermen of San Enrique, Negros Occidental.

FISH unloaded in the country's regional ports jumped by more than 50 percent year-on-year in the second quarter, according to the Philippine Fisheries Development Authority (PFDA).

In its quarterly bulletin, the agency said the RFPs delivered 186,557.96 metric tons (MT) to consumers from the April to June period.

This showed a 54.10-percent increase from the 121,062.55 MT recorded in the same period last year.

The PFDA said the landed catch during the three-month period was equivalent to an average daily unloading of 2,050.09 MT.

On a quarterly basis, the agency said the second quarter's volume of fish unloading was 38.45 percent higher than the 134,746.84 MT in the first quarter of the year.

The PFDA also said the ports opened their doors to 19,619 vessels and serviced 13,665 clients and port users throughout the reference period.

Meanwhile, the agency said its volume of ice production registered growth from April to June.

“The PFDA RFPs have also performed well in terms of ice production with 10,671.70 MT of ice produced throughout the quarter, and showed grit with 301.17 MT processed fish and fishery products.”

Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) showed that the total volume of fisheries production from January to March 2024 was 987,190 MT, a 0.5-percent decline from the 992,330 MT registered in the same quarter of the previous year.

“The decrease in production was noted in marine municipal fisheries, while commercial, inland municipal fisheries, and aquaculture reported increments in production during the period,” the PSA said in its fisheries situation report.

In March, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) released over P6 billion to the PFDA to construct and rehabilitate fisheries infrastructure in the country. (See: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/03/28/government-all-set-to-begin-construction-rehab-of-fisheries-infra/>)

Budget Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman cleared the issuance of a Special Allotment Release Order (SARO) amounting to a total of P6.037 billion to implement the fisheries infrastructure development program of the PFDA.

The DBM added that P1.1 billion of the allocated funds, which represent the Congress-Introduced Changes in Appropriations, will be used for the construction, rehabilitation and improvement of fish ports and other post-harvest facilities in the country.

The authorized appropriation to the PFDA serves as the National Government (NG) subsidy for fiscal year 2024, the DBM said. The budget will be released to the PFDA under the 2024 General Appropriations Act (GAA).

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/07/31/fish-unloaded-in-regional-ports-up-50-in-q2-pfda/>

# **Kadiwa stores to sell cheaper well-milled rice**

Ada Pelonia  
August 1, 2024



The Department of Agriculture (DA) is set to launch a program that will allow local consumers to purchase cheaper well-milled rice at selected Kadiwa sites.

Dubbed the Rice-for-All program, which will be launched in four Kadiwa stores, the DA said the public could buy well-milled rice at P45 per kilogram (kg). Each customer will be limited to 25 kilos per day.

The DA said the rice supply for the program would be sourced from importers and local traders.

“Rice under the Rice-for-All program will initially be sold at P45 a kilo. It will be adjusted depending on the movement of rice prices but it will definitely be lower than retail prices in general,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr. said in a statement.

The well-milled rice will be sold in Kadiwa outlets in FTI in Taguig City, the Bureau of Plant Industry in Manila, Potrero in Malabon, and Caloocan City.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said the program seeks to help more Filipino consumers cope with the impact of high food prices, which put pressure on inflation and consequently interest rates.

“The main objective of the Rice-for-All program is to have cheaper rice available. These are one of the many steps of the government to reduce the prices of basic commodities and eventually ease the pressure on inflation,” De Mesa told reporters partly in Filipino in a press briefing on Wednesday.

Apart from the P45 well-milled rice, De Mesa said premium rice would also be sold at the Kadiwa sites at P52 pesos per kilo.

To limit the purchase of buyers to 25 kilos, the DA will require them to register at the Kadiwa sites.

Meanwhile, De Mesa said the P29 Rice Program will be extended to two more areas—Sto. Rosa City in Laguna and Antipolo City in Rizal—increasing the network covered by the program to 17 sites.

“Both the P29 Rice and Rice-for-All programs are designed to make this essential staple more accessible and affordable for every Filipino.”

The latest price monitoring report of the DA indicated that the prevailing retail price of local well-milled rice and premium rice in Metro Manila markets averaged P50 per kilo and P55 per kilo, respectively.

Laurel said the government is banking on Kadiwa stores to reduce food prices and temper inflation.

“[Kadiwa] ang pinaka epektibong paraan para ma-stabilize yung presyo at mabigyan ng mas murang bilihan,” Laurel said in a radio interview ahead of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s State of the Nation Address last July 22.

The agri chief said the government is planning to build at least one Kadiwa store per municipality. Through Kadiwa stores, he said farmers could directly sell their agricultural products to the public.

Image credits: [www.philrice.gov.ph](http://www.philrice.gov.ph)

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/08/01/kadiwa-stores-to-sell-cheaper-well-milled-rice/>

# Manila lifts import ban on Japanese poultry products

Ada Pelonia  
August 1, 2024

The Department of Agriculture (DA) has lifted the temporary ban it slapped on poultry products from Japan.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr. issued Memorandum Order (MO) 31, which lifted the suspension of imports of domestic and wild birds along with their products including poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs and semen from the East Asian nation.

The MO rescinded the temporary import ban imposed in mid-January of this year due to a confirmed outbreak of High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (HPAI) or bird flu in Kashima City, Saga Prefecture.

According to MO 31, Japan had reported to the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) that earlier cases of the HPAI had been resolved and that no additional cases had been reported since June 2.

The DA noted that Japan first reported cases of the H5N1 subtype of the bird flu virus on November 8, 2023. It added that H5N1 could spread rapidly among the bird population, including poultry that is a multibillion-peso industry in the Philippines.

“Based on the evaluation of the DA, the risk of contamination from importing live poultry, poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs and semen is negligible,” MO 31 read.

Meanwhile, various government agencies, the academe, and the private sector are currently crafting a program that aims to prevent outbreaks of salmonella linked to poultry.

The DA earlier issued Special Order (SO) 1023 which mandated the creation of a technical working group (TWG) that will come up with a national poultry salmonella prevention and control program.

The department took its cue from Republic Act (RA) 10611 or the “Food Safety Act of 2013” and RA 8485 or the “Animal Welfare Act of 1998” as amended by RA 10631.

Laurel signed SO 1023 which indicated that the TWG will be composed of DA agencies, professional organizations, state university and colleges (SUCs), poultry stakeholders, local government units (LGUs), and development partners.

“The TWG shall discuss relevant issues and concerns on the SPCP [salmonella prevention and control program] and Salmonella in the poultry sector as it relates to food safety and animal health and recommend measures to address this,” SO 1023 read.

Among the tasks of the TWG are drafting and designing a poultry salmonella control program, reviewing the current issuances concerning salmonella, and conducting lectures and seminars on salmonella.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/08/01/manila-lifts-import-ban-on-japanese-poultry-products/>

# Rise in bird flu cases in Asia Pacific alarms experts

BusinessMirror  
July 31, 2024

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is calling for urgent regional efforts to combat a rise in avian influenza cases across the Asia-Pacific region.

The appeal follows a consultation of regional experts in Bangkok, supported by the United States Agency for International Development and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

FAO said recent developments are “alarming.” After a prolonged period of minimal human infection, 13 new human cases have been reported in Cambodia, with additional cases in China and Vietnam since late 2023.

The situation is further complicated by the emergence of a new variant of avian influenza, presenting new challenges for scientists, public health authorities, clinicians and communities alike.

Globally, the highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N1 virus has spread more widely geographically than ever before, reaching as far as South America and Antarctica. It has also begun infecting new wild and domestic animals, including scavenger species, marine mammals, carnivorous domestic pets, mammals farmed for fur and recently, farmed ruminants such as dairy cattle.

While the Greater Mekong Subregion, Indonesia and the Philippines are facing heightened scrutiny due to their diverse ecological landscapes and limited biosecurity measures, other regions also remain at risk. Notably, Thailand and Myanmar have not reported outbreaks in years. India, Nepal and Bangladesh are currently battling avian influenza outbreaks.

“The recent surge in avian influenza outbreaks is deeply concerning,” stated Kachen Wongsathapornchai, Regional Manager of FAO Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases.

“Since late 2023, we have observed a rise in human cases and the virus spreading to new animal species. The emergence of novel A/H5N1 strains, which are more easily transmissible, increases the pandemic threat. Immediate, coordinated preventive measures are essential.”

FAO said there is a need for a unified response, saying member nations must work together to implement comprehensive surveillance systems, including full genome sequencing, to track the novel virus’s spread and evolution.

“Building capacity for rapid diagnostics and bioinformatics is crucial for analyzing virus data. Enhanced cross-sectoral data sharing is vital for a holistic approach to disease management.”

Governments, international organizations and the private sector must collaborate and share information transparently and in a timely manner to devise effective containment strategies. Strengthening biosafety and biosecurity measures in the poultry industry is imperative, including vaccination strategies and promoting good farming practices.

Creating awareness in health providers and the public is essential to reducing the risk of transmission from sick or dead poultry to humans and ensuring that people with symptoms receive timely treatment.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/07/31/rise-in-bird-flu-cases-in-asia-pacific-alarms-experts/>



# Bohol takes farm tourism to the next level

Edwin P. Sallan  
July 31, 2024



Bohol Bee Farm in Dauis. Photo courtesy of Bohol Tourism Office.

Get your hands dirty as you plant and harvest produce, and get to eat them, too. Simply take delight in Bohol's latest farm-to-table adventure.

With its pristine beaches, popular resorts, natural wonders (those adorable tarsiers come to mind), and sought-after tourist spots, Bohol has long been considered a viable alternative to Boracay, especially during the summer months when the latter often becomes too crowded for comfort.

Early this year, however, the 10<sup>th</sup> largest island in the Philippines made headlines due to the discovery of a resort (now closed) nestled inside the foot of the famous

Chocolate Hills. Largely overshadowed by this controversy is the strides Bohol has made and continues to make in the growing trend of farm tourism.

Just last February, the Provincial Government of Bohol hosted the resumption of the Philippine Farm Tourism Conference set at The Bellevue Resort in Bohol's Panglao Island. Now on its 7th edition, the international event was organized by the International School of Sustainable Tourism (ISST) and supported by the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) based in Los Banos, Laguna.

Former Tourism secretary and current ISST president Mina Gabor noted that this year's edition of the conference with the theme, "Farm Tourism: Consciousness for Healthy Living and New Experiences" opted to focus on sustainable growth through the cultivation of fruit and vegetable farms, aquaculture and artisanal fisheries, and green investments in farm tourism.

Among the events that took place during the confab included a DTI -led exhibit of agricultural produce and by-products under its One Town One Product program, and a farm tour of notable farm tourism sites like Loboc Cacao Farm, Kinaiyahan Forest Park in Bilar, Asin Tibuok makers in Alburquerque, Lasang Cacao Farm in Maribojoc, Green Thumb Farm in Corella, South Farm in Panglao, Bohol Bee Farm in Dauis, Manay's Farm in San Miguel, Ubay Dairy Farm, and Jagna Recycling Facility and Eco Farm.



From left: Kinaiyahan Forest Park in Bilar, Asin Tibuok makers of Alburquerque, and Green Thumb Farm in Corella. Photos courtesy of Bohol Tourism Office.

This is in addition to visiting the province's iconic attractions of Tarsier Sanctuary in Corella and yes, the Chocolate Hills Park in Carmen.

Just what exactly is farm tourism? It's pretty much a unique travel experience that allows visitors, especially tourists to not only bond with nature but also to learn about local agriculture.

For tourists, farm tourism means contributing to a more responsible tourism industry by immersing themselves in Bohol's sustainable practices. A good number of farms in the province focus on organic farming and practice eco-friendly methods and responsible waste management.

It also means going beyond the usual sightseeing and a chance to participate in farm activities like planting crops, harvesting fruits and vegetables, or even learning traditional food production methods. While visitors will literally get their hands dirty, they will also gain a deeper appreciation on how most of their favorite food found their way to their respective tables.

As farms are often family-run businesses that thrive in local tradition, learning about the Boholanos' way of life will also lead to a more profound understanding of Bohol's culture.



Bilar Vegetable Farm. Photo courtesy of Bohol Tourism Office.

### **Diverse farm tourism experiences**

The best thing about Bohol's farm tourism industry is its diversity. Those who wish to learn about organic farming practices, participate in planting and harvesting activities, and enjoy meals prepared with fresh, organic ingredients should consider visiting the Green Thumb Farm in Corella or the Maribojoc Organic Demo Farm.

Although the most popular tourist spot in Bohol, the Chocolate Hills, has very little to do with real chocolates, it's not really surprising that Bohol is also known for its cacao farms. Dropping by the Loboc Cacao Farm or the Lasang Farm and Camp will let visitors discover the bean-to-bar process, participate in chocolate workshops, and of course, indulge in those delicious chocolate treats.

For a literal taste of honey, there's also the Bohol Bee Farm where visitors can learn about honey production, the intricate beehive ecosystem, and various honey products that anyone can sample.

Livestock farms like the Ubay Dairy Farm or Manay's Farm in San Miguel await those who yearn for "the simple life" and a more traditional farming experience that includes interaction with farm animals.

Finally, eco-farms like the Bung-aw Eco Farm in Clarin, known for responsible waste management and commitment to ecological balance, underscore sustainable practices in farming.

The 7th Philippine Farm Tourism Conference was also an opportunity to recognize the leading advocates and champions of Asia's growing farm tourism industry through the prestigious Lakbay Bukid Awards.

With a US\$ 1,000 cash prize from the family of the late tourism stalwart Bobby Joseph, the award was first given in 2016 to individuals, institutions and groups who have contributed significantly to the growth of the farm tourism industry in the continent.



4th Lakbay Bukid Awardees. Photo courtesy of International School of Sustainable Tourism (ISST).

This year's awardees are Francis Joseph Perdigon of Perdigon Farms in Butuan City, I Wayan Alit Artha Wiguna of Cau Chocolates in Bali, Indonesia; Tan Inong Asin Tibuok Manufacturing of Alburquerque, Bohol; Borneo Eco Tours of Sabah, Malaysia, and Malagos Agri-Ventures Corp. of Davao City.

Image credits: [Bohol Tourism Office](#), [ISST](#)

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/07/31/bohol-takes-farm-tourism-to-the-next-level/>

## Tolentino: Mag-ingat sa pagbili, pagkonsumo ng isda, shellfish sa mga apektado ng oil spill

August 1, 2024 | 12:00am



Men unload newly caught milkfish from fishing boats for delivery at the Magsaysay Fish Market in Dagupan City on July 26, 2024.

STAR/ Cesar Ramirez

**MANILA, Philippines** — Hinimok ni Senate Majority Leader Francis 'Tol' Tolentino ang mga mamimili na mag-ingat sa pagbili at pagkonsumo ng mga isda at shellfish na galing sa mga coastal areas na apektado ng oil spill mula sa tumaob na motor tanker Terranova sa karagatan ng Limay, Bataan noong Hulyo 25.

Inilabas ni Tolentino ang paalala sa kanyang pagbisita sa Barangay 31 sa Caloocan City, at Barangay 123 sa Tondo, Maynila kung saan namahagi siya ng tulong kasunod ng pananalasa ng Bagyong Carina.

“As consumers, we should take extra precautions when buying or consuming fish or shellfish that may have come from coastal areas affected by the oil spill,” sabi ni Tolentino.

“We need to clean these products thoroughly, or maybe avoid these at all for health and safety considerations,” dagdag ng senador.

Sa kanyang radio program na ‘Usapang Tol’, nagbigay ng update ang tagapagsalita ng Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) na si Rear Admiral Armand Balilo sa pagsisikap ng PCG at ng shipping company na pigilan ang oil spill at pagsipsip sa natitirang langis sa loob ng tanker.

Kung maaalala, si Tolentino ang nakipag-coordinate para sa technical assistance mula sa Japanese government para tumulong sa pagpigil sa MT Princess Empress oil spill sa Oriental Mindoro noong nakaraang taon.

<https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/bansa/2024/08/01/2374503/tolentino-mag-ingat-sa-pagbili-pagkonsumo-ng-isd-shellfish-sa-mga-apektado-ng-oil-spill>

# ‘Rice-for-All’, aarangkada na!

[Doris Franche-Borja](#)

August

1,

2024

12:00am



A vendor arranges his rice products for sale at a public market along M. Dela Fuente Street in Sampaloc, Manila on July 14, 2024.

STAR/ Edd Gumban

**MANILA, Philippines** — Aarangkada na ngayong araw ng Huwebes ang “Rice-for-All” program ng Department of Agriculture (DA).

Layon ng programa na magbenta ng abot-kayang bigas sa lahat ng Pilipino na bukod pa sa P29 program.

Ayon kay DA Spokesperson Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa, well-milled ang bigas na ibebenta sa “Rice-for-All” na magkakahalaga ng P45, mas mura kumpara sa P51-P55 na bentahan ngayon ng imported na bigas.

Sisimulan ito sa apat na Kadiwa Sites kabilang ang FTI sa Taguig City, Llano Road sa Caloocan, Potrero sa Malabon at tanggapan ng Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) sa lungsod ng Maynila.



Hanggang sa 25 kilos naman ang maaaring bilhin ng bawat mamimili kada araw sa 'Rice-for-All'.

Ang bentahan ay gagawin kada Huwebes, Biyernes at Sabado.

Sinabi ni De Mesa na bukod sa well milled rice, may ibebenta ring premium rice na P52 kada kilo sa FTI Kadiwa Site.

Katuwang ng DA sa bentahan ng murang bigas ang commercial stakeholders/partner traders na direktang magbebenta sa mga mamimili.

Bukod naman sa Rice for All, patuloy na palalawakin ng DA ang P29 program na ngayon ay available na sa 17 kadiwa sites sa Metro Manila, Bulacan at Calabarzon.

<https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/bansa/2024/08/01/2374501/rice-all-aarangkada-na>