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MANILA BULLETIN:

Farm output down 3.3% amid El Niño in second quarter

BY CHINO S. LEYCO

Aug 7, 2024 10:47 AM

Local farm output declined in the second quarter of the year due to a prolonged dry spell caused by El Niño, data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) showed.

The PSA reported that the value of the country's agricultural production totaled P413.91 billion from April to June, a 3.3 percent decrease compared to P427.95 billion in the same period the previous year.

“This was due to the annual decreases in the values of crops and livestock production during the period. Meanwhile, values of poultry and fisheries production posted annual increments,” the PSA said in a statement.

This decline in the second quarter was more pronounced than the 1.2 percent decrease recorded in the same quarter of 2023.

The second quarter farm output brought the country's first-semester agricultural productions to P843.53 billion, lower by 1.5 percent compared to P856.74 billion in the same period in 2023.

From April to June, crop production, the largest contributor to the farm sector's total value, decreased by 8.6 percent to P220.04 billion in the second quarter of 2024.

According to the PSA, the decline was primarily driven by decreases in palay and corn output by 9.5 percent and 20.3 percent, respectively.

Livestock production also decreased slightly by 0.3 percent to P63.33 billion, representing 15.3 percent of the total agricultural and fisheries production value during the same period.

Hogs, a significant component of livestock production, recorded a marginal 0.2 percent year-on-year decrease, the PSA said.

In contrast, poultry output increased by 8.7 percent to P70.15 billion from the previous year and contributed 16.9 percent to the total farm sector value.

During the second quarter, all poultry commodities showed an increase in their production value.

Fisheries, valued at P60.40 billion, experienced a growth of 2.2 percent year-on-year, representing 14.6 percent of the total agricultural and fisheries production value in the second quarter of 2024.

Last week, the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Operations Center of the Department of Agriculture (DA) reported a more severe impact of the El Niño phenomenon on the Philippines, with damages totaling P15.3 billion.

The latest estimates on agricultural losses caused by El Niño, which began in June 2023, increased 54.7 percent from the initial damage assessment of P9.89 billion reported by the agency on June 6.

El Niño, known for its below-average rainfall conditions, has adversely affected the livelihoods of 333,195 farmers and fishers spread across 15 regions in the country, according to DA.

These regions include Cordillera, Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Mimaropa, Bicol, Western Visayas, Central Visayas, Eastern Visayas, Zamboanga Peninsula, Central Mindanao, Davao, Soccsksargen, and Caraga.

DA reported a total of 784,344 metric tons of production has been lost over 270,855 hectares of agricultural land due to the impact of the ongoing El Niño conditions.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/8/7/farm-output-down-3-3-amid-el-nino-in-second-quarter>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Marcos assures farmers: No one gets left behind

BY ARGYLL CYRUS GEDUCOS

Aug 7, 2024 09:54 AM

AT A GLANCE

- A total of P782.132 million, the acquisition of new excavators, trailer trucks, and dumpers falls under the second tranche of NIA's three-year Re-fleeting Program.
- The NIA's Re-fleeting Program aims to fast-track irrigation development in the country.

President Marcos assured the country's farmers that they would not be left behind in the government's plans to modernize the agricultural sector, renewing his commitment to supporting them in improving their livelihood.



President Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr. (RTVM screenshot)

Marcos said this as he led the turnover of 148 newly procured heavy equipment to the National Irrigation Administration's (NIA) regional offices in Mexico City, Pampanga on Wednesday, Aug. 7.

In his speech, the President assured the farmers that the government is one with them in fulfilling their dreams by addressing issues that hinder them from earning more.

"Kailanman hindi po namin kayo pababayaan. Habang pinaunlad at ginagawa nating moderno ang sektor ng agrikultura, hindi natin kinakalimutan at iiwanan ang bawat magsasakang Pilipino (We will never forsake you. As we strive to modernize the agriculture sector, we have not forgotten you and we will not leave any of our Filipino farmers behind)," he said.

"Patuloy po tayong naghahanap ng mga solusyon upang mapabuti ang gawaing pagsasaka at mapataas ang inyong ani at ang inyong kita (We are continuously looking for solutions to improve your farming activities and increase your crops and your income)," he added.

According to Marcos, Wednesday's turnover of machinery was a realization of the government's commitment to uplifting the lives of farmers and attaining food security. A total of P782.132 million, the acquisition of new excavators, trailer trucks, and dumpers falls under the second tranche of NIA's three-year Re-fleeting Program.

In return, the President asked the farmers to continue their hard work.

"Sana po ay patuloy po kayong magpupursigi upang paunlarin ang inyong mga sakahan, at nang sa gayon ay magbunga ng masaganang ani ang inyong mga pagsisikap (I hope you remain dedicated to improving your farms so your hard work will bear fruit)," he said.

In his speech, President Marcos said the program ensures the sustainability of the country's irrigation systems to avoid losses and promote a more efficient use of water resources that will, in turn, produce better and more crops.

"This investment in our irrigation infrastructure attests to our unwavering commitment to supporting the backbone of our economy— the agricultural sector," he said.

"Through our Re-fleeting Program, we can instantly repair and build more irrigation facilities that were damaged by national calamities, [and] stand strong against the challenges of shifting climate change," he added.

The NIA's Re-fleeting Program aims to fast-track irrigation development in the country. The distributed heavy equipment will be used to operate and maintain irrigation systems, particularly in canal desilting operations in preparation for the wet crop season.

Currently, the NIA has 257 National Irrigation Systems (NISs) and 8,802 Communal Irrigation Systems (CISs).

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/8/7/marcos-vows-no-farmer-will-be-left-behind-in-agri-modernization-efforts>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Rising inflation still needs to be tamed; social safety nets for poorest households imperative

BY [MANILA BULLETIN](#)

Aug 8, 2024 00:04 AM



For the first time this year, the inflation rate exceeded the government’s target range of 2.0 percent to 4.0 percent, as it rose to 4.4 percent. Despite this increment, the average inflation rate for the first seven months remained within the target at 3.7 percent. This was the first time since November 2023 that headline inflation breached the 4.0 percent threshold.

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority, the increase was primarily driven by higher inflation rates in both food and non-food items, particularly in liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), fuel, meat, and fruits. The slower decline in electricity and fish prices also contributed to the overall inflation rise.

The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) pointed out: “While rice inflation slowed to 20.9 percent from 22.5 percent, it remained the top contributor to the July inflation

with 1.9 percentage points (ppt), followed by food and beverages services (0.5 ppt), housing rental (0.3 ppt), and meat (0.3 ppt).”

Finance Secretary Ralph Recto assured that this was likely to be a “one-time uptick,” as he cited the base effect of lower rice prices in July 2023. He pointed out that the amount of rice imported at lower tariffs will increase in the coming months and result in a drop in retail prices of rice.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) has mounted initiatives to ease the burden of high rice prices. Last Aug. 1, it launched the Rice-for-All Program to ease the burden of high rice prices. Under the program, rice will be sold at ₱45 per kilo at selected KADIWA centers, with prices adjusted according to the fluctuations in rice prices. In preparation for La Niña, DA has prepared an array of programs including the availability of the quick response fund, technical and credit assistance, and seed buffer stock. It has also expedited the unclogging of farm drainage systems and constructing water-impounding projects and post-harvest facilities.

Focusing on the big picture, Economic Planning Secretary Arsenio M. Balisacan emphasized: “Between 2023 and 2021, about 2.5 million Filipinos were lifted out of poverty, bringing our country’s poverty incidence down to 15.5 percent from 18.1 percent. Our goal now is to sustain this momentum by addressing the constraints to food security and economic development more broadly.”

Yet, it must be noted that the inflation rate for the bottom 30 percent income households increased to 5.8 percent in July 2024 from 5.5 percent in June 2024, driven by the higher year-on-year growth rate of the housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels index. Another major pressure on the poorest families was the high price of rice which accounts for 18 percent of their consumption basket compared to 8.9 percent for all-income households.

To address this situation, the Department of Budget and Management released the other day an additional ₱5 billion for the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) that will be used to assist 703,888 household beneficiaries. This beams the spotlight on the imperative for social safety nets to enable those struggling at the margins to cope with the continuing challenge of meeting their basic needs and seeking a brighter future.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/8/8/rising-inflation-still-needs-to-be-tamed-social-safety-nets-for-poorest-households-imperative>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

ASF spreads to 6 Batangas areas

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

August 8, 2024 | 12:00am



PVO chief Romelito Marasigan said among areas reeling from ASF outbreaks are Lobo with 17 affected barangays; Calatagan, five; Lian and Talisay, two each, and Rosario and Lipa with one each.

Cesar Ramirez

MANILA, Philippines — Up to 1,523 hogs have been culled as African swine fever (ASF) continued to spread in six areas in Batangas, according to the provincial veterinary office.

PVO chief Romelito Marasigan said among areas reeling from ASF outbreaks are Lobo with 17 affected barangays; Calatagan, five; Lian and Talisay, two each, and Rosario and Lipa with one each.

Meanwhile, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said he is eyeing the emergency procurement of 10,000 doses of ASF vaccine to address the outbreak in Batangas.

Tiu Laurel said that affected local government units may need to declare a state of emergency to enable the Department of Agriculture (DA) to swiftly respond to the situation.

He said the emergency procurement could cut the purchase period by about two weeks.

Tiu Laurel directed the DA's bids and awards committee and the Bureau of Animal Industry to draft a resolution needed to formalize the emergency procurement.

Marasigan said the outbreak was first reported on July 16 following reports of hog fatalities in affected barangays, which were later confirmed to be due to ASF.

He said a majority of residents in Lobo are engaged in backyard hograising, which could be the reason why the virus spread quickly in the area. - **Jun Elias**

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2024/08/08/2376195/asf-spreads-6-batangas-areas>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Jobless rate down 3.1% in June

[Brix Lelis](#) - The Philippine Star

August 8, 2024 | 12:00am



Job seekers line up at a job fair in Manila.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — The country's jobless rate dropped to its lowest this year as more Filipinos were absorbed by the labor market, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

Based on preliminary data of the Labor Force Survey released by the PSA yesterday, the unemployment rate eased to 3.1 percent in June from 4.1 percent in May.

The figure is the lowest reported this year and matches the record low set in December last year, marking the lowest jobless rate in nearly two decades.

The unemployment rate in June also improved from 4.5 percent in the same month last year.

In terms of magnitude, the number of jobless Filipinos in June stood at 1.62 million, lower than 2.11 million in the preceding month and 2.33 million in June 2023.

National Statistician and PSA Undersecretary Dennis Mapa attributed the lower jobless rate to the substantial increase in employed individuals in several sectors, such as construction.

“(Employee absorption) in the construction sector increased year on year. This indicated a significant rise in economic activities related to construction,” Mapa said in Filipino.

The country’s employment rate in June was estimated at 96.9 percent, higher than 95.9 percent in the previous month and 95.5 percent in June last year.

There were 50.28 million employed Filipinos in June, up from 48.87 million in the preceding month and 48.84 million in June last year.

The labor force participation rate (LFPR) declined to 66 percent in June, higher than 64.8 percent recorded in May but slightly lower than 66.1 percent logged in the same month last year.

The LFPR in June translated to a total of 51.9 million Filipinos aged 15 years and older who were in the labor force.

Meanwhile, the underemployment rate climbed to 12.1 percent in June from 9.9 percent in the previous month and 12 percent in June last year.

In June, an estimated 6.08 million Filipinos were underemployed, or those wanting to have additional hours of work or an additional job, up from 4.82 million in the previous month and 5.88 million in June last year.

“The labor market absorbed more workers, but not everyone secured full-time jobs. Some were working part-time, while others might be working less than 40 hours or were seeking additional employment,” Mapa explained.

Industries with the biggest month-on-month increases in employment in June are construction with 680,000; agriculture and forestry (571,000); wholesale and retail trade (490,000); accommodation and food service activities (184,000) and real estate (143,000).

On the other hand, those that recorded the largest drop in the number of employed Filipinos are public administration and defense with -466,000; education (-184,000); transportation and storage (-152,000); financial and insurance (-124,000) and fishing and aquaculture (-114,000).

Commenting on the data, the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) said that the drop in unemployment rate was due to the government's intensified efforts to create job opportunities.

“The government's swift implementation of infrastructure projects and the continued improvement of operating conditions have led to these employment gains,” NEDA Secretary Arsenio Balisacan said.

He also cited the increased investments in renewable energy, water supply, mining and quarrying.

“While we see encouraging figures in terms of our job generation, we will continue to focus on generating high-quality and well-paying jobs to address the issue of vulnerable employment and ensure a brighter future for our Filipino workers,” he added.

A ranking official of the Department of Agriculture (DA) yesterday blamed El Niño for the drop in employment in the agriculture sector after the PSA said that at least 920,000 farmers were displaced in June compared to the same period last year.

“There are many areas that failed to plant during El Niño; it really resulted in a decrease in the employment in the agriculture sector,” DA Assistant Secretary and spokesman Arnel de Mesa said at a press conference.

Based on the latest data from the PSA, the number employed in the agriculture sector dropped to 9.53 million this year compared to 10.45 million in the same period last year.

De Mesa, however, said employment in the farm sector is expected to improve with the start of the wet cropping season. – **Bella Cariaso**

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/08/08/2376313/jobless-rate-down-31-june>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Farm, fishery output shrink as El Niño hits

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



The sector's production in the April to June period amounted to P413.91 billion, about P14 billion lower than the P427.948 billion recorded in the same period last year, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). "This was due to the annual decreases in the values of crops and livestock production during the period," the PSA said yesterday.

From April to June

MANILA, Philippines — The value of the country's agriculture and fisheries output in the second quarter contracted by 3.3 percent as crops and livestock production dropped due to the ill effects of the El Niño weather phenomenon.

The sector's production in the April to June period amounted to P413.91 billion, about P14 billion lower than the P427.948 billion recorded in the same period last year, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

"This was due to the annual decreases in the values of crops and livestock production during the period," the PSA said yesterday.

The value of crops output, which accounted for half of the entire agriculture and fisheries production, fell by 8.6 percent to P220.04 billion.

The PSA recorded contractions across the value of 20 crops during the reference period, with sugarcane posting the steepest decline at 42.3 percent.

The production of palay, the primary crop of the country, fell by 9.5 percent year-on-year while corn output declined by 20.3 percent during the reference period.

The other crops that saw contraction in value of production were onion (-37.4 percent), tomato (-15.6 percent), mung beans (-14 percent), abaca (-12.4 percent), rubber (-7.5 percent), cassava (-7.2 percent), eggplant (-7 percent), sweet potato (-5.8 percent) and bitter melon (-5.1 percent).

Government officials and industry stakeholders earlier noted that a contraction in the domestic crops performance was expected given the threats posed by the dryer and hotter weather conditions caused by El Niño.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) recorded P15.3 billion in damage and losses in the agriculture and fisheries sector because of the ill effects of El Niño, with a volume loss of about 784,000 metric tons across 270,855 hectares of land.

According to the DA, more than 333,000 farmers and fishermen were affected by the extreme weather condition.

The PSA said livestock output dipped to P63.33 billion in the second quarter from P63.505 billion in the same quarter last year.

Annual decreases were observed in the production of goat, carabao and hogs at 2.7 percent, 2.4 percent and 0.2 percent, respectively, the PSA said.

Meanwhile, the value of poultry production in the second quarter grew by 8.7 percent year-on-year to P70.15 billion, with the sector contributing almost 17 percent of the total value of agriculture and fisheries production.

Fisheries output, which accounted for 14.6 percent of the sector's entire production, increased by 2.2 percent to P60.397 billion, according to the PSA.

The country's agriculture and fisheries output in the first half contracted by 1.5 percent, a reversal of the 0.4 percent growth recorded in the same period last year.

The DA said the contraction in farm and fisheries output in the second quarter was cushioned by the expansions in the poultry and fisheries industries. The DA vowed to intensify efforts to help farmers cope with the El Niño-induced challenges.

“The Philippine agriculture sector has demonstrated resilience, bolstered by strategic interventions from the Department of Agriculture, in the face of challenges posed by the adverse impact of El Niño on crop harvest and the stubborn African swine fever on hog production, particularly during the second quarter,” Agriculture Assistant Secretary and spokesman Arnel de Mesa said in a statement yesterday.

The DA has rolled out various measures to address the El Niño-related challenges, such as P14.54 billion cash assistance to rice farmers and earmarking of P350 million for procurement of vaccines against African swine fever.

“The department’s proactive approach aims to mitigate the impact of adverse weather conditions and strengthen the sector’s capacity to rebound,” De Mesa said.

“The support measures are designed to enhance productivity and support farmers, demonstrating the DA’s commitment to sustaining agricultural growth and stability despite external challenges,” he added. – **Bella Cariaso**

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/08/08/2376169/farm-fishery-output-shrink-el-nio-hits>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Agriculture, forestry sector suffer loss of 916,000 workers in June

[Jean Mangaluz](#) - Philstar.com

August 7, 2024 | 11:45am



Tobacco farmers from Barangay Sta. Cruz in Sinait, Ilocos Sur continue with their daily routine on Saturday morning, May 25, 2024.

The STAR / Ryan Baldemor

MANILA, Philippines — Not long after Farmer Appreciation Day, hundreds of thousands of agriculture and forestry workers have left the industry.

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) recorded a large drop in laborers in the agriculture sector in June.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s administration has long posed itself as one that values farmers. In 2023, the president even signed the New Agrarian Emancipation Act, which forgave the land debt of 610,054 agrarian reform beneficiaries.

Despite seemingly significant assistance from the government, the PSA still found an annual 916,000 decline in people working in agriculture and forestry in its June 2024 survey. Fishing and aquaculture also lost 81,000 workers.

The PSA pointed following months of intense heat waves caused by the El Niño phenomenon, including farmers

“The agri sector dropped substantially, in particular the crops, and we can see in rice in particular. Livestock, particularly hog farming, was reflected in the labor

market, so we can say that El Niño had a big effect this second quarter in particular.” PSA Undersecretary Dennis Mapa said at a press conference.

On top of the El Niño phenomenon, this massive drop in the agriculture sector also happens to coincide with Marcos’ Executive Order 62, which lowered the tariffs of agricultural products such as rice.

Farmer groups have sought to stop the EO by requesting for a temporary restraining order at the Supreme Court last June. The Palace has since asked the Supreme Court to junk the said petition, saying that disagreement with the government’s position is not enough grounds to bring the EO to the court.

How did other sectors fare?

The agriculture and forestry sub-sector is not the only vital labor group that suffered losses.

The PSA also found an annual decrease of workers in several other sectors. The public administration sub-sector saw a loss of 466,000 workers. These include workers in legislative activities, national defense, immigration and other government services.

Education lost 71,000 workers while financial and insurance activities had a decline of 42,000 workers.

So where did these workers go, especially amid an increased employment rate in the PSA’s June 2024 survey? While it is difficult to determine which sub-sector these workers went to, the PSA recorded the following sectors with the highest increase in workforce.

- 1. Construction – 938,000 workers**
- 2. Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles – 527,000 workers**
- 3. Accommodation and food service activities – 396,000 workers**
- 4. Manufacturing – 353,000 workers**
- 5. Transportation and storage – 323,000 workers**

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/08/07/2376105/agriculture-forestry-sector-suffer-loss-916000-workers-june>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Entry of ‘other sugars’ in PH market flagged

By: [Lisbet K. Esmael](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 05:46 AM August 08, 2024



Mary Joy Gumarsa, assists customers at a stall selling sugar and other merchandise in Marikina Public Market, Marikina City. —Inquirer file photo/Grig C. Montegrando

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) has ordered the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) to closely monitor the “alarming volume” of “other sugars” in the market, which a group said could be “highly detrimental” to the sector if allowed to remain unregulated.

In a statement, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. told the SRA to “look into the actual volumes of other sugars coming into the country and if warranted, require them to acquire clearances as well.”

Sugar stakeholders earlier raised the issue with the DA chief, noting that other sugars have been present in the Philippines for the past eight years.

“This volume of sugar premixes represents about 4 million bags of sugar amounting to roughly P10 billion and the continued lack of regulation for these sugar-based products is highly detrimental to the sugar industry,” United Sugar Producers Federation president Manuel Lamata said in a statement.

Stagnant demand

Other sugars include glucose, sucrose, maltose, dextrose, maltodextrin and lactose, among others.

Lamata said their presence in the market might be the reason why sugar demand has “remained constant in the last 10 years or so despite the growth of population.”

According to the DA, only high fructose corn syrup is being strictly regulated.

Lamata said the other sugars were not regulated as previous administrations “purposely ignored” the issue.

“There is no reason for them to import this as they should buy local sugar first. We must use locally produced sugar,” he told the Inquirer.

Lamata said that other sugars were being used in various products—from food to drinks—as a substitute for natural cane sugar.

“The only purpose is to lower production costs for more profits for the companies at the expense of the local farmer. We detest this practice of buying and helping other farmers from other countries,” he said.

Asked about the potential impact on health, Lamata said they had asked the DA to have both the Food and Drug Administration and Department of Health examine if the other sugars were safe for human consumption.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1970619/entry-of-other-sugars-in-ph-market-flagged>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Agricultural output for Q2 down by 3.3% – PSA

By: [Lisbet K. Esmael](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

Inquirer Business / 10:12 AM August 07, 2024



The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) data shows agricultural output in the second quarter of 2024 slid by 3.3 percent due to the drop in the value of crops and livestock production. INQUIRER FILE PHOTO

MANILA, Philippines — Agricultural output in the second quarter of 2024 slid by 3.3 percent due to the drop in the value of crops and livestock production, according to data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) released Wednesday.

In its report, the PSA said the value of production in agriculture and fisheries declined to P413.91 billion from P427.69 billion a year ago.

Crop production dropped to P220.04 billion, eight percent lower than in the second quarter last year. The PSA noted that palay and corn production – the country’s major staples – also recorded decreases during the period.

Livestock likewise booked a 0.3-percent dip in the value of production to P63.33 billion.

However, both poultry and fisheries production logged growth, expanding to P70.15 billion and P60.40 billion in the second quarter of 2024, according to the PSA data.

<https://business.inquirer.net/473445/agricultural-output-for-q2-down-by-3-3-psa>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Senate probe on MT Terranova oil spill set Aug. 13

Philippine News Agency / 07:44 PM August 07, 2024



CONTAINING THE DAMAGE A tugboat hired by Shogun Ships Co., owner of the MT Terranova joins the Philippine Coast Guard in its efforts to contain the spread of the oil leak from the sunken tanker in the waters of Limay, Bataan. —INQUIRER file photo / RICHARD A. REYES

MANILA, Philippines – The Senate inquiry on the massive oil spill caused by the ill-fated MT Terranova will push through on Aug. 13, Senate Majority Leader Francis Tolentino announced on Wednesday.

Tolentino earlier filed a resolution to investigate the cause of the oil spill that affected around 46,000 fisherfolk, marine biodiversity, and food security in Bataan, Cavite, Metro Manila, and nearby areas.

“We need to set up stricter mechanisms to prevent such incidents, and to improve our capability to immediately respond to contain, clean up, and mitigate the impact of this

toxic substance on the fishing sector and the environment,” Tolentino said in a news release, citing similar occurrences in Pola, Oriental Mindoro in 2023, and the island-province of Guimaras in 2006.

Tolentino also urged the Department of Agriculture (DA) to collaborate with other agencies to support fish vendors who are affected by the lower catch and subsequent fishing bans due to the oil spill.

“We must not forget the fish vendors. The government must also reach out to them because we have interviewed sellers in public markets who said that many stalls selling fish have now been closed,” the senator told DA Assistant Secretary Arnel De Mesa in his radio program.

In response, De Mesa assured the DA will work with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Department of Trade Industry (DTI) to assist fish vendors.

The Philippine Coast Guard is currently receiving assistance from the United States Coast Guard and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to contain the spill.

The DA, through the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), has also started extending fuel subsidies to affected fisherfolk.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1970536/senate-probe-on-mt-terranova-oil-spill-set-aug-13>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Batangas municipalities to get ASF vaccine faster if emergency declared

August 7, 2024 | 9:14 pm



REUTERS

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said on Wednesday that Batangas municipalities may need to declare an emergency to facilitate the release of funds to obtain African Swine Fever (ASF) vaccines.

“Local government units may need to declare a state of emergency to enable the DA to respond swiftly to the situation and release funds for the urgent purchase of vaccines,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. said in a statement.

The DA noted that active ASF cases have been recorded in Lobo, Lian, Rosario, Calatagan, and Lipa City, Batangas.

Constance J. Palabrica, assistant secretary for Poultry and Swine, said that the DA estimates the need for vaccines at about 10,000 doses.

The DA’s Bids and Awards Committee and Bureau of Animal Industry will draft the resolution which will set in motion the emergency procurement process, shortening the regular procurement period to around two weeks.

The DA is currently collaborating with local officials in enforcing movement restrictions to prevent the spread of infected animals.

The DA has said that it is planning a limited rollout of the AVAC ASF Live Vaccine from Vietnam by the third quarter.

It has allocated P350 million for the trial, funding about 600,000 vials. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/08/07/612772/batangas-municipalities-to-get-asf-vaccine-faster-if-emergency-declared/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Q2 agricultural output falls by 3.3%

August 8, 2024 | 12:35 am



Farm output dropped by 3.3% in the second quarter, as the El Niño weather phenomenon caused dry spells and droughts around the country. — PHILIPPINE STAR/RUSSELL A. PALMA
By **Adrian H. Halili**, *Reporter*

THE PHILIPPINES' agricultural output fell in the second quarter, as the crops and livestock sector continued to bear the brunt of the El Niño weather phenomenon.

Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) showed the value of production in agriculture and fisheries at constant 2018 prices dropped by 3.3% to P413.91 billion in the April-to-June period, worsening from the 1.2% contraction a year earlier.

It was the first decline in agricultural output since the 0.2% drop in the third quarter of 2023, and the biggest drop since the 3.4% contraction in the first quarter of 2021.

“The reduction was due to the decreases in the value of crops and livestock production. Meanwhile, expansions were recorded in the value of poultry and fisheries production,” the PSA said.

The agriculture sector accounts for about a tenth of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) and provides about a quarter of all jobs.

The PSA is scheduled to release second-quarter GDP data on Aug. 8.

For the first half, the value of production in agriculture and fisheries slipped by 1.5%, a reversal of the 0.4% growth a year ago.

“The Philippine agriculture sector has demonstrated resilience, bolstered by strategic interventions from the Department of Agriculture (DA), in the face of challenges posed by the adverse impact of El Niño on crop harvest and the stubborn African Swine Fever (ASF) on hog production, particularly during the second quarter,” Agriculture Assistant Secretary and Spokesperson Arnel V. de Mesa said on Wednesday.

Crops production, which accounted for half of the agriculture sector's total production, slumped by 8.6% year on year in the second quarter. This was a reversal of the 1.2% growth a year ago.

Year to date, crops production dropped by 4.4%, reversing the 1.5% growth a year earlier.

In the second quarter, palay (paddy rice) production declined by 9.5%, while corn plunged by 20.3%.

Also posting double-digit declines in production were sugarcane (-42.3%), onion (-37.4%), tomato (-15.6%), mongo (-14%), and abaca (-12.4%).

Lower output was also seen in rubber (-7.5%), cassava (-7.2%), eggplant (-7%), sweet potato (-5.8%), ampalaya (-5.1%), coconut (-4%), banana (-3.3%), mango (-2.8%), pineapple (-2.7%), tobacco (-1.9%), coffee (-1.87%) and potato (-1%).

Only calamansi (6.4%), cacao (5.9%), and cabbage (2.7%) posted growth in production in the second quarter.

"These drops are the effects of El Niño during the first semester of the year. Crops, particularly rice and corn, either did not survive or suffered yield losses due to lack of water," Federation of Free Farmers National Manager Raul Q. Montemayor said in a Viber message.

The state weather bureau declared the start of the El Niño weather event in June 2023, bringing below-normal rainfall conditions, dry spells and droughts. El Niño ended in early June, but dry conditions are expected to continue.

Based on the Agriculture department's final bulletin, farm damage from El Niño hit P15.3 billion, with total crop losses at 784,344 metric tons. Rice and corn were the most affected crops.

"The explanation of (the DA) that the drop was due to delayed planting by some farmers does not seem realistic... So it was not a delay in planting but an inability to plant due to lack of rain," Mr. Montemayor said.

However, Mr. De Mesa said the DA had supported the agriculture sector during El Niño, earmarking P14.54 billion in financial aid for affected farmers, production support and loans.

LIVESTOCK

DROP

Livestock production shrank by 0.3% in the quarter ending June, reversing the 0.7% expansion a year ago. It accounted for 15.3% of the total agricultural output during the April-to-June period.

Data from the PSA showed a drop in the value of production for goat (-2.7%), carabao (-2.4%) and hog (-0.3%). Higher production was seen in dairy (9.7%) and cattle (0.2%).

In the January-to-June period, the value of livestock production slid by 1.9%, a reversal of the 2.4% growth in 2023.

Former Agriculture Secretary William D. Dar said in a text message that the livestock industry, particularly hogs, is still affected by ASF.

"The 0.3% decline (in hogs) is small. Most likely, the market weights of hogs are smaller due to extreme heat, which affected the feed intake and therefore the feed conversion as well," National Federation of Hog Farmers, Inc. Vice-Chairman Alfred Ng said in a Viber message.

Hogs account for 12.4% of livestock production.

GAINS IN POULTRY, FISHERIES
Poultry output, which accounts for 16.9% of the total agricultural output, jumped by 8.7% in the April-to-June period, an improvement from the 1.5% growth a year ago.

Higher production was seen for chicken eggs (9%), chicken (8.9%), duck (1.3%) and duck eggs (0.8%).

From January to June, the value of poultry production rose by 7.3% from 2.3% a year ago.

Former Agriculture Undersecretary Fermin D. Adriano said the growth in poultry output during the period was due to poultry growers' improved efforts to curb the spread of bird flu.

"It is easy for poultry production to recover because there are now chicken breeds which can be harvested for less than a month. Old stock affected by bird flu can easily be replenished," he said in a Viber message.

Mr. Dar said the growth in poultry was driven by the sustained investments of large poultry companies including small- and medium-sized growers.

Meanwhile, fishery production increased by 2.2% in the second quarter, a turnaround from the 13.8% decline a year ago. The subsector made up 14.6% of the total farm output.

Year to date, the value of fishery output inched up by 1.1%, a turnaround from the 7.5% decline last year.

"Fisheries were coming from a very low base, so it was relatively easy for the sector to show an uptick. Maybe the hot weather induced more phytoplankton production," Mr. Montemayor said.

Gains were seen in skipjack or *gulyasan* (141.2%), bigeye tuna (94.1%), yellowfin tuna (43.2%), frigate tuna or *tulingan* (33.7%), P. Vannamei (33.6%), blue crab (7.4%), fimbriated sardines (5.9%) and cavalla or *talakitok* (4%).

On the other hand, production declined for tiger prawn or *sugpo* (-40.3%), grouper or *lapu-lapu* (-34.8%), seaweed (-25.8%), slipmouth or *sapsap* (-24.7%), big-eyed scad or *matangbaka* (-22.3%), mudcrab or *alimango* (-18.3%), round scad or *galunggong* (-13.6%), squid (-6.8%), tilapia (-6%), milkfish or *bangus* (-4.6%), threadfin bream or *bisugo* (-4.4%), and Bali sardinella or *tamban* (-0.1%).

Mr. Adriano noted that the open fishing season in Philippine waters coupled with better weather contributed to the increase in fishery production.

The DA is targeting 1-2% agricultural growth in 2024, taking into account the effects of the El Niño and La Niña weather events.

<https://www.bworldonline.com/top-stories/2024/08/08/612763/q2-agricultural-output-falls-by-3-3/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Sugar industry wants other sweeteners to be regulated

August 7, 2024 | 9:12 pm



REUTERS

SUGAR PRODUCERS said on Wednesday that the Department of Agriculture (DA) needs to regulate imports of other sweeteners that compete with cane sugar.

In a statement, the United Sugar Producers Federation of the Philippines (UNIFED) said the entry of glucose, sucrose, maltose, dextrose, maltodextrin and lactose is currently unregulated.

UNIFED added that the volume of other sweeteners being shipped amounts to 100,000 to 200,000 metric tons per year.

“This volume of sugar premixes (is equivalent to) about 4 million bags of sugar (valued at) roughly P10 billion, and the continued lack of regulation for these sugar-based products is highly detrimental to the sugar industry,” UNIFED President Manuel R. Lamata said.

Mr. Lamata added that the increased shipments of these products may have caused the stagnation in sugar prices.

“This is probably why demand for sugar has remained constant in the last 10 years or so despite the growth of the population,” he said.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. has ordered an investigation after meeting with the sugar industry.

He ordered the Sugar Regulatory Administration to look into the actual volumes of other sweeteners and, if warranted, require them to acquire clearances as well.

“If this is not addressed, then the sugar industry will be paying a hefty price along with the five million Filipinos dependent on the industry,” Mr. Lamata said.

Code 17.02 of the Asean Harmonized Tariff Nomenclature sets tariffs only for high fructose corn syrup.
— **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/08/07/612799/sugar-industry-wants-other-sweeteners-to-be-regulated/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Philippines Q2 farm output value down 3.3% yr/yr

August 7, 2024 | 12:09 pm



PHILIPPINE STAR/KRIZ JOHN ROSALES

MANILA – The Philippines’ agricultural and fisheries output value dropped an annual 3.3% in the second quarter of the year, led by decreases in the crops and livestock sector, the statistics agency said on Wednesday.

The Southeast Asian nation’s crop output, which accounted for 53% of the agriculture sector’s total production, sank 8.6% from a year earlier while livestock output contracted by 0.3%, the Philippine Statistics Authority said.

Poultry output rose 8.7% and fisheries production increased by 2.2%.

The government will release second-quarter gross domestic product figures on Thursday, giving the central bank more data ahead of their Aug. 15 rate-setting meeting. — **Reuters**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/breaking-news/2024/08/07/612645/philippines-q2-farm-output-value-down-3-3-yr-yr/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Anti-agri economic sabotage bill awaits Marcos signature

- Jovee Marie N. de la Cruz
- August 8, 2024

The House of Representatives has endorsed for President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s signature the proposed Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act.

This comes after the lower chamber ratified late Tuesday the bicameral conference committee report on the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act, one of the priorities of the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council.

The Senate also ratified the said committee report on Tuesday.

House Committee on Agriculture and Food Chairman Mark Enverga said the bill is designed to enhance agricultural productivity and shield farmers and fishers from the detrimental activities of smugglers, hoarders, and profiteers.

“Today is a significant victory for our agricultural sector and the Filipino people,” said Enverga. “The ratification of this proposal demonstrates our commitment to addressing the challenges faced by our farmers and fisherfolk, ensuring they are protected from those who seek to exploit the market.”

The bill is a direct response to Marcos' call to action during his 2023 State of the Nation Address. The President highlighted the detrimental impact of smugglers and hoarders on agricultural prices and vowed to eliminate such practices.

Congress ratified the bicameral report on the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act back in May; however, a new amendment was subsequently added.

Senator Cynthia Villar said the bicameral committee decided to include the Department of Finance in the composition of the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Enforcement group.

The ratified proposed Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act imposes stringent penalties on activities such as smuggling, hoarding, profiteering, and cartel operations, covering a wide array of agricultural and fishery products.

It mandates the Department of Agriculture to collaborate with other agencies to establish a daily price index aimed at preventing price manipulation and ensuring fair pricing.

Furthermore, the bill calls for the creation of the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Council and a Special Team of Prosecutors within the Department of Justice to ensure rigorous oversight and enforcement.

“As we move forward, let us remain vigilant and committed to supporting our agricultural sector,” Enverga said. “Together, we can build a more prosperous and resilient future for our farmers, fisherfolk, and consumers.”

He said the ratification of this proposal signifies a collaborative effort towards a fairer and more robust agricultural economy.

“I extend my deepest gratitude to Speaker Martin Romualdez for his leadership and support in advancing this vital legislation,” Enverga added.

“I also commend my fellow congressmen and senators for their tireless efforts in ensuring its swift passage. This collective commitment underscores our dedication to protecting the livelihoods of our farmers and fisherfolk and ensuring fair market competition.”

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/08/08/anti-agri-economic-sabotage-bill-awaits-marcos-signature/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

DA plans purchase of ASF vaccines after outbreak in Batangas

- Ada Pelonia
- August 8, 2024

The Department of Agriculture (DA) is planning to procure vaccines against African swine fever (ASF) following the outbreak of the fatal hog disease in Batangas.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr. said the DA is preparing for the “emergency procurement of ASF vaccines to address the situation promptly.”

The emergency procurement could shorten the purchase period by about 2 weeks.

“The local government units may need to declare a state of emergency in these Batangas municipalities to enable the DA to respond swiftly to the situation and release funds for the urgent purchase of vaccines,” Laurel said in a statement.

Local government units (LGUs) have the authority to declare a state of emergency and the declaration would be confined to the affected areas to control the ASF outbreak.

Laurel also noted that the DA is coordinating with the police and the military to enforce checkpoints to prevent the spread of the hog disease.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa recently said the towns of Lobo, Lian, Rosario, Calatagan, and Lipa City in Batangas reported ASF cases.

Meanwhile, Assistant Secretary Dante Palabrica said the department may need to purchase at least 10,000 doses of ASF vaccines for the emergency response.

Palabrica has been tasked to engage LGU officials to discuss the declaration of the state of emergency and coordinate the response.

The DA said its Bids and Awards Committee and Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) will draft the necessary resolution to formalize the emergency procurement process.

Laurel said the DA will also provide hog producers in Batangas with industrial lime to treat areas where condemned swines are buried.

He noted the government's efforts in eliminating ASF, a stubborn virus that continues to adversely affect local swine production despite intensive biosecurity efforts since the first outbreak was reported in 2019.

“The DA's proactive steps underscore its commitment to addressing the ASF outbreak effectively and minimizing its impact on local pig production.”

The region of Calabarzon, which includes Batangas, was the top hog producer in the Philippines in the first quarter, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

As of January 1, PSA said the swine inventory in Batangas rose by 22.4 percent year-on-year to 943,180 heads. This is because commercial raisers are encouraged to increase their stocks due to no ASF incidence, and increasing farmgate price.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/08/08/da-plans-purchase-of-asf-vaccines-after-outbreak-in-batangas/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

DA chief circular to promote use of organic fertilizer

- **Ada Pelonia**
- **August 8, 2024**

The Department of Agriculture (DA) is harmonizing the guidelines on the establishment of a composting facility for biodegradable wastes (CFBW) to improve soil health by using organic fertilizers.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. issued Memorandum Circular (MC) 31 which states that using compost could reduce farms' and households' dependence on chemical fertilizers and pesticides, which would cut production costs and increase returns on investment.

“This is one method to minimize groundwater pollution and restore soil fertility, thereby reducing the vulnerability of marginal farmers to the high cost of chemical fertilizers,” the MC read.

With its advanced technical specifications, the circular noted that the machine has a larger capacity to produce a mass volume of compost fertilizer, making it ideal for larger-scale composting needs and promoting more sustainable production practices.

The technology package includes one rotary composter and one biomass shredder machine that has a maximum capacity of one ton per loading operation.

The MC issued respective requirements for the provision of CFBW to the eligible recipients under the DA's funding banner programs, namely the National Organic Agriculture Program (NOAP), High-Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP), National Rice Program (NRP), and National Corn Program (NCP).

The recipients must also satisfy the following requirements:

- **Capable of operating and maintaining the facility and providing counterparts such as labor, land, shed, farm supplies and tools, and/ or fencing for the composting facility, operation, and maintenance cost;**

- **Willing to undergo training on compost production and facility management of CFBW; and**
- **For those who have already availed of CFBW and intend to request additional units, interested recipients must have records or documents of CFBW utilization and maintenance as proof of maximizing the capacity of the CFBW to produce compost.**

“Interested recipients should also be willing to undergo retraining on compost production and facility management of CFBW,” the MC read.

The proposed requirement should have an area of at least 50 square meters for the production area of CFBW, have a source of water and electricity that fits the requirement of the equipment to operate, and a sufficient source of agricultural residues, poultry and livestock manure, wastes, and other indigenous biodegradable materials.

The site should also be accessible for transport or hauling vehicle with no right-of-way issue and not located in flood-prone areas.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/08/08/da-chief-circular-to-promote-use-of-organic-fertilizer/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

India considering major cut to food weighting in CPI basket

- [BusinessMirror](#)



- [August 8, 2024](#)

Vendors sell bananas at a market in Vizianagaram, Andhra Pradesh, India, on Friday, May 10, 2024.

An Indian government panel tasked with revising the nation's consumer price index (CPI) is considering a substantial cut in the weighting of food, according to a person familiar with the matter, a move that could curb inflation spikes in the South Asian nation.

The panel, under the statistics ministry, is discussing a proposal to reduce the weight of food in the consumer price basket by as much as 8 percentage points, according to the person, who asked not to be identified as the discussions are private. The food and beverage category makes up 45.86 percent of the current CPI basket.

The CPI is currently based on consumer spending patterns surveyed in 2011-2012, which economists say are outdated and may be distorting the official inflation data the central bank uses to set interest rates. More recent surveys show consumers are spending less of their budget on food than they did a decade ago. Bloomberg

Economics estimates inflation in June was 70 basis points higher than it would have been using new weights.

A spokesman for the Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation didn't immediately respond to an emailed request for further information.

The Reserve Bank of India has kept interest rates unchanged for more than a year, and stuck to a relatively hawkish stance given inflation is above its 4-percent target. Economists surveyed by Bloomberg predict the RBI will likely hold again on Thursday.

Food is a big driver of inflation in India given its high weighting in the CPI basket. In June, food prices rose 9.36% from a year earlier, pushing up the headline inflation rate to 5.08 percent. Excluding food and energy costs, inflation was 3.15 percent.

A revision of the CPI, which currently has some 299 items, would see redundant items such as horse cart fares, prices for video cassette recorders, and costs of audio and video cassettes likely weeded out of the calculation. The government panel is also discussing including consumer electronic products, such as smartphones in the updated index, the person said.

The changes to the CPI weights and the base year, which are under consideration now, will likely only be implemented by January 2026. The revisions are based on results of new consumer spending surveys, which the statistics ministry is still finalizing. The entire process is expected to be completed sometime during 2025.

India's Chief Economic Adviser V Anantha Nageswaran, a top official in the Ministry of Finance, last month argued the central bank's inflation target should exclude food. Several economists, however, said removing food from the CPI target wasn't appropriate for a country like India.

Pronab Sen, India's former chief statistician, said Tuesday the central bank's interest rates can't directly affect food prices and the government should use fiscal policy interventions to target food inflation instead. *Bloomberg News*

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/08/08/india-considering-major-cut-to-food-weighting-in-cpi-basket/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Close to 50K fishers threatened by oil spill ‘effect’ in Manila Bay

- **Jonathan L. Mayuga**
- **August 8, 2024**

THE threat of oil spills continues to affect fishing communities in Bataan, Cavite, Metro Manila, Bulacan, and Pampanga, as a result of a Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) warning not to buy and eat fish caught from oil-affected areas.

According to BFAR, the number of Fisherfolk in Areas to be Potentially Affected by the Bataan Oil Spill based on the BFAR Municipal Fisherfolk Registration (FishR) program is 46,090 as of July 26, 2024.

BFAR has been conducting on-ground monitoring and assessment of fishing areas and communities that are potentially affected by the three consecutive maritime incidents in the waters of Bataan.

These include oil spill following the capsizing and sinking of the motor tanker (MT) Terra Nova near the coast of Lamao Point in Limay on July 25, 2024, and MTKR Jayson Bradley in the shallow waters of Mariveles on July 27, 2024; as well as the running aground of MV Mirola 1 in the vicinity waters of Mariveles on July 31.

According to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, the oil spill has so far affected 25,145 fishermen, and 21 coastal cities and municipalities are currently under a state of calamity.

The DA-BFAR has deployed personnel in catch landing sites and local markets in the affected and nearby areas to ensure that oil spill-contaminated seafood does not reach the consumers and at the same time, evaluate market dynamics to maintain the price stability of fish.

At the same time, the BFAR’s floating assets have been mobilized to assist partner agencies in monitoring and surveillance, clean-up operations, and fabrication and deployment of oil spill booms using used nets and coco fiber.

The BFAR has been in close coordination with the Provincial Local Government Units and the Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (RDRRMC) to expedite the early recovery program.

The Bureau is set to release fuel subsidies and additional food packs/relief packages to mitigate the impact of the oil spill on the livelihood of displaced fishers.

Additionally, the agency is also validating alternative areas for capture fishing.

As a safety measure, the Bureau advises against consuming fish caught in areas where oil slicks have been observed. This is to avoid incidents of food poisoning as a result of ingesting contaminated seafood. DA-BFAR, likewise, urges fisherfolk and the general public to remain calm and monitor the situation through updates issued by government authorities.

‘Fish tastes like oil’

Jochelle Magracia, chairperson of the Bataan-based group YoungBEAN, told the BusinessMirror that BFAR’s warning is not without basis.

“I’ve eaten fish. I’m [from] Barangay Lamao and the fish tastes like oil,” says Magracia.

Barangay Lamao is the site of the first vessel that sank in Limay, Bataan, carrying around 1.4 million liters of industrial fuel oil. The Philippine Coast Guard (PCH) is having trouble safely extracting the oil, which creates a feeling of fear among the coastal communities.

“What if the oil started to leak and affect us? How long will this problem last?” she asked in Filipino.

According to MaGracia, fish that used to sell at P300 per kilo could not even fetch a buyer for P50 a kilo.

“What is happening is that the fishermen and their families are the ones eating the fish that they catch,” she said.

According to her, help from the government is not felt in the coastal communities of Bataan. “The first time, fishermen were the ones to get the package of support. That was July 30. But then first week of August, the wife or children of fishermen are being required to pick up the package. I don’t know why but it is now harder for the fishermen to receive the support,” she lamented.

“In Mariveles, where the third vessel was reported, the oil is very much visible now and there were activities to contain the oil through improvised spill boom,” she added.

According to BFAR, developments on the incident and the impact on fisheries such as the imposition of fishing bans could affect 10,988 fishermen in Bataan alone. However, the figure does not include the unregistered fishermen.

In Bulacan, there are 8,264 fishermen and 5,902 in Pampanga.

In the Calabarzon, there are 13,806 registered fishermen, all in the province of Cavite; and 7,130 in Metro Manila.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/08/08/close-to-50k-fishers-threatened-by-oil-spill-effect-in-manila-bay/>

MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT:

DA orders audit on importation of alternative sweeteners

By

Jed Macapagal

-

August 8, 2024

The United Sugar Producers Federation (UNIFED) said Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel has ordered the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) to conduct an audit of imported alternative sweeteners following reports of an alarming volume of premixes have entered the country the last eight years.

UNIFED officials said imports of alternative sweeteners have reached 200,000 to 300,000 metric tons per year.

“This volume of sugar premixes represent about 4 million bags of sugar amounting to roughly P10 billion and the continued lack of regulation for these sugar-based products is highly detrimental to the sugar industry,” said Manuel Lamata, UNIFED president, in a statement.

Lamata said demand for sugar has remained constant in the last 10 years despite the growth of population.

UNIFED said Tiu Laurel ordered SRA administrator Pablo Azcona to “look into the actual volumes of other sugars coming into the country and if warranted, require them to acquire clearances as well.”

The groups said under tariff code 17.02 of the Asean Harmonized Tariff Nomenclature, only high fructose corn syrup is being strictly regulated while other sugars like glucose, sucrose, maltose, dextrose, maltodextrin and lactose among others are not being regulated.

https://malaya.com.ph/news_business/da-orders-audit-on-importation-of-alternative-sweeteners/

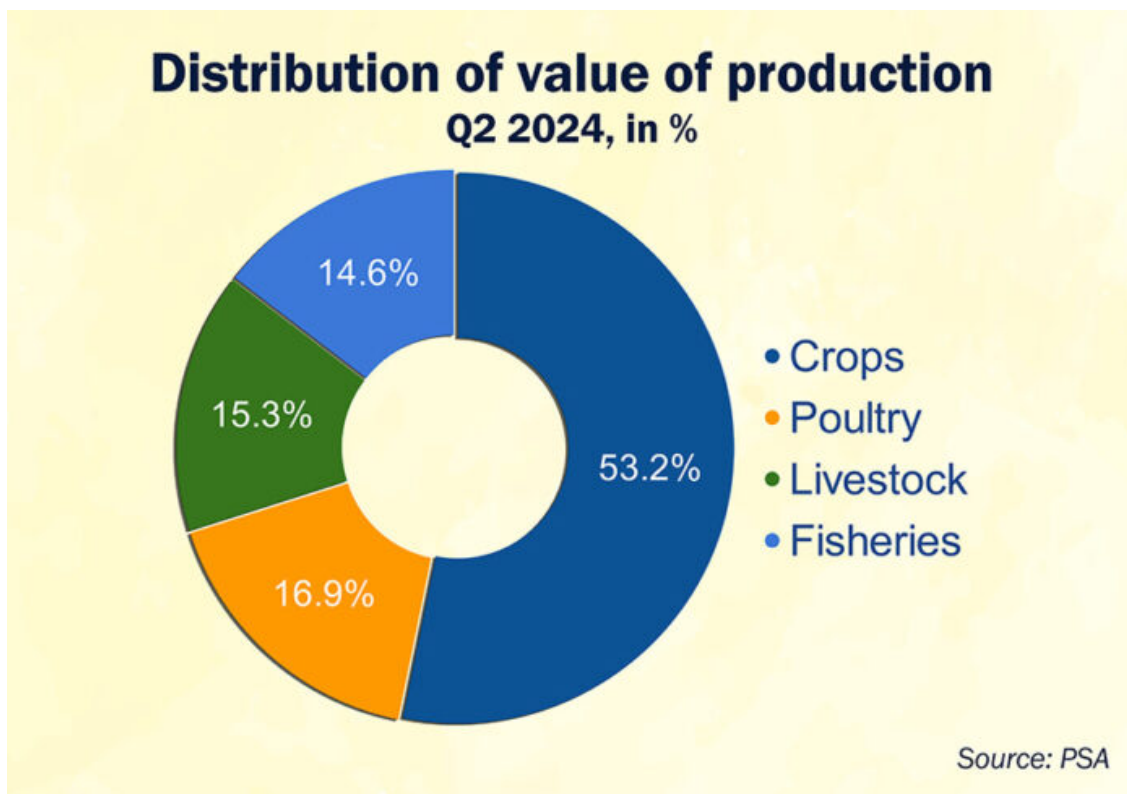
Farm output contracts 3.3%

By

Jed Macapagal

-

August 8, 2024



Agriculture production value contracted 3.3 percent year-on-year in the second quarter on the dismal performance of crops and livestock, data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) showed.

At constant 2018 prices, the decline translated to a value of P413.91 billion for the second quarter of the year.

For the first six months of the year, the value of production in agriculture and fisheries at constant 2018 prices is equivalent to a 1.5 percent decrease.

The crops subsector's value of production dropped 8.6 percent year-on-year, equivalent to P220.04 billion and accounted for 53.2 percent or more than half of the total value of production of the country's agriculture and fisheries.

Weaker production were registered for palay at 9.4 percent to 3.85 million MT from 4.25 million MT as well as for corn at 20.4 percent to 1.17 million MT from 1.47 million MT.

Reductions were also recorded for sugarcane, onion, tomato, mongo, abaca, rubber, cassava, eggplant, sweet potato, ampalaya, coconut, banana, mango, pineapple, tobacco, coffee and potato.

The only crops which showed improvements for the period were calamansi, cacao and cabbage.

The livestock subsector, which contributed 15.3 percent or P63.33 billion of the total value of agricultural production, posted a slight year-on-year decline in value of 0.3 percent.

Hog production weakened by 0.2 percent to 422.06 MT from 422.72 MT while carabao production fell 2.4 percent to 32.90 MT from 33.72 MT.

The drop in the livestock sector was cushioned by improvements in dairy, cattle and goat.

The poultry subsector recorded the highest improvement of 8.7 percent to P70.15 billion and which accounted for 16.9 percent of total agriculture output.

The performance of the subsector was pushed by increases in the production of chicken, chicken eggs and duck, with duck eggs as the only segment which recorded decline. All segments of the subsector including chicken, chicken eggs, ducks and duck eggs posted improvements.

Chicken production reached 520.48 MT from 477.76 MT, an 8.9 percent growth while chicken eggs output hit 198.04 MT from 181.74 MT, a 9 percent increase.

The fisheries subsector posted a 2.2-percent increase in value of production, contributing P60.40 billion or 14.6 percent of total agricultural output.

Increases were recorded for skipjack, big eye tuna, yellowfin tuna, frigate tuna, vannamei, blue crab, fimbriated sardines, talakitok and alumahan.

Production declines were observed for tiger prawn, grouper, seaweeds, sapsap, matangbaka, mud crab, galunggong, squid, tilapia, milkfish, bisugo and tamban.

DA Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said despite the overall drop, the agriculture sector “has demonstrated resilience, bolstered by strategic interventions” that limited the impact of El Niño on crop harvest and the African swine fever (ASF) on hog production, particularly during the second quarter.

“In response to the El Niño-induced challenges, the DA has launched several key initiatives to support the agricultural sector. These measures include P14.54 billion allocated for Rice Farmers Financial Assistance, production support, farmer indemnification, and loan provisions. Additionally, the DA has earmarked P350 million for ASF vaccine procurement, pending Food and

Drug Administration approval, and continues to promote biosecurity measures to control the spread of ASF,” de Mesa said.

He said the DA’s proactive approach aims to mitigate the impact of adverse weather conditions and strengthen the sector’s capacity to rebound.

“The support measures are designed to enhance productivity and support farmers, demonstrating the DA’s commitment to sustaining agricultural growth and stability despite external challenges,” de Mesa said.

Danilo Fausto, Philippine Chamber of Agriculture and Food Inc. president, said additional mitigation measures are needed to curb the effects of climate change to the local agri sector.

“Climate change or El Niño, greatly contributed to the decline in crops’ volume of production affecting palay, corn and sugarcane. Effects of climate change is really difficult to control. Additional mitigation measures and more preparation than what was done should be put in place for future interventions,” Fausto said.

https://malaya.com.ph/news_business/farm-output-contracts-3-3/

Govt turns over irrigation equipment, inaugurates flood mitigation system

By

Jocelyn Montemayor

-

August 8, 2024



President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. leads the inauguration of the Integrated Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation Project-Stage 1 in Masantol, Pampanga on Aug. 7, 2024. (PCO Photo)

PRESIDENT Marcos Jr. yesterday led the turnover of P782.132-million worth of heavy equipment such as excavators, trailer trucks and dumpers to the regional offices and other beneficiaries of the three-year Re-fleeting Program of the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) which aims to improve the agricultural sector and help attain food security in the Philippines.

The President also inaugurated the Integrated Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation Project-Stage 1 (IDRR-CCA 1) in Masantol in Pampanga which is expected to reduce the flood level and duration from 66 days to 17 days in the municipalities of Macabebe, Masantol, Minalin, and Sto. Tomas.

The President, during the turnover of 148 new heavy equipment held in Mexico in Pampanga, said the third tranche of the re-fleeting program which is worth over P1 billion will be turned over in 2025. The first tranche of equipment which included 141 units benefitting 17 NIA regional offices were turned over in 2023.

Marcos said the provision of the new machineries will empower the NIA regional offices, the irrigators' associations, and the farmers to ensure the sustainability of the country's irrigation systems.

The President said the re-fleeting program would help "avoid losses and to promote more efficient use of water resources that will in turn, produce better and more crops."

Marcos said it would also help in repairing and building more irrigation facilities that were damaged by natural calamities such as typhoons Carina and Butchoy can be immediately done.

Under the re-fleeting program, heavy equipment will be utilized in the operations and maintenance of irrigation systems, particularly in canal desilting operations in preparation for the wet crop season.

NIA at present manages 257 National Irrigation Systems and 8,802 Communal Irrigation Systems

Meanwhile, at the inauguration of the IDRR-CCA 1, the President directed the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) to ensure the second stage of the project will proceed as scheduled “to fully realize the project’s benefits and provide long-term solutions to flooding” in Pampanga.

“We are very optimistic this will redound to improving the people’s lives by enhancing the disaster resilience of all our communities,” Marcos said.

He extended his gratitude to the South Korean government for its technical assistance in realizing the project which aims to increase and improve the capacity of the Third River, Eastern Branch River, Caduang Tete River, and Sapang Maragul River which all drains into the Pampanga River.

The P7.57-billion project was sourced from the Export-Import Bank of Korea-Economic Development Cooperation Fund.

The President also highlighted the government has completed several flood control projects in Central Luzon such as the P85-million Pampanga River in Gabaldon in Nueva Ecija which was completed in May 2024, and the P91- million rehabilitation of the eroded bank of the Pampanga River in Candating in Arayat that was completed in October last year.

He committed that the government, through the DPWH, will expeditiously complete the other ongoing flood control projects especially in Central Luzon, which had been affected by the heavy rains and flash floods brought by Typhoon Carina and the Habagat.

https://malaya.com.ph/news_business/govt-turns-over-irrigation-equipment-inaugurates-flood-mitigation-system/

THE MANILA TIMES:

Facility to boost Ilocos tomato farming



By Leander C. Domingo

August 8, 2024

The newly completed P33.5-million cold storage facility in Sarrat is expected to boost the tomato industry in Ilocos Norte.

Deputy Project Director Dennis Tactac said that the first of its kind facility in Region 1 (Ilocos Region) funded by the Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) under the Department of Agriculture (DA), was turned over to the San Joaquin Multipurpose Cooperative (SJMPC) in Sarrat on July 29.

Tactac said the facility will also be a showcase for other funding institutions, as well as farmers' cooperatives and associations, on benchmarking for similar projects in the future.



The new P33.5-million cold storage facility in Sarrat that can boost the tomato industry in Ilocos Norte. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

"We have patiently waited for this for one year and finally it was inaugurated and turned over to SJMPC," said DA Region 1 Executive Director Annie Bares.

Bares added that with proper coordination and management, the cooperative can succeed in handling the facility with its more than 7,000 members. The cold storage facility has a capacity of over 100 metric tons.

The turnover of the facility comes with a trading capital amounting to P1 million and 512 plastic crates to support the cooperative's marketing activities.

On the viability of the project, 50 contract grower-members of SJMPC are expected to realize a 212-percent increase in annual income over two planting seasons.

Sarrat Mayor Remigio Medrano said they have been encouraging farmers to go into tomato cultivation.

"We have been clustering the agricultural sector to encourage them to plant more tomatoes, otherwise the capacity of the facility is not maximized," he said.

Medrano said that the local government of Sarrat, together with DA Region 1, PRDP and the Ilocos Norte provincial government, will continue to monitor and support the operations of SJMPC.

"The commodity (tomato) also has a shelf life. We cannot store the commodity for more than two months if it cannot last for that long," Medrano said.

"It would be ideal if the control system of the refrigeration system of the cold storage functions in accordance with the type of commodity that will be put inside the facility," he added.

Ilocos Norte Gov. Matthew Joseph Manotoc said that the cold storage facility is not just the sole long-term solution for tomato farmers in the province.

"What is important is the marketing of the product and before we plant, we should already know who will buy and as well as the price," Manotoc said.

The governor said farmers in Ilocos Norte, including SJMPC members, should be market-driven "so that our farmers and cooperatives will earn more."

"Let's make sure that this will succeed and become something that we can be proud of and ultimately, provide a significant benefit to our farmers. This will be something we can benchmark and replicate across the province," Manotoc said.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/08/business/agribusiness/facility-to-boost-ilocos-tomato-farming/1962500>

THE MANILA TIMES:

Pangasinan agriculture modernizing



By Philippine News Agency

August 8, 2024

PANGASINAN'S corporate farming program will get a boost through a new set of agricultural machinery from the Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (PHilMech).

In a phone interview on Monday, provincial agriculturist Dalisay Moya said PHilMech will donate a four-wheeler tractor, a combined harvester, two riding-type transplanters and six walk-behind transplanters to the province.

"These machinery and equipment will be used for the implementation of the corporate farming," she said, noting that an agreement will be signed in the coming days.

This is the second time Pangasinan is receiving a donation under the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund-Mechanization Program aimed to support the national government's food sufficiency thrust under the Masagana Program for Agriculture.

Pangasinan reached 209-percent rice sufficiency in 2023 after rice farmers produced 1.3 million metric tons from the 267,946.14 hectares of land.

The combined output of yellow and white corn varieties reached 419,577.5 metric tons.

Last year, PHilMech donated six hand tractors, 10 combined harvesters, two multi-pass rice mills and a walk-behind-transplanter to Pangasinan.

Moya said the six walk-behind transplanters that they will get this year will be given to the six districts of the province while the other machinery will be allocated depending on the needs of the farmer-groups.

About 23 of the 48 towns and cities of Pangasinan, covering around 650 hectares, are included in the corporate farming program.

Moya said there are around 685 farmers from 25 farmer-cooperatives and associations who benefit from the program.

The flagship program aims to enhance food production and transform farming into a lucrative and sustainable economic enterprise through the so-called convergence approach among farmer cooperatives and associations, local government units, the Department of Agriculture and its attached agencies, various national government entities, the private sector and financial institutions.

In an earlier interview, Pangasinan Gov. Ramon Guico III said the program resulted in reduced palay (unmilled rice) production cost per hectare by 9.08 percent or P6,464 for hybrid and 8.04 percent or P5,091 for inbred palay in 2023.

These figures were based on the baseline data from P71,200 to P64,736 for hybrid and from P63,320 to P58,229 for inbred per hectare.

For the cost of production for palay per kilogram, there was a reduction of 18.73 percent for hybrid and 20.80 percent for inbred palay, Guico said.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/08/business/agribusiness/pangasinan-agriculture-modernizing/1962495>

THE MANILA TIMES:

Aquaculture benefits Region 2 small fishers



[By Leander C. Domingo](#)

August 8, 2024

THE Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) office in Region 2 (Cagayan Valley) is sustaining its initiatives to boost the output of aquaculture in the region.

A good example is in Kasibu, Nueva Vizcaya, where 57-year-old Simeon Rafael utilizes a pond-based technology demonstration project on the grow-out culture of tilapia.

On July 25, Rafael got a partial harvest of some 100 kilograms of marketable-sized tilapia during the Harvest Field Day, a joint activity of BFAR Region 2 through the Provincial Fishery Office in Nueva Vizcaya headed by Jay-Arre Usquisa and the local government unit (LGU) of Kasibu.

□ [Yulo's mom apologizes](#)

Usquisa said the harvest field day aims to showcase the economic benefits of growing tilapia in fishponds and at the same time promote food security in the mountainous province of Nueva Vizcaya.

Rafael's pond is expected to produce 940 kilograms — sold at P160 per kilo — with an 80 percent survival rate once the total harvest is done.

The BFAR said the pond has an area of 1,000 square meters utilized as a techno-demo site and was stocked with 5,000 tilapia fingerlings.

Aside from technical assistance, the bureau also provided such as fertilizers and feeds to the project cooperator.

Rafael thanked the bureau for choosing him to showcase the lucrative source of income.

"There is a growing number of fisherfolks in this mountain town of Kasibu, and I am one of those selected for this project," he said.

Another BFAR Region 2 initiatives is in Cagayan province, also to promote food security, with the BFAR and the LGU of La-lo jointly spearheading the conduct of harvest field day of its technology demonstration on the grow-out culture of tilapia in Barangay Naguilian on July 18.

Project beneficiary Hector Ponce received full livelihood assistance from the bureau including inputs such as commercial feeds, fingerlings, fertilizers and technical guidance.

The BFAR Region 2 team said Ponce was provided with 2,500 pieces of tilapia fingerlings as a startup and has progressed over a four-month culture period.

During the harvest field day, Ponce yielded 130 kilograms of tilapia.

Also in Cagayan province, some 15 Abulug women-fisherfolk are looking at fish processing as a promising side hustle with the help of the bureau.

The women-fisherfolk are eyeing fish processing as one of their options as a side job so they can have additional income for their families.

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On July 17 to 18, they participated in a training titled "Skills Training on Value Added Fish Processing Technology" in Barangay San Julian in Abulug that was spearheaded by the bureau's training arm, the Cagayan provincial fishery office and the town.

The bureau said the participants were taught the basics of proper fish handling, good manufacturing practices, sanitation standard operating producers, product packaging and labeling.

Participant Emi Tapeç said various value-added products from tilapia were produced as their output of the training, including fish ball, fish roll, fish skin chicharon, fish embutido, fish breaded stick and fish tocino.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/08/business/agribusiness/aquaculture-benefits-region-2-small-fishers/1962497>

THE MANILA TIMES:

SRA urged to regulate sugar-based products

[By Janine Alexis Miguel](#)

August 8, 2024

INDUSTRY stakeholders are urging the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) to regulate all sugar-based products to address the influx of imports that lowers demand for the commodities that are locally produced.

The United Sugar Producers Federation (Unifed) said that around 200,000 metric tons (MT) to 300,000 MT of sugar products enter the country annually, including premixes of the commodity.

"This volume of sugar premixes represents about 4 million bags of sugar, amounting to roughly P10 billion, and the continued lack of regulation for these sugar-based products is highly detrimental to the sugar industry," Unifed President Manuel Lamata said on Wednesday.

He said that the continued absence of regulation for sugar-based products is detrimental to the local sugar industry.

Currently, only high fructose syrup is regulated under Tariff code 17.02 of the Asean Harmonized Tariff Nomenclature. Asean is the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Other sweeteners, such as glucose, sucrose and maltodextrin, are not similarly controlled, which can lead to a surge in the imports of sugar-based products.

"Before we knew it, we received reports that they are coming in, in staggering amounts," Lamata said.

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Unifed said that this regulatory gap might be the reason for the stagnation in demand for locally produced sugar despite the country's population growth. If not addressed, Lamata said that this could impact the sugar industry and the 5 million Filipinos dependent on it.

With that scenario, the group said that the Department of Agriculture responded swiftly by instructing the SRA to investigate the volumes of imports and to consider implementing clearance procedures if necessary.

Unifed, along with other sugar stakeholders, sought the help of Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. during a consultative meeting on Tuesday.

"We hope that Administrator (Pablo Luis) Azcona will make this a priority and can update us before the next milling season starts," he said.

The consultation also included SRA Board members, representatives from the Philippine Sugar Millers Association, and other sugar federations.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/08/business/top-business/sra-urged-to-regulate-sugar-based-products/1962588>

THE MANILA TIMES:

NIA re-fleeting program to get P1B allocation



[By Kristina Maralit](#)

August 8, 2024

PRESIDENT Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Wednesday bared that the government is allocating P1 billion next year for the third tranche of National Irrigation Administration (NIA) re-fleeting program, a nationwide program aimed at improving the agriculture sector to attain food security in the country.

The Chief Executive made the announcement during the turnover ceremony of various operations and maintenance equipment for NIA in Mexico, Pampanga — the second tranche of capacity-building for the agency.

"This investment in our irrigation infrastructure attests to our unwavering commitment to supporting the backbone of our economy — the agriculture sector," he said.

The event saw 148 newly procured heavy equipment amounting to P782 million meant to improve irrigation systems in the Philippines and make them more functional and effective.

In 2023, the first tranche of equipment — 141 units of excavators amounting to about P776 million — had been distributed which benefited 17 NIA regional offices.

Marcos said the distribution of the equipment goes beyond the procurement and distribution of machinery as it also empowers the NIA regional offices, the irrigators' associations and the farmers to ensure the sustainability of the country's irrigation systems.

It also aims "to avoid losses and to promote more efficient use of water resources that will in turn produce better and more crops."

"With these [machineries] and with these equipment to optimize our irrigation systems, the NIA has provided services to more than half of our National Irrigation Systems (NIS) and Communal Irrigation Systems (CIS)," the President said.

"In areas where dam construction is not feasible or where there is a need to pump water to irrigate farmlands, the NIA has provided renewable energy-driven irrigation systems. We will not stop to find solutions that work for our farmers. We remain steadfast in our efforts to employ sustainable technologies to meet our irrigation needs," he added.

At present, NIA has 257 NIS and 8,802 CIS.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/08/regions/nia-re-fleeting-program-to-get-p1b-allocation/1962589#:~:text=PRESIDENT%20Ferdinand%20Marcos%20Jr.%20on,food%20security%20in%20the%20country.>

THE MANILA TIMES:

Living the El Niño and La Niña life



[By Samira Gutoc](#)

August 8, 2024

I recently attended a hearing on flooding that was presided over by Sen. Robin Padilla and called the attention of officials of the Department of Public Works and Highways, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority and other government agencies in charge of the country's calamity infrastructure.

Climate change is acknowledged but what more concrete actions can be done aside from the usual information, education and communication activities?

Local government officials from Bulacan, Camanava and Manila attended the hearing. They presented issues and actions, and listened to recommendations on water catchment and other flood-control management measures. Padilla cited Japan, where underground infrastructures can accommodate all the water collected.

Months ago, Padilla filed a resolution seeking a comprehensive public information dissemination campaign to help the nation prepare for various "environmental shocks," such as the El Niño and La Niña weather phenomena.

Senate Resolution 1025 directs the Senate committee on public information and mass media, which Padilla heads, to conduct an inquiry on the matter in aid of legislation.

The lawmaker said Filipinos must be informed about the necessary preparations and responses by the national and local governments, as they had been "taking the brunt of these environmental shocks" over the years.

Community radio and public broadcasting channels must be strengthened. Local languages must be tapped to localize campaigns on hazards, as many communities continue to be stubbornly situated in danger zones.

Padilla assured on Tuesday that he would push for a budget allocation that would strengthen the public information campaign about El Niño and La Niña next year.

He made the assurance during the public hearing of the Senate subcommittee on Senate Resolution 987, which seeks to look into the effectiveness of the information and awareness campaign of the national government on the impact of El Niño on the country.

Fluvial flooding occurs when rivers and streams exceed their capacity and overflow their banks due to intense or prolonged precipitation.

The flooding brought about by climate change threatens at least 4.8 million individuals and may result in at least P274 billion in annual damage in the near term, and 5.2 million individuals and P300 billion in the long term, according to a report in the 2024 National Action Plan (NAP).

Based on the 268-page NAP, which was approved by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., pluvial floods may result in the disruption of approximately 4.8 million individuals in the near term, or from 2020 to 2040 (annual average), and 5.2 million individuals in the long term from 2040 to 2060 (annual average).

The report also said pluvial flooding was forecast to cause up to P274 billion in infrastructure damage in the near term and nearly P300 billion in the long term.

Pluvial flooding is defined as inundation of land and urban areas caused by heavy precipitation, where the excess water cannot be efficiently absorbed or drained due to several factors, including impermeable surfaces and inadequate drainage systems.

At least 250,000 Filipinos are exposed to fluvial flooding — which result from swollen rivers — in the near term, the report said, with economic losses of P13 billion and threatens 300,000 individuals and possible damage of P16 billion in the near term.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/08/08/opinion/columns/living-the-el-nio-and-la-nia-life/1962516>

MANILA STANDARD:

Marcos urged to cut rice production costs through palm oil biofuels

Spotlight



By Manila Standard

August 7, 2024, 7:54 pm

In his third State of the Nation Address, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. reaffirmed his commitment to making food affordable for every Filipino, particularly focusing on reducing the price of rice, which currently ranges from PhP45 to P65 per kilogram.

To address this challenge, innovative solutions are being proposed to lower rice production costs, one of which is the use of biofuel in powering rice production processes.

On the morning of the SONA, Jose Vidal, a farmer group leader from Occidental Mindoro, made a critical plea to President Marcos, emphasizing the need for government intervention to enable local farmers to produce rice competitively, especially against imported varieties that benefit from lower tariffs.

Vidal specifically requested support in reducing production costs — a challenge that biofuel, an economical and environmental alternative energy source could help address given the high

cost of electricity and diesel fuel used in harvesting machinery and rice millers.

Currently, the biofuels mandate in the local energy sector implements a 3% coco methyl ester (CME) blend in all diesel fuel sold nationwide.

The Department of Energy has noted potential net savings of PhP4.17 per liter of diesel with a higher CME blend of 5%, corresponding to a 10% increase in mileage for vehicles using biodiesel including farm vehicles.

These savings could be even greater with the use of crude palm oil, which costs lower than crude coconut oil, at PhP51 versus PhP81, respectively.

In Indonesia, the world's largest producer of palm oil, the biodiesel blending mandate for palm methyl ester (PME) set at 35%.

Palm oil, a versatile commodity, finds applications across various industries. It is a key ingredient in food products, personal care items, and numerous other by-products.

Beyond these uses, palm oil's potential as a biofuel is particularly noteworthy. The advantages of using palm oil biofuels in rice production are multifaceted.

Firstly, biofuels are renewable and have an abundant global supply, reducing dependency on fossil fuels and stabilizing energy costs.

Secondly, the use of biofuels can lower greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to more sustainable agricultural practices.

By strategically leveraging palm oil-integrated biofuels, the agricultural sector gains an economical alternative to fossil fuel diesel. The process of converting palm oil into biofuel involves refining the crude oil into biodiesel, which can then be used to power various types of machinery.

For rice production, this means that biofuels can operate rice plantations, milling processes, and essential farm vehicles such as harvesters and tractors. By replacing expensive fossil fuels with more affordable biofuels, farmers can significantly reduce their operational costs.

The promise of palm oil biofuels in reducing rice production costs is clear. With government support and innovative approaches, the Philippines can create a more sustainable agricultural sector, and pave the way for a more affordable and competitive rice market, benefiting the economy, farmers and consumers alike.

<https://manilastandard.net/spotlight/314481484/marcos-urged-to-cut-rice-production-costs-through-palm-oil-biofuels.html>

REMATE:

PH Agri output sa Q2 bumaba ng 3.3% – PSA

August 7, 2024 14:31



MANILA, Philippines – Bumaba ng 3.3 percent ang agricultural output sa ikalawang quarter ng 2024 dahil sa pagbaba ng halaga ng crops at livestock production, ayon sa datos ng Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) na inilabas nitong Miyerkules, Agosto 7.

Sa ulat, sinabi ng PSA na ang halaga ng produksyon sa agriculture at fisheries ay bumaba sa P413.91 billion mula sa P427.69 billion noong nakaraang taon.

Ang crop production ay bumaba sa P220.04 bilyon, o 8% na mas mababa kumpara sa ikalawang quarter noong 2023.

Sinabi ng PSA na nakapagtala rin ng pagbaba sa nasabing period ang palay at corn production. Nakapagtala rin ng 0.3 percent na pagbaba sa halaga ng produksyon ang livestock, o P63.33 bilyon.

Sa kabila nito, lumago naman ang produksyon sa poultry at fisheries sa P70.15 billion at P60.40 billion sa ikalawang quarter ng 2024. *RNT/JGC*

<https://remate.ph/ph-agri-output-sa-q2-bumaba-ng-3-3-psa/>

ABANTE:

Kamara inaprub economic sabotage sa agri smuggling

- Abante News
- August 7, 2024



Niratipika ng Kamara de Representantes ang bicameral conference report ng panukalang Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act.

Ayon kay House Committee on Agriculture and Food chairperson at Quezon Rep. Mark Enverga ang ratipikasyon ay isang “significant victory” para sa sektor ng agrikultura at mga Pilipino.

Sinabi ni Enverga na layunin ng panukala na maging produktibo at maprotektahan ang mga mag-sasaka at mangingisda laban sa mga smuggler, hoarder, at profiteer. Ang pagpasa ng panukala ay prayoridad ng Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (LEDAC).

“President Ferdinand “Bongbong” R. Marcos Jr., in his 2023 State of the Nation Address, warned that the days of smugglers and hoarders are numbered, identifying them as key contributors to rising agricultural prices. This Act is our response to his call for action,” sabi ni Enverga.

Bukod sa pagpapataw ng parusa sa mga smuggler, hoarder, profiteer, at mga kasama sa kartel, binibig-yan ng panukala ng kapangyarihan ang Department of Agriculture, sa tulong ng iba pang ahensya na maglabas ng Daily Price Index upang mapigilan ang price manipulation at matiyak na patas ang presyo ng pagkain.

Babalangkasin din ang Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Council at isang special team ng mga prosekutor mula sa Department of Justice na hahawak ng mga kasong may kaugnayan sa agricultural smuggling. (Billy Begas)

<https://www.abante.com.ph/2024/08/07/kamara-inaprub-economic-sabotage-sa-agri-smuggling/>