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MANILA BULLETIN:

Rice farmers urged to watch for pests this wet season

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

Aug 1, 2024 02:42 PM



The Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) has issued a crucial advisory for rice farmers to intensify pest monitoring efforts as the wet season heightens the risk of pest outbreaks.

This warning stems from the findings of the Pest Risk Identification and Management (PRIME) Project, a significant initiative under the Department of Agriculture aimed at protecting crops and preventing substantial yield losses.

Leonardo V. Marquez, a crop protection expert at PhilRice, underscored the importance of vigilant pest surveillance, especially during the rainy season when conditions are ideal for pest proliferation.

“Unmanaged infestations can lead to yield losses of 15% or more. Early detection and management are needed,” Marquez stated.

The PRIME Project, based on a comprehensive five-year survey across 53 provinces, has pinpointed the top five pests threatening rice crops: brown spot, deadheart, leaf blast, sheath blight, and whitehead. This analysis, which monitored 19 pests, revealed that pest incidents are more frequent and severe during the wet season.

Brown Spot Prevalence in Western Visayas

Brown spot, a fungal disease affecting rice at all growth stages, was particularly rampant in Western Visayas last December, with incidences exceeding 5% in Antique, Aklan, Capiz, Iloilo, and Negros Occidental.

This disease can cause stunting, yellowing, leaf drying, short panicles, and empty grains. Marquez advised using high-quality seeds, applying potassium-rich fertilizers, and fungicides to mitigate its impact.

Deadheart Infestations in Iloilo

Deadheart, associated with stem borer infestations, showed high incidence rates in Iloilo.

“Deadheart, where the central part of the panicle turns white and dies, can cause substantial yield loss if 30% of the crop is affected during flowering,” Marquez noted.

He stressed the importance of monitoring stem borer moths, especially during the wet season, to determine when to take action.

Leaf Blast Concerns During Rainy Season

Leaf blast, another major concern, becomes more damaging during the rainy season.

Effective management practices include avoiding excessive nitrate nitrogen, maintaining proper water depth, and burning affected rice straw to eliminate spores.

Sheath Blight Threat in Irrigated Fields

Sheath blight, characterized by grayish-brown lesions, poses a significant threat, particularly in irrigated fields with heavy rainfall and excessive nitrogen fertilization.

The disease can reduce yields by up to 25% if left untreated and has been a concern in Antique, Capiz, Iloilo, and Negros Occidental.

Whitehead Problems from Stem Borer Attacks

Whiteheads, resulting from stem borer attacks, disrupt nutrient flow and lead to panicle death. Marquez recommended avoiding pesticide use for 30-40 days after planting, promoting beneficial insects, and monitoring butterfly populations.

“Pesticides should only be used if caterpillar numbers exceed those of wasps. For future plantings, use resilient varieties, stagger planting, and manage fertilization properly,” he advised.

The PRIME Project, under the Rice Program of the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Agricultural Research, focuses on pest management by assessing outbreak risk factors, developing mitigation strategies, and enhancing partners’ capabilities in remote sensing and pest risk mapping.

Rice farmers are encouraged to heed these recommendations to safeguard their crops and ensure a bountiful harvest despite the challenges posed by the wet season.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/8/1/ricer-farmers-urged-to-watch-for-pests-this-wet-season>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Samar town implements pork holiday to thwart ASF

BY [MARIE TONETTE MARTICIO](#)

Aug 1, 2024 09:27 PM

TACLOBAN CITY – The municipality of Calbiga in Samar province implemented a pork holiday from Thursday, August 1, to Friday, August 16, to prevent the spread of African Swine Fever and protect the hog industry.



Mayor Red Nacario issued an executive order calling for a pork holiday after the Municipal Agriculture Office (MAO) discovered that some meat vendors at the public market were selling butchered pork meat suspected to be infected with ASF.

In a pork holiday, commercial slaughtering of pigs and selling of pork meat, either raw, cooked, or processed, are not be allowed for 15 days.

Movement of live, raw, and processed pork meat and its byproducts within the town was also prohibited.

The local government unit encouraged a massive disinfection of all piggery wards.

The town's slaughterhouse was closed for disinfection after a suspected ASF-infected pig died in the facility.

Pork bought from ASF-free areas is allowed only for personal and family consumption.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/8/1/samar-town-implements-pork-holiday-to-thwart-asf>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Breeding Dreams

From Los Baños to Hawaii, Tessie Amore continues to dream for the Philippine horticulture industry

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

Aug 1, 2024 12:09 PM



Growing up near the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), Teresita “Tessie” Amore was surrounded by nature and beauty from a young age. With a mother who loved gardening, Tessie often found herself at the Los Baños Flower and Garden Shows and in the company of the Los Baños Orchid Society, where vibrant blooms enchanted her.

It wasn’t long before she developed her own passion for plants, a journey that truly began with her first visit to the UPLB Orchid Laboratory. Amidst the bottles of seedlings nurtured by Dr. Paulina Pages, whom she fondly called “Tita Bing,” Tessie found her calling.

"I was hooked," Tessie recalls. "The visit made an impression on me, especially Dr. Pages’ work on enhancing orchid mediums."

This fascination, combined with a natural interest in biology and genetics, led Tessie to major in horticulture at UPLB, where she became the university’s first magna cum laude in the field. Although she taught at UPLB for two years, her desire to expand her knowledge in orchid hybridization and tissue culture took her to the University of Hawaii. There, under the guidance of Dr. Haruyuki Kamemoto, a renowned figure in orchid breeding, Tessie earned her master’s degree and eventually became Dr. Kamemoto’s assistant.

Today, Tessie heads the dendrobium and anthurium breeding programs at the University of Hawaii.

Recently, she returned to the Philippines for Pagsibol 2024: The 1st Philippine Horticulture and Urban Agriculture Summit. During our conversation at the summit, Tessie shared insights on the Philippine horticulture industry and her ongoing dreams for its future.



Tessie says there are still so much work to be done for the Philippines orchids industry.

When asked about the progress of the Philippine orchid industry since 2012, Tessie noted that while there have been positive developments, much work remains.

"There is still more to be done, more room for improvement," she remarked. She observed the establishment of propagation laboratories, which she sees as a crucial step. However, she emphasized the need for these laboratories to produce plant materials for growers—whether backyard, small-scale, or commercial—to meet market demand consistently.

The conversation turned to the specific areas of progress and challenges in the industry. Tessie highlighted the importance of nursery growers and propagators producing new varieties in quantities and qualities needed by the landscape industry.

"The pipeline from research and development of new varieties, to propagating these varieties, establishing standards, and generating quantities to fulfill industry needs, will be critical for the growth of the ornamental sector," she explained.

Tessie believes that the Philippines has great potential in ornamentals due to its rich biodiversity. She identified two key priorities for harnessing this potential: first, assessing and characterizing plant material with commercial promise and understanding its cultivation needs; and second, fostering dialogue between regulatory agencies, producers, and consumers.

She stressed the importance of knowing the best propagation practices to conserve plant material and prevent over-collecting from natural habitats. Tessie welcomed the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' reconsideration of policies regarding propagating endemic or native plants as a positive step forward.

One of the lessons Tessie emphasized from her experience in Hawaii is the value of collaboration. "In Hawaii, we started this collaboration with flower designers to ensure that the flowers we breed will have market potential," she said.



Tessie with flower designers in Hawaii. Inset shows "Rudolf, the Red Nosed Anthurium" which took 15 years to breed yet failed to captivate the market.

This collaboration helps avoid situations where extensive time and resources are invested in developing new plant varieties that ultimately do not find a market. Tessie shared an anecdote about an anthurium variety named "Rudolf" that took 15 years to develop but was deemed unmarketable.

She stressed the need for a comprehensive approach to address all challenges and issues affecting the industry, including water and land use, importation, risk management, marketing, and exporting. "We need constant dialogue between regulating agencies, producers or growers, and consumers," Tessie urged, underscoring the importance of a unified vision and shared goals among all stakeholders.

Reflecting on her time as a student at UPLB, Tessie described herself as a diligent student who also enjoyed her college life. She recalled joining the Horticulture Society as a junior and working under the demanding standards of Dr. Helen Valmayor, which often meant working on her thesis even on weekends.

Tessie's advice to aspiring plant breeders is to maximize learning opportunities both inside and outside the classroom. "The UPLB undergrad education provided me with a solid background

in biology, genetics, plant physiology, and horticulture," she said. However, she also emphasized the importance of informal education, learning from growers and experiences beyond the university.



Tessie with former classmates, students, and colleagues at the University of the Philippines Los Baños where she recently had a visiting lecture.

Despite her successful career in Hawaii, Tessie remains connected to her roots and continues to dream for the Philippines. "In 2012, Dr. Valmayor chided me for not returning, 'Ikaw kasi, hindi ka bumalik.' Although I did not return to teach, I have returned to give occasional presentations about my work," she shared. Tessie's dream is for the Philippines to achieve international recognition with products developed in the country.

She envisions a world-class Philippine ornamental industry but recognizes that this requires the collective effort of public and private sectors. "All sectors need to work together, share a common vision, and forge a path together for the long haul," Tessie said. She acknowledges that building such an industry will take time and commitment from all participants, but she remains hopeful and dedicated to contributing to this dream.

Tessie Amore's journey from a young girl fascinated by orchids to a leading figure in horticulture is a testament to the power of passion and perseverance. Her story inspires and reminds us that with vision, collaboration, and dedication, dreams for a better future in Philippine horticulture can become a reality.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/8/1/breeding-dreams>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

El Niño cuts palay output by 5% in H1

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

August 2, 2024 | 12:00am



Domestic palay or unhusked rice output in the January to June period declined by 5.5 percent to 8.53 million metric tons from 9.026 million MT, latest Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) data showed.

STAR / File

Lowest in 4 years

MANILA, Philippines — Palay production in the first half contracted by more than five percent to a four-year low due to lower farm yield as some farmers delayed planting amid threats brought about by the El Niño phenomenon.

Domestic palay or unhusked rice output in the January to June period declined by 5.5 percent to 8.53 million metric tons from 9.026 million MT, latest Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) data showed.

The latest output is the lowest first-half production recorded by the country since 2020 when production fell to 8.386 million MT, based on PSA data.

PSA data indicated that both production of irrigated and rainfed palay during the six-month period contracted on an annual basis.

Irrigated palay output reached 6.916 million MT, down by 5.44 percent from 7.314 million MT recorded volume in the first half last year. Rainfed palay production, meanwhile, shrank by 5.7 percent year-on-year to 1.613 million MT from 1.711 million MT.

The country saw larger reductions in palay output on an annual basis during the second quarter compared to the first quarter.

Palay output in the second quarter contracted by 9.5 percent to 3.845 million MT from 4.247 million MT. Meanwhile, first quarter production fell by two percent year-on-year to 4.685 million MT.

Government officials and industry stakeholders attributed the reduction in palay output to the ill effects of hotter and dryer weather conditions caused by the El Niño phenomenon in the first half.

For one, the erratic weather conditions forced farmers to delay their planting to avoid losses. Second, palay planted by farmers who survived El Niño suffered lower crop yield.

“(The contraction was) expected because of the delayed planting due to prolonged dry spell,” Agriculture Undersecretary Christopher Morales told The STAR.

Morales said the Department of Agriculture (DA) is now intensifying its efforts to provide the necessary planting initiatives to boost palay production in the second half.

Some of the interventions being made by the DA include the distribution of additional rice seeds as well as the contract farming of the National Irrigation Administration covering 40,000 hectares.

Raul Montemayor of the Federation of Free Farmers said it was not surprising that palay output in the first half contracted since the ill effects of El Niño spilled over to the second quarter.

Montemayor pointed out that the decline in palay production of nearly 500,000 MT during the reference period is equivalent to at least seven days of nationwide rice supply.

The reduction in output would have to be compensated by imports to ensure that the country has sufficient stock of the staple, Montemayor told The STAR.

The country’s rice imports as of July 25 have reached 2.441 million MT, a fifth higher than the 2.02 million MT recorded volume in the same period of last year, based on Bureau of Plant Industry data.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/08/02/2374719/el-nio-cuts-palay-output-5-h1>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

MVP at forefront of beefing up dairy industry

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

August 2, 2024 | 12:00am



Manuel V. Pangilinan.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — Business tycoon Manuel V. Pangilinan plans to establish national dairy champions nationwide as he beefs up his investments in the dairy industry following his acquisition of Universal Harvester Dairy Farms Inc. (UHDFI), the operator of Bukidnon Milk Co.

Metro Pacific Agro Ventures (MPAV), a wholly owned subsidiary of conglomerate Metro Pacific Investments Corp. (MPIC), has entered into agreements to acquire 100 percent of UHDFI as part of its goal of providing fresh and high-quality milk products to the public.

The acquisition valued at more than P700 million complements the current resources of The Laguna Creamery Inc., where MPAV is a majority shareholder, in Pangilinan's plan of establishing a national dairy champion with farms across the country, a nationwide reach and a comprehensive range of products.

MPAV emphasized that the recent buyout is a testament to the company's continued support for the dairy industry, which it noted is an "underserved" segment of the economy.

The country imports virtually 99 percent of its dairy requirement as local milk production remains minuscule. The government aims to increase local milk production to five percent of domestic demand by 2028.

“Establishing this strategic beachhead in Mindanao complements our dairy farms in Luzon, bringing us closer to our mission of achieving nationwide food security,” said Pangilinan, chairman and president of MPIC and chairman of MPAV.

“Our operations in Laguna have not only improved the accessibility of fresh dairy, but also fostered an ecosystem of milk farmers who supply to us, creating a virtuous cycle of increased domestic milk production,” he added.

UHDFI, located in Maramag, Bukidnon, produces fresh milk, flavored milk, yogurt and cheese products under the Bukidnon Milk brand, with presence in key cities across the Visayas and Mindanao.

MPAV said UHDFI is the largest state-of-the-art dairy production facility in the country, and a showcase for community, private sector and government partnership.

UHDFI is a major supplier of products for the National Dairy Authority (NDA)’s Milk Feeding Program, primarily focused on ensuring schoolchildren have regular access to high-quality fresh milk, according to the MPAV.

The acquisition of UHDFI is a “significant” step toward MPAV’s goal of becoming a “dairy masterbrand” that serves Filipinos with a full range of dairy products from ice cream, milk, yogurt, cheese and butter, among others, which are all fresh and locally produced, said MPAV president and CEO Juan Victor Hernandez.

MPAV said the completion of the acquisition is subject to various conditions, which include regulatory consents and other customary closing conditions.

Nonetheless, the How family, who founded UHDFI in 2015, will work with MPAV in ensuring a smooth transition of operations.

“We have narrowed the technology gap with our Asian and Western counterparts, pushing the boundaries of dairy innovation in the Philippines. UHDFI is a testament to Filipino ingenuity, perseverance, and the power of agriculture to transform lives,” said Milagros Ong-How, founder of UHDFI.

“We believe that MPAV is the right partner to take our vision to the next level. This partnership will not only expand our reach, but also enhance the quality and range of dairy products available to Filipino consumers. We look forward to contributing to the continued growth and success of the dairy industry in the Philippines,” Ong-How added.

MPAV is now also eyeing to invest in corn plantations and silage production to further enhance its dairy portfolio.

MPAV targets to expand the revenue of its dairy portfolio to P500 million by 2025 and P1 billion by 2027, confident that its recent business moves would speed up its growth.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/08/02/2374717/mvp-forefront-beefing-dairy-industry>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Farm schools, not Tesda, should get more funding – agri group leader

By: [Krixia Subingsubing](#) - Reporter / [@KrixiasINQ](#)

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 05:44 AM August 02, 2024



Raul Montemayor —NFA PHOTO

Farm schools supported by the Department of Agriculture (DA) should get more funds drawn from rice import tariffs, not the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda).

The call was made on Thursday by the leader of one of the farmer organizations taking part in the ongoing congressional review of the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF), which was established under the 2019 rice tariffication law (RTL) to

allocate P10 billion annually for programs designed to raise the productivity of local agriculture.

During a meeting called by the Congressional Oversight Committee on Agricultural and Fisheries Modernization (COCAFAM), Raul Montemayor, national manager of the Federation of Free Farmers Inc., said it might be more prudent to focus less on Tesda, which currently gets the bulk of the RCEF allotments for training.

Proposed changes

“My point is, why give that money to Tesda whose mandate is not agricultural training? Why not give it to ATI (Agricultural Training Institute) or PhilRice (Philippine Rice Research Institute) so they can strengthen their capacity?” Montemayor said, his question addressed to the committee chair, Sen. Cynthia Villar.

Under the RTL, the RCEF gets an annual appropriation of P10 billion in six years to fund programs related to farm mechanization (P5 billion), seed development (P3 billion), rice credit assistance (P1 billion), and extension and training (P1 billion).

At present, 70 percent of the RCEF extension and training funds go to Tesda while the Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (PhilMech), PhilRice and ATI get only 10 percent each.

“I think that ATI, for one, can easily do what Tesda is doing. So why not strengthen ATI instead since that is the one directly under the DA? Why not let the ATI oversee all of the farm schools?” Montemayor asked.

‘Happy with the setup’

“I think the money should be spent in strengthening the capabilities of the DA agencies in training and extension,” he stressed.

In response, Villar said there was still value in making Tesda handle the grant of scholarship vouchers since it encourages more farmers to attend farm schools in their hometowns.

According to the senator, there are currently more than 2,800 farm schools across the country, and that there are more than two farm schools in every town.

“The idea for Tesda to pay for the tuition of our farmers is because they might (otherwise) not be persuaded to study,” Villar said. “Yes, Tesda is not teaching farming—it’s the farm schools—but if you talk to them they’re happy with the setup because farmers are able to go there even if they just walk to school.”

After Thursday’s hearing, Villar said, the oversight committee will prepare a report on its review of the RCEF and whether it would be extended for another six years.

While the COCAFAM meeting did not lead to any clear-cut commitment, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu-Laurel told the panel that extending the fund “was very important as we need a few more years to ensure that we give the right support” to farmers.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1968611/farm-schools-not-tesda-should-get-more-funding-agri-group-leader>

BUSINESS WORLD:

\$80 Dubai crude price set as trigger for farmer fuel subsidy

August 1, 2024 | 8:45 pm



CHRISTINE WALKER-UNSPLASH

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said a fuel subsidy for farmers that own or rent machinery will kick in when the benchmark Dubai crude price hits \$80 per barrel.

Memorandum Circular (MC) No. 27 defined the \$80 trigger point for the subsidy, as certified by the Department of Energy.

“Fuel expenses is one of the important operating cost in farming,” the DA said, adding that the subsidy will be handed out once, regardless of the number of machines operated on farms.

The DA has said registered farmers will receive P3,000 in fuel assistance. It has allocated over P510 million to aid about 160,000 registered beneficiaries.

“The fuel assistance shall be used for all types of machinery utilized in crops, livestock, and poultry production,” the DA said.

MC 27 stipulated that eligible farmers must be clustered or work in consolidated farms.

The DA said that the funds will be distributed via cards issued by the Development Bank of the Philippines and its financial technology partners. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/08/01/611766/80-dubai-crude-price-set-as-trigger-for-farmer-fuel-subsidy/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Congress pitched on using RCEF for solar irrigation, pest control

August 1, 2024 | 8:46 pm



PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said on Thursday that it is proposing to tap the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) for use in pest management and solar irrigation programs.

“We would like to also add new components to the RCEF like pest and disease management... and to use if possible RCEF funds for solar irrigation, small water impounding, (as well as) post-harvest machinery and facilities,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. told a Congressional oversight committee on agricultural and fisheries modernization.

The Rice Tariffication Law, (Republic Act No. 11203), funds RCEF from rice import tariffs. It liberalized rice imports but made importers pay a 35% tariff on Southeast Asian grain.

Last month, the government slashed rice tariffs to 15% until 2028 via Executive Order No. 62.

“We need a few more years to ensure that we give the right support through mechanization, to increase production,” he added.

Mr. Laurel said the DA is also hoping to establish a program management office for rice industry development.

He said the DA is planning to harmonize its two rice programs — RCEF and the National Rice Program.

Amendments proposed in the House of Representatives seek to raise RCEF's annual allocation from tariffs to P15 billion a year from P10 billion currently. They also seek to tweak the way RCEF is spent, with 53% going to mechanization, 28% to rice seed, and the remainder to farm credit and extension services.

Federation of Free Farmers National Manager Raul Q. Montemayor said RCEF should also be more flexible to address location-specific requirements and the preferences of rice farmers.

He added that RCEF should also provide additional funds for common service facilities that farmers can access.

“We are seeing a lot of idle equipment in the field coming from RCEF, because the equipment given to farmers and cooperatives is not being fully utilized,” Mr. Montemayor said. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/08/01/611768/congress-pitched-on-using-rcef-for-solar-irrigation-pest-control/>

REMATE:

ASF vax certificate inilabas na; agri sector nagpasalamat kay PBBM

August 1, 2024 15:30



MANILA, Philippines- Naglabas na ng Certificate of Registration ang Food and Drug Administration (FDA) para sa bakuna sa African Swine Fever (ASF).

Sa isang panayam, nagpahayag ng kagalakan ang sektor ng agrikultura sa anunsyo ng FDA at sinabing magandang balita ito dahil pasado na sa pagsusuri ang bakuna.

Bilang chairman ng Pork Producers Federation of the Philippines, Inc. at presidente ng Agricultural Sector Alliance, sinabi ni Rep. Nicanor Briones na bagama't hindi nagdudulot ng banta sa kalusugan ng tao ang ASF ay nakapipinsala naman ang epekto nito sa mga baboy na may isang impeksyon, na kayang lipulin ang mga ito.

Sinabi ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. na magsisimula na sila sa pagpapakalat sa nasabing bakuna sa mga apektadong lugar. Ayon pa kay Laurel, 150,000 bakuna ang agad nilang dadalhin sa mga Red Areas ng ASF partikular sa mga lalawigan ng Batangas at Mindoro na sisimulan sa susunod na buwan.

“Malaking tulong po ito at matagal na pong hinihintay ng mga sector ng pagbababuyan at ang pagkakaalam ko po, libre ito at iyon ang isang malaking pag-asa na dumating sa ating mga magbababoy na matagal nang pinapahiran na ASF at alam ko na aabot sa 600,000 baboy ang pwedeng bakunahan ng libre na nagkakahalaga ng P350 million ang budget.

“Ibig sabihin naglalaro ito between P550 to P600 ang halaga kada dose,” pahayag ni Cong. Briones. Bagama’t limitado parin aniya sa ngayon ang supply, libre namang ibibigay ng DA ang bakuna laban sa nasabing sakit.

Bahagi ng kabuuang 600,000 bakuna na magmumula sa Vietnam ang 150,000 bakuna na unang ipamimigay ng Agriculture Department.

Samantala, tiniyak naman ng Department of Agriculture (DA) na naglaan ito ng P350 milyon para sa pagbili ng mga bakuna.

Sasailalim sa controlled rolled-out na pangangasiwa ng Bureau of Animal Industry ang mga bakuna, kabilang ang mga mula sa Vietnam.

Nagpapasalamat ang nasabing sektor kay Pangulong Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos, Jr., at Sec. Kiko Laurel dahil napagkalooban sila ng libreng bakuna lalo na ang backyard raisers na lubhang naapektuhan ng nasabing outbreak.

Muli, humilihiling ang sektor ng magbababoy na isunod naman ng pamahalaan ang bakuna laban sa bird flu.

“Inumpisahan nila na magbigay ng libreng bakuna sana lahatin nila iyong backyard at commercial na buong populasyon ng baboy sa bansa. Magiging malaking tulong ito para sa mga ating hog raisers para magkaron sila ulit ng lakas ng loob na mag-alaga at magparami.

Lalong malaking tulong ito sa ating mga consumers, mamili dahil pwedeng bumaba ang presyo ng baboy kapag dumami ang supply ng ating karneng baboy sa ating bansa. Bababa ang presyo makikinabang ang mamimili o pamilyang Pilipino sa ating bansa, ” pagwawakas ni AGAP Rep. Briones. **Jocelyn Tabangcura-Domenden**

<https://remate.ph/asf-vax-certificate-inilabas-na-agri-sector-nagpasalamat-kay-pbbm/>

REMATE:

9 coastal areas positibo sa red tide

August 1, 2024 13:00



MANILA, Philippines- Nagpositibo ang siyam na coastal areas sa bansa sa paralytic shellfish poison o toxic red tide na lampas sa regulatory limit, base sa Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) nitong Huwebes.

Sa August 1 bulletin ng BFAR, sinabi nitong natukoy ang red tide toxins sa mga shellfishna nakolekta at sinuri mula sa mga sumusunod na lugar:

- Daus at Tagbilaran City sa Bohol
- Dumanquillas Bay sa Zamboanga del Sur
- San Benito sa Surigao del Norte
- Daram Island, Zumarraga Island at Cambatutay Bay sa Samar
- Matarinao Bay sa Eastern Samar
- Cancabato Bay sa Leyte

“All types of shellfish and Acetes sp. or alamang gathered from the areas above are not safe for human consumption. Fish, squids, shrimps, and crabs are safe for human consumption provided they are fresh and washed thoroughly, and internal organs such as gills and intestines are removed before cooking,” anito.

Samantala, sinabi ng BFAR na walang natukoy na toxic red tide sa coastal towns ng Cavite, Las Piñas, Parañaque, Navotas, Bulacan, at Bataan (Mariveles, Limay, Orion, Pilar, Balanga, Hermosa, Orani, Abucay, at Samal) sa Manila Bay. **RNT/SA**

<https://remate.ph/9-coastal-areas-positibo-sa-red-tide/>

REMATE:

Walang shortage sa suplay ng gulay, isda, bigas sa pananalasa ni Carina – DA

August 1, 2024 08:27



MANILA – Nananatiling stable ang supply ng mga gulay, isda at iba pang mga agricultural commodities, kabilang ang bigas, kasunod ng pinalakas na habagat at Super Typhoon Carina, tiniyak ng Department of Agriculture (DA).

Ito ay matapos tumaas ang pinsala sa agrikultura sa P1.21 bilyon para sa 22,088 metric tons (MT) ng volume loss, na nakaapekto sa 46,625 na magsasaka at mangingisda, ayon sa DA-Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Operations Center bulletin no. 14.

Sa isang panayam, pinawi ni DA Assistant Secretary Arnel De Mesa ang pagkabahala sa posibleng pagtaas ng presyo ng mga gulay sa highland at lowland.

“We are happy na hindi masyadong naapektuhan iyong Calabarzon. Kasi Calabarzon, iyan iyong malapit sa Metro Manila na source ng gulay natin, lalo na pakbet (mixed vegetable flavored with bagoong),” sinabi niya.

Para sa mga high-value crops, iniulat ng DA-DRRM ang humigit-kumulang 2,044 MT volume loss na nagkakahalaga ng PHP88.81 milyon. Kabilang sa mga apektadong lugar ang bahagi ng Cordilleras at Mimaropa.

“Iyong bahagi ng Banahaw doon sa ating upland vegetables, hindi kami masyadong nag-aalala. May kaunting pagtaas siguro pero hindi masyado,” ani De Mesa.

Tiniyak din ni De Mesa ang “minimal” na pagsasaayos ng presyo sa mga produktong isda sa kabila ng mga epekto ng parehong pinahusay na habagat at banta ng oil spill sa ilang karagatan.

“Iyong presyo siguro mag-a-adjust nang very minimal pero we are not expecting ng malaking pagbabago sa mga presyo,” aniya pa.

Para sa bigas, pinanindigan ng DA na walang dahilan para sa pagtaas ng presyo ng tingi kung isasaalang-alang ang stable na supply mula sa parehong ani ng tag-araw at pag-import ng bigas.

Nitong Hulyo 20, iniulat ng Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) ang pagdating ng 56,000 MT ng bigas sa ilalim ng ibinabang taripa na 15 porsiyento.

Tiniyak naman ng DA ang agarang tulong sa mga apektadong magsasaka ng palay.

Sa ngayon, ang pinsalang natamo sa sektor ng bigas ay umakyat sa PHP635.17 milyon, o 10,639 MT ang volume. *RNT*

<https://remate.ph/walang-shortage-sa-suplay-ng-gulay-isda-bigas-sa-pananalasa-ni-carina-da/>

PEOPLE’S JOURNAL:

Agri innovation grants open to Filipinos, other Southeast Asians

Thursday, August 1, 2024 [SEARCA](#)



Calling all agricultural innovators and researchers in Southeast Asia! The Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) is accepting proposals for its Grants for Research towards Agricultural Innovative Solutions (GRAINS) until August 9, 2024.

SEARCA GRAINS offers substantial funding to support research projects addressing critical agricultural challenges. These include developing sustainable farming practices, building climate-resilient agriculture, advancing agricultural biotechnology, strengthening value chains, ensuring food security, and creating effective agricultural policies.

Dr. Glenn Gregorio, SEARCA Center Director, emphasizes that “Through GRAINS, we aim to empower researchers and innovators to develop solutions that will lead to a more sustainable and resilient agricultural sector in Southeast Asia.”

Innovators and researchers from academe, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector across Southeast Asia are encouraged to apply. Successful applicants will receive funding to conduct research for up to one year.

The SEARCA GRAINS grant covers various research expenses, including personnel costs, equipment, fieldwork, and knowledge dissemination activities.

Proposals must demonstrate a clear focus on innovative agricultural solutions with the potential to significantly impact the region. SEARCA prioritizes proposals that are aligned with its mission of Accelerating Transformation Through Agricultural Innovation (ATTAIN).

Dr. Gregorio affirms that “Innovation is at the heart of SEARCA’s mission. SEARCA is looking for projects that not only push the boundaries of agricultural research but also have the potential to create meaningful change for farmers and communities across Southeast Asia.”

All applications must be submitted electronically through the GRAINS Information System at: <https://grains.searcaapps.org/>

<https://journal.com.ph/agri-innovation-grants-open-to-filipinos-other-southeast-asians/>

No bird flu outbreak in Tarlac, DA confirms

By Jerry M. Hernandez

August 2, 2024

THE Department of Agriculture (DA), through the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI), refuted a report that there is a bird flu outbreak in Tarlac.

The BAI said that test samples have been taken from various chicken farms in the province and none was infected by the highly pathogenic avian influenza, dispelling fears of consumers and industry players of a bird flu outbreak.

"All samples from Tarlac tested negative for the bird flu virus," said DA assistant secretary for swine and poultry Dante Palabrica on Wednesday.

"Based on the results, news about the bird flu are untrue."

He said the public should trust the BAI which has modern and reliable facilities to detect viruses and diseases on animals.

The BAI said it is aware of recent reports circulating in the media regarding an alleged bird flu outbreak in Tarlac, but clarified that the report did not come from the DA or BAI.

"The BAI takes the health and safety of our poultry industry very seriously. We urge the public and the media to rely on verified information and official statements from BAI," he added.

DA Secretary Arnel de Mesa also assured the residents of Tarlac that there are no cases of avian influenza in the province.

Blood samples from three poultry farms were collected by the team of Tarlac Provincial Veterinarian Maria Lorna Baculanta and were submitted to the BAI, eventually getting results of no infection from the virus.

Baculanta noted that the unverified July 29 report resulted in panic and chaos among poultry farmers and consumers.

"There was chaos. The local chicken industry was affected by the news but the report has no basis. It's not true," Baculanta said.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/02/regions/no-bird-flu-outbreak-in-tarlac-da-confirms/1961380>

Philippine agriculture, quo vadis?

By Dr. Fermin D. Adriano, PhD

August 2, 2024

THERE is no doubt that the quality and the delivery of the annual State of the Nation Address (SONA) of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. last week was far superior than his predecessor.

In sharp contrast, former president Rodrigo Duterte's SONAs, in between stating his administration's accomplishments and future policy directions, were punctuated with streams of thoughts and ad libs occasionally laced with curses to shock his audience.

Whether that is the preferred delivery of the "masa" and whether it partly accounts for President Duterte's continuing popularity among them are something that sociologists and political scientists are better positioned to explain to us.

President Marcos' SONA tackled head on the foremost concern of the public which is inflation, particularly high food prices. Reputable survey firms like Pulse Asia and OCTA Research revealed that almost 70 percent of their respondents identify inflation as their foremost governance concern.

The President humbly recognized that while positive macroeconomic indicators are good for the health of the country's economy, their benefits do not automatically translate to ease the foremost concern of the general public, which is inflation.

A good part of his opening speech, delivered in Filipino so that the "masa" could understand it, was devoted to what his government was doing to address the continuing high food prices. Briefly, he noted the following facts and enumerated what his government is doing:

– While a record palay (unmilled rice) harvest was attained last year, the 13 million metric tons (MT) of locally produced rice was still unable to meet our total annual rice demand of 16 million MT. Rice imports have become an indispensable tool to meet demand, though he claimed that "importation is the last resort."

Tariffs have been lowered from 35 to 15 percent under Executive Order 62 that he recently issued.

– He vowed to improve local production and improve the entire value chain, partly as a way of taming soaring retail food prices.

– He stressed that the government was committed to combating price manipulation and agricultural smuggling.

– He declared that more Kadiwa stores offering lower food prices would be established in strategic parts of the country.

– He highlighted a number of recently launched agricultural infrastructure projects such as irrigation dams, solar-powered irrigation facilities and farm-to-market roads.

– He cited distribution of massive amounts of agricultural subsidies such as seeds, fertilizers, layers for poultry producers, fingerlings for aquaculture fisherfolk and the upgrading of fish ports and cold storage facilities.

– Soon, a vaccine to counter the ravages of African swine fever, which has devastated our local hog industry, will be introduced.

Most of these measures are currently in play but unfortunately, high food prices continue to bedevil the poor Filipino consumers. While it is unfair to demand that the SONA should provide details on how the administration intends to lower food inflation, these must be disclosed to the public for the policy directions laid down to be credible.

How will the administration significantly increase agricultural productivity to meet growing consumer demand and tame food inflation? What are the productivity targets per commodity given that our food requirements go beyond rice alone? When will those targets be attained? How much budgetary resources will be needed?

Putting those details in the SONA will make it so boring. However, we expect the Department of Agriculture (DA) to provide us those details if we are to hope for some positive outcomes from a SONA that accorded priority concern to agriculture and food production.

Ostensibly, the SONA gave significant attention to rising rice prices. This is not surprising because the grain is treated as a political commodity in the country. As such, most of the measures discussed were rice centric. From the need to reduce tariffs and the plethora of subsidies — mostly given to rice farmers — and more Kadiwa stores selling cheaper rice, all were intended to bring rice prices to an affordable level.

The problem is more rice is not equivalent to attaining agricultural development. A key feature of economies with developed agricultural sectors is the highly diversified nature of the products they produce and export. Take Thailand, Malaysia and Vietnam, which export more than seven agricultural products valued at no less than \$100 million annually. The Philippines has only two that generate foreign exchange revenues at that amount: coconut and bananas.

Also worth noting that rice-based crop diversification has been promoted in these countries with successful agricultural sectors. In between two planting seasons of rice, other crops that are of high value are cultivated like vegetables, legumes and even selected fruits. This is not the rule in the Philippines.

In fact, the average cropping intensity — despite the presence of irrigation facilities — in the country is just around 1.37 for both

national and communal irrigation systems, unlike in Vietnam or Thailand, where it is over two. Cropping intensity means the number of times the land is planted during the year. More progressive farms achieve more than three.

Indeed, our agricultural sector is so backward that without a serious rethinking of policies, strategies, measures and programs, one has to be worried about its future.

During the administration of the late president Benigno Aquino III, technical papers were released detailing how the promises and directions laid down in his SONAs would be attained. Without those details — how, who, when, where and how much would be required to fund the ambitious development thrust — the SONA exercise becomes a public relations stint.

It is up to the DA to prove to the Filipino people that this is not so by providing us with a clearer blueprint on how the President's SONA agricultural agenda can be accomplished.

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<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/02/business/top-business/philippine-agriculture-quo-vadis/1961300>

DA plans to impose special duties on imported rice

Ada Pelonia
August 1, 2024



File photo: PRICES of local and imported rice are displayed at a market stall in Marikina City

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) plans to impose special safeguard duties (SSG) on imported rice to shield rice farmers from cheaper imports.

This was confirmed by Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. during the Senate Committee on Agricultural and Fisheries Modernization hearing last Thursday.

“The SSG is really part of the DA’s plan,” Laurel said, partly in Filipino, while assuring lawmakers that the 15-percent tariff rate levied on rice would undergo a 4-month review as stipulated in Executive Order (EO) 62.

“The National Economic and Development Authority [Neda], the industry and [the] DA will convene. If the tariff needs to be raised, it will be raised,” he said in Filipino.

The SSG is a trade mechanism that a country can impose on imported products that fall below a so-called trigger price. Additional duties are slapped on the commodity to protect domestic output against unfair market price competition.

Laurel issued the statement after Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) National Manager Raul Montemayor proposed that the government apply safeguard duties when there is a sudden surge in imports.

“[For the] special safeguard, now that we have dropped our tariff to 15 percent, we can only impose an additional 5-percent tariff [...] we can apply that 5 percent additional tariff only until the end of December. It has restrictions,” Montemayor explained.

Meanwhile, Laurel said that if the farmgate price of palay dips at a level that would incur huge losses for farmers, it would trigger the department to impose the safeguard measure.

“[The DA will impose SSG] if the price of palay declines to a point where the farmers could incur a huge loss,” Laurel told the BusinessMirror.

Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) data indicated that local traders bought dry unhusked rice at a higher price in June.

A month before the start of the lean season for rice, PSA data showed the average quotation for dry palay jumped by nearly 28 percent to P24.59 per kilo in June, from P19.23 per kilo a year ago. The lean season for rice is from July to September.

Laurel maintained that they continue to monitor the farmgate prices and assured farmers that the department will protect them from incurring huge losses.

Senator Cynthia Villar noted in her opening statement that the Rice Tariffication Law’s aim is to bolster rice output and minimize the country’s reliance on imported rice.

“The main objective of the RTL is to encourage and empower our local farmers to increase their yield, reducing the need for the Philippines to import rice from other countries,” Villar said.

Data from the Bureau of Plant Industry showed that rice import arrivals as of July 20 reached nearly 2.4 million metric tons (MMT).

In an earlier interview, Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel V. de Mesa said that shipments after July 6 were already levied with the 15-percent tariff rate. Rice imports from the first three weeks of July stood at 56,118 MT.

Image credits: [Bloomberg News](#)

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/08/01/da-plans-to-impose-special-duties-on-imported-rice/>