

CLIPPINGS FOR TODAY SEPTEMBER 18, 2024

A. MANILA BULLETIN:

Majority of pigs inoculated with ASF vaccine have developed antibodies, says DA

B. THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Hogs vaccinated vs ASF remain healthy – DA

C. PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Sugar farmers urge regulation of artificial sweeteners

Prolonged El Niño curbed third quarter palay output

D. BUSINESS WORLD:

Palay output estimated to have fallen 11% in Q3

Yellow onion imports starting to arrive in PHL

Sugar industry urges more controls on imports of artificial sweeteners

Century Pacific Food to distribute 100,000 coconut seedlings to aid planting effort

E. THE MANILA TIMES:

Farmers, fishermen in Catanduanes get aid

Tiu Laurel cautiously upbeat on agri output

F. MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT:

AMID REPORTED DEATHS: 30-day post-ASF vaccination period critical: DA

Govt action sought on sweetener imports

G. BUSINESS MIRROR:

PHL paddy rice output likely dropped 11% to 3.36 MMT

Group appeals to DA: Call off fish importation next month

H. REMATE:

DA kinalampag sa mabagal na ASF vax roll-out

9 lugar sa VisMin, binalaan sa red tide

Bird flu outbreak iniulat sa Czech Republic

I. ABANTE:

Paggamit ng vessel monitoring system hinirit

Mabilis na pagpapakalat ng bakuna vs ASF hirit ng mga magbababoy

MANILA BULLETIN:

Majority of pigs inoculated with ASF vaccine have developed antibodies, says DA

BY JEL SANTOS

Sep 17, 2024 10:32 AM



(DA PHOTO)

A majority of the pigs inoculated with the African Swine Fever (ASF) vaccine in Batangas have produced antibodies within 14 days of inoculation, the Department of Agriculture (DA) announced on Tuesday, Sept. 17.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary for Swine and Poultry, Constante “Dante” Palabrica, who is a doctor of veterinary medicine, said 60 percent of the inoculated hogs developed antibodies.

“Results are out: the vaccinated pigs showed antibodies 60 percent of total pigs after 14 [days] post vaccination—good sign so next will be after 14 days to check for [an] increase in percent,” Palabrica told the Manila Bulletin in a text message.

He explained that it is normal for the vaccinated hogs to not all have developed antibodies yet, as some take longer than others.

“After 14 days kukuha ulit ng dugo upang makita na ‘yung negative magiging positive. Hindi sabay-sabay sila nag react—normal ‘yan [na] reaction (After 14 days, blood will be drawn again to see if the negative ones will turn positive. They don't all react at the same time—that's a normal reaction),” said Palabrica.

Meanwhile, Palabrica urged the public not to believe erroneous reports circulating on social media linking the deaths of some inoculated pigs to the ASF vaccine.

“Hayaan munang magtuloy-tuloy ang monitoring ng mga binakunahan at huwag maging judgemental sa ilang baboy na namatay na dahil may comorbidities. Tinututukan natin ito at BAI (Bureau of Animal Industry) na magsasabi kung okay or hindi —huwag maniwala sa fake news (Let the monitoring of the vaccinated continue, and don’t be judgmental about the few pigs that died due to comorbidities. We are closely monitoring this, and the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) will determine if everything is okay or not—don’t believe in fake news),” he said.

The DA official was referring to the six pigs inoculated with the ASF vaccine in Batangas that died because of their preexisting conditions, not because of the vaccine.

Assistant Secretary Arnel De Mesa, the spokesperson of the DA, said one of the six pigs was crippled while the five others were suffering from pulmonary ailments that were not disclosed prior to the vaccination.

The agriculture department started the administration of the ASF vaccine in Lobo, Batangas on August 30, inoculating a total of 41 pigs. Small-hold and backyard hog-raisers were prioritized in the controlled ASF vaccination.

Since it is under controlled testing, the DA closely monitoring the effects of the ASF vaccine on the first batch of inoculated pigs.

Only 31 vaccinated pigs are currently being monitored, as six from the first batch of hogs inoculated with the ASF vaccine died due to comorbidities.

The agency has allocated 10,000 doses of ASF vaccine to Batangas province.

Based on DA’s data, 7,900 hogs have been culled in Batangas due to ASF as of Sept. 6.

Reports said ASF has been detected in 96 barangays across Batangas.

The agriculture department had earlier increased indemnification for diseased hogs surrendered for culling, raising the compensation ceiling to ₱12,000 for breeders from the previous maximum of ₱5,000.

To curb the spread of the highly fatal disease, the government has allotted ₱300 million to procure 600,000 doses of the ASF vaccine from Vietnam.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/9/17/most-pigs-inoculated-with-asf-vaccine-develop-antibodies-says-da>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Hogs vaccinated vs ASF remain healthy – DA

[Romina Cabrera](#) - The Philippine Star

September 18, 2024 | 12:00am



The DA said results of ELISA or enzyme-linked immunoassay tests conducted on the hogs showed the presence of ASF antibodies in some pigs.

AFP / File

MANILA, Philippines — A majority of hogs included in the controlled vaccination against African swine fever (ASF) remain in good health and have developed antibodies, according to the Department of Agriculture.

The DA said results of ELISA or enzyme-linked immunoassay tests conducted on the hogs showed the presence of ASF antibodies in some pigs.

“The test results indicated the hogs are building immunity. All remaining pigs are healthy and under close observation,” DA Assistant Secretary Constante Palabrica said.

Earlier, the DA said five of 41 pigs inoculated with ASF vaccine died of pulmonary diseases and not of the virus.

The DA started the vaccination trial in Lobo, Batangas in a bid to control the spread of ASF, which has been hurting the swine industry.

The agency said that vaccination is only a part of a broader ASF control strategy, noting that comprehensive biosecurity measures are needed to curb the spread of the virus.

“Honest and timely reporting from farmers is essential for the program’s success,” Palabrica said.

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2024/09/18/2386068/hogs-vaccinated-vs-asf-remain-healthy-da>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Sugar farmers urge regulation of artificial sweeteners

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

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 02:30 AM September 18, 2024



| PHOTO: Official website of the Department of Agrarian Reform / [dar.gov.ph](#)

Sugar groups in the country are urging the government to address the unregulated entry and use of artificial sweeteners, warning that this would displace a substantial volume of sugar in the domestic market.

The Sugar Council and the National Congress of Unions in the Sugar Industry of the Philippines (Nacusip) raised “serious concern” about “the importation and use of artificial sweeteners.”

In a letter to Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr., sugar groups said the presence of artificial sweeteners sourced from abroad could result in the widespread displacement of sugarcane farm workers, sugar mill workers and biofuel workers and the degradation of the livelihood of families of agrarian reform beneficiaries.

The Sugar Council and the Nacusp also said this could affect children and dependents of industry workers and small farmers, who enjoy scholarships and other socio-economic benefits under the Social Amelioration Program funded by liens from locally produced sugar.

“We seek your help in providing us data on the impact of artificial sweeteners on the consumption of locally produced sugar,” groups said.

“We need your help because we are aware that this issue on artificial sweeteners will involve other government agencies to which you have access,” it added.

They also said sucralose, aspartame and acesulfame potassium—the most popular artificial sweeteners used in beverage manufacturing—are duty-free under the Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Trade in Goods Agreement.

Artificial sweeteners that enjoy zero tariffs compromise the capability of the local industry to compete amid rising production costs, the groups said. **INQ**

<https://business.inquirer.net/480552/sugar-farmers-urge-regulation-of-artificial-sweeteners>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Prolonged El Niño curbed third quarter palay output

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

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 03:20 AM September 18, 2024



Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. —MARIANNE BERMUDEZ

The country produced 3.36 million metric tons (MT) of palay (unhusked rice) in the July to September period, down by 11.4 percent from last year's output, as the prolonged dry spell caused by El Niño severely affected farmers' harvests.

In a report, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) said the third-quarter palay production estimated as of Aug. 1 was also 0.7 percent lower than the 3.39 million MT projected as of July 1.

It estimated a decline in the harvest area based on standing by 14.1 percent to 796,469 MT while the yield per hectare of palay reached 4.22 MT, an increment of 2.9 percent.

The PSA said 116,412 hectares of standing crop have been harvested, accounting for 14.6 percent of the total.

About 14.9 percent of standing palay crops yet to be harvested were at the vegetative stage while 58.7 percent of these were at the reproductive stage. The remaining 26.4 percent were at the maturing stage.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. reiterated his previous stance that local palay output would be flat this year because of the El Niño phenomenon, characterized by below-normal rainfall conditions.

“Production declined due to El Niño but we expect it to increase once La Niña begins. As I said yesterday, a curveball in the form of a typhoon might affect our production. But hopefully, I guess I am comfortable to say that production will be at least equal to last year,” he said (translated from Filipino) on the sidelines of an event in Makati City on Tuesday.

The country had recorded the highest palay output of 20.06 million MT in 2023, up by 1.5 percent from 19.76 million MT a year ago, data from the PSA showed.

However, in the first semester of 2024, palay production decreased by 5.5 percent to 8.53 million MT from 9.03 million MT.

Meanwhile, the PSA pegged corn output at 2.52 million MT, rising by 2.4 percent from the actual volume of 2.47 million MT a year ago.

On a quarterly basis, the volume of corn production dipped by 0.3 percent from the 2.53 million MT recorded in the April to June period.

The harvest area based on standing crop was estimated to have gone down by 1.9 percent to 806,526 hectares, while the yield per hectare of corn likely climbed by 4.3 percent to 3.13 MT.

Some 161,674 hectares of standing corn have been harvested, equivalent to 20 percent of the total.

About 6.9 percent of standing corn crops for harvest were at the vegetative stage, 59.9 percent at the reproductive stage and 33.1 percent at the maturing stage.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. reiterated his previous stance that local palay output would be flat this year because of El Niño phenomenon, characterized by below-normal rainfall conditions.

“Production declined due to El Niño but we expect it to increase once La Niña begins. As I said yesterday, a curveball in the form of a typhoon might affect our production. But hopefully, I guess I am comfortable to say that production will be at least equal to last year,” he said (translated from Filipino) on the sideline of an event in Makati City on Tuesday.

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<https://business.inquirer.net/480553/prolonged-el-nino-curbed-third-quarter-palay-output>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Palay output estimated to have fallen 11% in Q3

September 17, 2024 | 8:41 pm



A farmer threshes newly harvested palay grains at a ricefield in Mogpog, Marinduque in central Philippines, March 22, 2016. — REUTERS

By **Adrian H. Halili**, *Reporter*

OUTPUT of palay, or unmilled rice, is estimated to have declined 11.4% during the third quarter, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) said.

In a report, the PSA said that the palay harvest could come in at 3.36 million metric tons (MMT) during the three months to September. If the estimate is confirmed, it would fall far short of the 3.8 MMT in actual output reported a year earlier.

The PSA's third-quarter outlook is based on the standing rice crop as of Aug. 1.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) earlier downgraded its palay production estimate to 20.1 MMT for 2024, from the 20.44 MMT forecast issued earlier.

The PSA said that the total harvest area likely decreased 14.1% year on year to 796,470 hectares.

"The yield per hectare of palay may increase to 4.22 MT or by 2.9% from (the year-earlier) yield of 4.10 MT," the PSA said.

It added that 14.6% or 116,410 hectares of the crop was harvested as of Aug 1. It is about 469,400 MT.

“Of the total area of standing palay yet to be harvested, 14.9% were at the vegetative stage, 58.7% at the reproductive stage, and 26.4% at the maturing stage,” the PSA said.

On the other hand, corn production is estimated to have risen 2.4% to 2.52 MMT during the period, compared to the actual output of 2.47 MMT a year ago.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. has said that agricultural production could improve in the second half if no major typhoons damage the standing crop.

“The third and fourth quarter output should be good because we have water, but the only problem is if we get hit by storms or heavy rains,” Mr. Laurel said.

The DA has an output growth target of between 1% to 2% for 2024, an estimate which incorporates the impact of the El Niño and La Niña weather events.

“But I’m still optimistic that it will be much better than the first half of this year,” Mr. Laurel added.

Agricultural production declined 3.3% during the second quarter, worsening from the 1.2% drop a year prior, the PSA said.

“For the forecast for this year we need to know the adjusted forecast by the end of this month,” Mr. Laurel said.

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/09/17/622210/palay-output-estimated-to-have-fallen-11-in-q3/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Yellow onion imports starting to arrive in PHL

September 17, 2024 | 8:39 pm



PIXABAY

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said imports of yellow onion have started to arrive in response to local shortages.

“We have issued the import permits. From what I understand, 2,000 metric tons (MT) have already arrived,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. told reporters late Monday.

Last month, the DA said it will allow yellow onion imports of up to 16,000 MT until the end of the year.

In July, Mr. Laurel extended the import ban on red onion until the end of August, with supply deemed sufficient until February 2025.

He said however that the supply of domestic yellow onion is sufficient only until the end of August.

Separately, the Jollibee Group Foundation (JGF), the social development arm of the Jollibee Foods Corp., said that it is seeking to increase its onion purchases from domestic farmers. The company is expecting to increase the share of domestic onion purchases to 33% from 24% last year.

JGF President Gisela H. Tiongson said improved weather conditions have raised the yields of its partner farmers.

“Last year has been very good and we’re very thankful for that, expanding not only in terms of the number of farmers but also increasing the yield of their farms,” Ms. Tiongson added.

The national inventory of yellow onion was 1,642 MT as of Aug. 9, according to the Bureau of Plant Industry. Red onion stocks, on the other hand, were at 99,512 MT. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/09/17/622241/yellow-onion-imports-starting-to-arrive-in-phl/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Sugar industry urges more controls on imports of artificial sweeteners

September 17, 2024 | 8:39 pm



ALEXANDER GREY-UNSPLASH

THE SUGAR industry is calling for more controls on imported artificial sweeteners to keep them from further crowding out domestically grown sugar in the markets.

In a joint statement, the Sugar Council and the National Congress of Unions in the Sugar Industry of the Philippines said sugar substitutes have displaced a substantial volume of sugar on the domestic market.

The most popular artificial sweeteners used in beverage manufacturing are Sucralose, Aspartame, and Acesulfame Potassium.

Citing the Philippine Statistics Authority, the groups said imports of artificial sweeteners hit 1.1 million kilograms last year.

The groups urged the Department of Agriculture to release data on the impact of artificial sweeteners on the consumption of domestically grown sugar.

“(This would compromise) the ability of locally produced sugar to compete in the market, especially in the face of rising production costs,” the groups said.

It added that the unregulated imports could displace farm, mill, and biofuel industry workers.

Earlier, the United Sugar Producers Federation of the Philippines called for the increased regulation of other sweeteners competing with cane sugar.

It noted that the entry of glucose, sucrose, maltose, dextrose, maltodextrin and lactose is currently unregulated.

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

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

Under tariff code 17.02 of the ASEAN Harmonized Tariff Nomenclature, only high fructose corn syrup is regulated. Artificial sweeteners are admitted at zero tariff under the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement.
— **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/09/17/622206/sugar-industry-urges-more-controls-on-imports-of-artificial-sweeteners/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Century Pacific Food to distribute 100,000 coconut seedlings to aid planting effort

September 17, 2024 | 8:37 pm



PHILSTAR FILE PHOTO

CENTURY Pacific Food, Inc.'s (CNPf) Coco Mama brand said it hopes to distribute 100,000 coconut seedlings over the next five years to support the industry's bid to replace ageing trees.

"The project aims to contribute to the overall effort to revitalize the Philippine coconut industry," the company said in a statement on Tuesday.

Coco Mama is CNPF's coconut cream brand. The project was launched in General Santos City.

"Coco Mama's 'Save Our Coconuts' Project is part of the brand's efforts to contribute to the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) bigger mission of rehabilitating the coconut industry and uplifting the lives of coconut farmers," it added.

The PCA has been tasked by President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. to plant 100 million coconut trees by 2028.

The rehabilitation plan aims to address the advanced age of the nut-bearing trees. The PCA is seeking to plant about 8.5 million trees this year.

“We make our commitment to provide quality seedlings to smallholder farmer communities in the region,” Coco Mama Marketing Director Bryan Lingan said.

Under the Philippine Coconut Industry Development Plan 2024-2034 the tree replacement project is expected to increase coconut production by 4.7 billion nuts, valued at P33.1 billion, by 2034.

By 2025, the PCA aims to plant 15.3 million trees, followed by 25.4 million annually between 2026 and 2028.

Earlier, the President allocated an additional P1 billion to the PCA for the planting operation in 2025, with an additional P2.5 billion set aside for fertilization. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/09/17/622202/century-pacific-food-to-distribute-100000-coconut-seedlings-to-aid-planting-effort/>

Farmers, fishermen in Catanduanes get aid

By Rhaydz Barcia
September 18, 2024

LEGAZPI CITY — In an effort to alleviate the plight of fishermen and farmers on the island province of Catanduanes, the Department of Agriculture provided assistance worth P47.9 million through the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS) over the weekend.

Rodel Tornilla, DA Bicol regional executive director, led the distribution and turnover of various agricultural and fishery interventions in the province.

A total of P15,055,640 from the rice program, which included 1,500 bags of hybrid palay seeds for dry season cropping 2024-2025, fertilizer discount vouchers for 1,500 hectares rice area, soil ameliorants and biofertilizers for over 1,000 hectares of rice field, 55 units of knapsack sprayer and 264 liters of foliar fertilizer, were distributed to the 11 municipalities of Catanduanes.

Under the High-Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP), 24 sets of garden tools, two wheelbarrows, two plastic drums and assorted vegetable seeds were also given to the 11 local government units of Catanduanes.

Similarly, 25 schools from all over the province received Gulayan sa Paaralan packages.

DA Bicol also provided 39 caraheifers, sexually mature female carabaos that have not yet given birth, as rehab assistance to

farmers affected by the shear line in LGU-Bato, Viga, Panganiban and San Miguel; 200 piglets for hog raisers impacted by African swine fever (ASF) in the province, and one unit of Integrated National Swine Production Initiatives for Recovery and Expansion and Compact Feed Mill worth P13,065,000 from the Livestock and Poultry Program.

Three farmers cooperatives and associations, namely the Agrarian Livelihood Services Technology Organization in Viga, Maligaya Village Rural Improvement Club (RIC) in San Miguel and Genitligan Upland Farmers Association in Baras, were given 2,500 pieces of grafted pili and a total of 50 bags of organic fertilizer with an aggregate amount of P1,182,625.

Under the Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) Program, the department turned over four units of brush cutters and two units of multi-cultivator with mulchers worth a total of P860,000 to the Pagsangahan Organic Farmers Association in San Miguel, Tindog Tilis Farmers Association in Bato, Paraiso Community Based and Livelihood Farmers Association in San Miguel, and Sibol Farmers Association in Bato.

Three of DA attached agencies also delivered various interventions for their beneficiaries.

The Philippine Rice Research Institute-Bicol distributed certificates of award for 5,671 bags of certified inbred rice seeds for the dry season 2024-2025, worth a total of P4,740,956 to the 11 municipalities.

The Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority turned over 979 units of three-in-one modified abaca stripping knives and nine units of portable modified spindle stripping machines to nine abaca farmers associations worth a total of P12,040,000.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) distributed P1,041,000 worth of interventions consisting of 120,000 pieces of freshwater tilapia fingerlings for the municipalities of Bato,

Caramoran, Gigmoto, San Miguel and Viga; 50,000 pieces of brackish water tilapia fingerlings for the Municipality of Panganiban; and 120,000 bangus fingerlings for the municipalities of Bagamanoc, Baras, Bato, Caramoran, Panganiban and Pandan.

Tornilla highlighted DA Bicol's priorities to boost food security not only in the region's mainland provinces, including Catanduanes.

"It is our priority at the Department of Agriculture in Bicol to raise the level of food security not only in its mainland provinces but also in the island provinces in the region including Catanduanes Island. This is through increasing production, advancement of modern technology and modernization in the agricultural sector," he said.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/09/18/regions/farmers-fishermen-in-catanduanes-get-aid/1972194>

Tiu Laurel cautiously upbeat on agri output

By Janine Alexis Miguel

September 18, 2024

AGRICULTURE Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. expressed optimism with some caution in the country's food production outlook this year, highlighting positive trends in the third quarter but expressing concerns for the last quarter.

Admitting that agricultural output contracted in the second quarter due to the El Niño climate effect, Tiu Laurel also mentioned potential problems in the coming three months.

On the bright side, he said that with sufficient water availability and improved weather conditions, the July-September crop planting period is expected to show significant improvement. "The third and fourth quarter output should be good because we have water," Tiu Laurel said at a press briefing on Monday.



Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. Photo from Department of Agriculture

But a cause for concern is the coming La Niña weather pattern which could cause storms or heavy rain. "Last Thursday and Friday, I went to five provinces, and I saw a lot of flooding. So, again, we throw away [the crops] that were planted in the flooded areas," Tiu Laurel said.

This is likewise the reason the Agri chief projected that, in the coming months, full-year farm output may decrease: "There is a possibility, honestly. Because we really had a very bad El Niño [season] and productivity was down, really down."

Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority showed that in the first quarter of 2024, the country's farm output remained relatively flat as its three subsectors posted declining figures.

Then production fell 3.3 percent in the second quarter, with losses in crops and livestock output outweighing gains in poultry and fisheries.

From the April-June period, agriculture and fisheries earned P413.9 billion, lower than the P429.6 billion in January-March and P433.1 billion a year earlier. The April-June numbers negated the 0.2-percent production increase in the first three months of the year and even worse than the 1.2-percent drop a year earlier.

While farm output from January to March posted an uptick of 0.05 percent, it was smaller than the 2.1-percent growth in the same period last year and the 0.9-percent rise three months earlier.

In 2023, agricultural revenue grew 0.4 percent due to higher poultry, crops and livestock production valued at P1.76 trillion. In 2022, it was worth P1.75 trillion.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/09/18/business/top-business/tiu-laurel-cautiously-upbeat-on-agri-output/1972231>

AMID REPORTED DEATHS: 30-day post-ASF vaccination period critical: DA

By **Jed Macapagal**

September 18, 2024

The Department of Agriculture (DA) yesterday said the 30-day post-vaccination period is critical for assessing vaccine effectiveness and ensuring the health of the remaining pigs that received live attenuated vaccines for African Swine Fever (ASF) developed in Vietnam.

In a statement yesterday, the DA said majority of the pigs administered with the vaccines in Lobo, Batangas remain in good health.

This as the DA said some pigs have died post-vaccination following the controlled vaccine administration for pigs in the town.

The inoculation started August 30.

DA said for the first test farm of the 29 hogs that were vaccinated, 15 heads developed antibodies. However, 1 hog died and the remaining 13 will be observed further.

For the second test farm, 12 heads were vaccinated but only three developed antibodies. Of the 12, six pigs died and the remaining three are still being observed.

The agency said polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests on the deceased pigs confirmed ASF infection, but since the live attenuated vaccine can also be detected by PCR, additional diagnostic tests are underway.

Constante Palabrica, DA assistant secretary for swine and poultry, said enzyme-linked immunoassay (ELISA) tests were conducted to measure the immune response by detecting antibody levels. An increase in percentage blocking suggests stronger immunity for vaccinated hogs.

“The ELISA test results showed the presence of antibodies against ASF in some pigs, indicating they are building immunity. All remaining pigs are healthy and under close observation,” Palabrica said.

He said differentiating infected from vaccinated animals (DIVA) tests are also in progress.

“The DIVA test distinguishes between vaccinated pigs and those infected with the field virus, which will help determine if the virus in the deceased pigs is linked to the vaccine or external sources,” Palabrica said.

“Vaccination is crucial, but it must be accompanied by stringent biosecurity practices to prevent further outbreaks. Honest and timely reporting from farmers is essential for the program’s success,” Palabrica added.

So far, vaccinated pigs are producing the expected number of antibodies which should be at 40 percent after 14 days and around 90 percent after 30 days, Palabrica said.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. reaffirmed the government’s commitment to finding a long-term ASF solution and expressed optimism about the vaccine’s potential.

“These initial results are part of a broader effort to protect our swine population. We remain hopeful but cooperation from all stakeholders is vital. Strict adherence to vaccination protocols and biosecurity measures is crucial,” Tiu Laurel said.

Based on latest data from the Bureau of Animal Industry, as of September 6, active cases of ASF are contained in 14 regions, 31 provinces, 109 municipalities and 472 barangays.

https://malaya.com.ph/news_business/amid-reported-deaths-30-day-post-asf-vaccination-period-critical-da/

Govt action sought on sweetener imports

By **Jed Macapagal**

September 18, 2024

SUGAR farmers and industry workers led by the Sugar Council and the National Congress of Unions in the Sugar Industry of the Philippines (NACUSIP) called on the government to act on the unregulated entry and use of artificial sweeteners in the country.

Without specifying any course of action they want government to take, the groups said in a statement yesterday sugar substitutes displace a substantial volume of sugar in the domestic market.

Sugar Council and NACUSIP said they have raised this concern in a letter to Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. who also serves as the concurrent chairman of the Sugar Board of the Sugar Regulatory Administration.

The groups said the three most popular artificial sweeteners used in beverage manufacturing are sucralose, aspartame and acesulfame potassium.

“If we know how much locally produced sugar is displaced by artificial sweeteners, can we consider the latter as replacement to importing refined sugar? Because as it is today, with refined sugar imports and artificial sweetener imports, both of which are cheaper to get to market, our local sugar faces a double whammy,” the groups said in their letter to Tiu Laurel.

Sugar Council and NACUSIP also said the three artificial sweeteners enjoy zero tariff under the Asean Trade in Goods Agreement which further compromises the ability of locally produced sugar to compete in the market, especially in the face of rising production costs.

On the labor front, the groups warned that displacement of locally produced sugar by artificial sweeteners could result to widespread displacement of sugarcane farm workers, sugar mill workers and biofuel workers in the sugarcane industry, as well as degrade the livelihood of families of agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs).

The groups also expressed concern on the sustainability of scholarships and other socio-economic benefits under the Social Amelioration Program funded by liens from locally produced sugar which is not charged from imported sweeteners.

The Sugar Council represents the Confederation of Sugar Producers' Associations Inc., the National Federation of Sugarcane Planters and the Panay Federation of Sugarcane Farmers.

Meanwhile, NACUSIP is the largest aggrupation of labor unions and ARBs in the country.

https://malaya.com.ph/news_business/govt-action-sought-on-sweetener-imports/

PHL paddy rice output likely dropped 11% to 3.36 MMT

BusinessMirror
September 17, 2024

THE country's paddy rice output likely dropped by 11.4 percent to 3.36 million metric tons (MMT) in the third quarter, based on the Philippine Statistics Authority's (PSA) survey of standing crops.

In its latest production forecast, the PSA said palay harvest likely declined in the July to September period from the previous year's actual output of 3.80 MMT.

The latest figure is also 0.7 percent lower than the agency's initial estimate of 3.39 MMT.

As of August 1, the PSA said the total palay harvest area during the period likely shrank by 14.1 percent to 796,470 hectares (ha) from the 926,920 ha recorded in the same period last year.

Despite this, the agency noted that palay yield may jump by 2.9 percent to 4.22 metric tons (MT) per hectare from the previous year's 4.10 MT.

“As of 01 August 2024, about 116,410 hectares or 14.6 percent of the 796,470 hectares updated harvest area of standing crop have been harvested. This translates to palay output of 469,400 metric tons,” the PSA said.

“Of the total area of 680,060 hectares of standing palay yet to be harvested as of 01 August 2024, 14.9 percent were at the vegetative stage, 58.7 percent at the reproductive stage, and 26.4 percent at the maturing stage.”

Meanwhile, the PSA said corn output in the third quarter likely grew by 2.4 percent to 2.52 MMT from last year's 2.47 MMT. This showed a 0.3 percent decline from its earlier projection of 2.53 MMT.

The harvest area during the period was expected to contract by 1.9 percent to 806,530 ha from the 822,400 ha recorded in the previous year while yield per hectare may jump by 4.3 percent to 3.13 MT from 3 MT.

“As of August 1, 2024, about 161,670 hectares or 20 percent of the 806,530 hectares updated harvest area of standing corn have been harvested, translating to a 546,590 metric tons of corn output,” the PSA said.

“Of the total area of 644,850 hectares of standing corn yet to be harvested as of 01 August 2024, about 6.9 percent were at the vegetative stage, 59.9 percent at the reproductive stage, and 33.1 percent at the maturing stage.”

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/09/17/phl-paddy-rice-output-likely-dropped-11-to-3-36-mmt/>

Group appeals to DA: Call off fish importation next month

Jonathan L. Mayuga
September 17, 2024

A GROUP of fishermen on Tuesday urged the Department of Agriculture (DA) to call off its plan to import 35,000 metric tons of fish next month to prevent further decrease in farm-gate prices of fish that will impact small fishermen.

The Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) said that it has already monitored the decrease in farm-gate prices of various fish including galunggong at P100 per kilogram and bonito at P80 per kilo, in several areas in the country.

Pamalakaya's Ronnel Arambulo said the farm-gate price of fish is at its lowest and is expected to go down once imported fish enters the market.

"We are calling on the DA not to proceed with the plan to import fish this year because unscrupulous traders will take advantage of small fishermen," Arambulo, vice chairman of Pamalakaya, said in a statement.

He said fishermen still reeling from the impact of natural calamities will not be able to recoup their losses should the DA proceed with the planned importation next month.

The group clarified that a low farmgate price does not translate to a fair retail price, as private traders manipulate and mark up the prices at the expense of fishermen and consumers.

"Let us clarify that small fishermen do not dictate the price of fish in the market, but the private fish dealers and traders who buy the fish from them at a low and unreasonable price," Rambulo explained.

Along with various rural-based groups, Pamalakaya has been demanding an end to import-liberalization policies that burden farmers and fishermen. Instead, they seek

to strengthen local agri-fisheries production in the form of production aid and other livelihood support.

The DA issued a memorandum circular governing the importation of 35,000 metric tons (MT) of frozen galunggong, bigeye scad, mackerel, bonito, and moonfish from October 1 to December 31 this year.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/09/17/group-appeals-to-da-call-off-fish-importation-next-month/>

REMATE:

DA kinalampag sa mabagal na ASF vax roll-out

September 17, 2024 17:59



MANILA, Philippines – Kinalampag ng mga sektor ng magbababoy at mga stakeholder ang gobyerno partikular ang Department of Agriculture (DA) ukol sa mabagal na pagbabakuna sa mga baboy sa bansa laban sa African Swine Flu (ASF).

Sa isang media forum sa Maynila, muling nakiusap ang mga hog raisers na bilisan ang pagbabakuna sa mga baboy dahil naisagawa naman na anila ang roll-out noong Agosto 30.

Panawagan pa ng mga hog raiser, mas maraming alagang baboy ang maliligtas at hindi malulugi ang mga

nagnenegosyo kabilang ang mga feed producers kung mabilis ang pagbabakuna lalo na sa mga backyard hog raisers.

Ayon kay Rico Geron, CEO ng SoroSoro Ibaba Development Cooperative, kung magpapatuloy na mamamatay ang mga baboy ay liliit ang suplay nito dahil sa ASF, hindi maiwasan na magtaas naman ang presyo nito sa darating na Kapaskuhan kung kailan mataas na ang demand.

Kasama ang mga miyembro ng National Federation of Hog Farmers Inc. at Pork Producers Federation of the Philippines, muling hinihimok ni Agap Partylist Rep. Nick Briones ang pamahalaan na magdeklara na ng national state of emergency kontra ASF.

Sinabi ni Briones na araw-araw ay may namamatay na baboy dahil sa mabagal na pagbabakuna.

Aniya, tinatayang nasa siyam na milyon ang bilang ng baboy sa bansa kung saan 40% dito ay mga national hog raisers habang 60% ang tinatawag na backyard hog raisers na lubos na nangangailangan ng bakuna.

Idinagdag pa ni Geron na handa silang tumulong sa pamahalaan upang mapabilis ang pagbabakuna sa mga apektadong hog raisers dahil mayroon silang kooperatiba at network sa Luzon tulad ng mga technician at beteryaryo.

“Kami ay nagboboluntaryo sa pamahalaan para pabilisin ang roll-out ng bakuna sapagkat mabilis nauubos kabuhayan at alaga ng ating mga kabahayan,” pahayag ni Geron.

Nang magroll-out noong Agosto 30 sa Lobo, Batangas kung saan nagkaroon ng outbreak ng ASF, sinabi ni Briones na natutuwa ito dahil may bakuna sa mga baboy kaya naman nanawagan ito ngayon na sana ay magkaroon ng sistema at gumamit ng cooperative industry leaders upang mapabilis ang pagbabakuna.

Sa nasabing roll-out, 10,000 doses ng bakuna kontra ASF ang itinurok pero natatagalan ang proseso nito dahil sa paghihintay ng resulta sa mga isinasagawang pag-aaral gayundin ang sinasabi ng Food and Drug Administration (FDA) na ‘gene-sequencing’ na ayon kay Briones ay hindi na kailangan dahil ang nararapat ay ang agarang aksyon na para sa mga naapektuhang kabuhayan.

Aniya, ang pagdedeklara ng state of emergency ay magiging paraan para agad at mabilis ang roll-out ng bakuna sa mga mas nangangailan lalo na sa mga lalawigan na lubhang apektado ng sakit. *Jocelyn Tabangcura-Domenden*

<https://remate.ph/dept-of-agriculture-kinalampag-sa-mabagal-na-asf-vax-roll-out/>

REMATE:

9 lugar sa VisMin, binalaan sa red tide

September 17, 2024 16:54



MANILA, Philippines – Nagpositibo sa paralytic shellfish poison (PSP) o toxic red tide na sobra sa regulatory limit ang ilang coastal areas sa Visayas at Mindanao, ayon sa Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR).

Sa shellfish bulletin na may petsang Setyembre 16, sinabi ng BFAR na hindi ligtas ang lahat ng uri ng lamang dagat at alamang na nakolekta mula sa mga sumusunod na lugar:

Coastal waters ng Zumarraga Island sa Samar,
Coastal waters ng Daram Island,
Carigara Bay sa Leyte,
Dumanquillas Bay sa Zamboanga del Sur,
Coastal waters ng Tungawan sa Zamboanga Sibugay Province,
Cambatutay Bay sa Samar,
Irong-Irong Bay sa Samar,
Maqueda Bay sa Samar
Matarinao Bay sa Eastern Samar

Ayon sa BFAR, tanging ang mga isda, pusit, hipon at alimango ang ligtas na kainin mula sa mga nabanggit na lugar bagama't kailangan pa ring linisin bago lutuin. **RNT/JGC**

<https://remate.ph/9-lugar-sa-vismin-binalaan-sa-red-tide/>

REMATE:

Bird flu outbreak iniulat sa Czech Republic

September 17, 2024 10:28



CZECH REPUBLIC – Iniulat ng Czech Republic ang outbreak ng highly pathogenic H5N1 strain ng avian influenza, o bird flu, sa isang poultry farm nito, ayon sa World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) nitong Lunes, Setyembre 16.

Kumitil sa buhay ng 52 pato ang virus sa isang farm sa bayan ng Martinice u Breznice, kung saan 848 ibon din ang kailangang patayin.

Matinding sinalanta ng bird flu ang iba't ibang poultry farms sa buong mundo sa mga nakalipas na taon. *RNT/JGC*

<https://remate.ph/bird-flu-outbreak-iniulat-sa-czech-republic/>

ABANTE:

Paggamit ng vessel monitoring system hinirit

Abante News

- September 17, 2024



MULING hinikayat ng Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) ang paggamit ng vessel monitoring system (VMS) at electronic reporting system (ERS) para sa mga commercial Philippine -flagged fishing vessel.

Ito ay hindi lamang bilang pagtalima sa Fisheries Administrative Order No. 266 na inilabas noong 2020 na naglalayong masubaybayan ang mga posisyon ng mga fishing vessel para sa tamang pamamahala kundi para na rin sa kaligtasan ng bangka at ng mga sakay nito kapag inaabot sila ng masamang panahon sa gitna ng karagatan.

Ayon kay Allan Castillo, hepe ng Fishery Law Enforcement ng BFAR CALABARZON, mabilis na masaklolan ang mga vessel na inaabot ng trahedya kung gumagana ang kanilang VMS.

Inihalimbawa ni Castillo ang lumubog na FBca Zshan sa Quezon sa pananalasa ng Bagyong Enteng na mabilis sanang natukoy ng mga rescuer kung aktibo ang VMS nito.

Aktibo umano ang VMS ang FBca Zshan noong Hunyo 11, 2024 pero hanggang Hulyo 16, 2024 lang namonitor ng BFAR Monitoring Center ang lokasyon nito at hindi na naulit. (Ronilo Dagos)

<https://www.abante.com.ph/2024/09/17/paggamit-ng-vessel-monitoring-system-hinirit/>

ABANTE:

Mabilis na pagpapakalat ng bakuna vs ASF hirit ng mga magbababoy

Abante News

- September 17, 2024



Patuloy ang ginagawang apela sa gobyerno ng mga samahan ng hog raisers sa bansa na bilisan na ang ginagawang pagbabakuna laban sa african swine fever (ASF).

Layunin nito na mas maraming mailigtas na alagang baboy at hindi tuluyang malugi ang mga nagne-negosyo nito.

Nagkaisa ang mga miyembro ng National Federation of Hog Farmers Inc. at Pork Producers Federation of the Philippines, sa pangunguna ni Agap Partylist Rep. Nick Briones na muling himukin ang pamahalaan na magdeklara na ng national state of emergency kontra ASF.

Aniya, tinatayang nasa 9 na milyun ang bilang ng baboy sa bansa kung saan 40% dito ay mga national hog raisers habang 60% ang tinatawag na backyard hog raisers na lubos na nangangailangan ng bakuna.

Ang pagdedeklara ng state of emergency ay magiging paraan para agad na mabilis ang roll-out ng bakuna sa mga mas nangangailan lalo na sa mga lalawigan na lubhang apektado ng sakit.

Binigyan diin pa ni Briones, na marami ng baboy ang namamatay dahil sa mabagal na pagbabakuna at karamihan ay nalulugi na ang negosyo.

Una nang nakapagturok noong August 30 ng 10,000 doses ng bakuna laban sa ASF ngunit natatagalan ang proseso nito dahil sa paghihintay ng resulta sa mga isinagawang pag-aaral.(Mina Navarro)

<https://www.abante.com.ph/2024/09/17/mabilis-na-pagpapakalat-ng-bakuna-vs-asf-hirit-ng-mga-magbababoy/>