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**MANILA BULLETIN:**

# DA to stop inoculating pigs if ASF vaccine found ineffective

BY [JEL SANTOS](#)

Sep 19, 2024 06:32 PM



Should the African Swine Fever (ASF) vaccine be found to be ineffective, the Department of Agriculture (DA) on Thursday, Sept. 19, said it will immediately suspend the controlled inoculation of hogs in the country.

The country is currently conducting controlled vaccination of the ASF vaccine in Batangas, which has been badly struck by highly fatal disease. As of Sept. 6, 7,900 pigs infected with ASF have been culled in Batangas.

“Pero again, ‘yung monitored release, titingnan natin kung effective; kung hindi effective, canceled; kung effective, tuloy (But again, the monitored release will determine if it is effective; if it is not effective, it will be canceled; if it is effective, it will continue),” Assistant Secretary for Swine and Poultry, Constante “Dante” Palabrica, said during a radio interview.

“Dahil ito ay babalansehin ng FDA (Food and Drug Administration) at ‘yung private group ng scientists—doon namin ibabato ang lahat ng data na makukuha namin, at sila ang magsasabi kung maayos or hindi (Because it will be balanced by the FDA and the private group of scientists—there we will throw all the data we can get, and they will say whether it is good or not),” he added.

The Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI), according to Palabrica, is circumspect when it comes to the ASF vaccine.

“Maingat na maingat ang BAI tungkol dito. Kaya kahit na gusto na madaliin nila, hindi namin minamadali ang pagbabakuna nito (BAI is very cautious about this. So even though they want to hurry, we don't rush its vaccination),” he said.

“We have to protect ‘yung taxpayers money rito. Hindi puwedeng bibili tayo ng gamot o bakuna na kapag nakita nating wala sa ayos at tuloy-tuloy nating gagamitin (We have to protect the taxpayers' money. We cannot buy medicine or vaccine when we see something is wrong and we will continue to use it).”

Palabrica stated that the ASF vaccine from Vietnam has been used in large farms and proven successful, but the agriculture department wants to validate it to be cautious.

The DA, he said, is targeting to administer the ASF vaccine to about 1,500 pigs in Batangas province this September.

For the controlled use of the ASF vaccine, the government has allocated 10,000 doses for Batangas province.

Recently, Palabrica announced that the majority of the pigs inoculated with the ASF vaccine in Batangas province have developed antibodies within 14 days of inoculation.

He told the Manila Bulletin that 60 percent of the inoculated hogs produced antibodies.

“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),” the DA official said.

The DA had earlier clarified that the six pigs inoculated died due to their preexisting conditions.

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 before the vaccination.

The ASF vaccine was first administered in Lobo, Batangas on Aug. 30 wherein small-hold and backyard hog-raisers were prioritized.

It can be recalled that the Philippine government has allocated ₱300 million to purchase 600,000 doses of the ASF vaccine from Vietnam.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/9/19/da-to-stop-inoculating-pigs-if-asf-vaccine-found-ineffective>

**MANILA BULLETIN:**

# **DA seeks additional funds from foreign partners**

**BY GABRIELL CHRISTEL GALANG**

Sep 19, 2024 02:12 PM

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The Department of Agriculture (DA) is seeking additional funding from foreign partners to address critical issues faced by the agriculture sector, such as the lack of infrastructure.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. stated that the department is seeking funding from official development partners to address the challenges facing the agriculture sector.

The DA mentioned that the "Build Better More" initiative for developing farm-to-market roads has been discussed with the French Government. This proposal aims to enhance agricultural production sites, fisheries, coastal landing points, and post-harvest facilities to markets and major highways which would address infrastructure gaps. According to the DA chief, the project would also facilitate trade to ensure agricultural products have a smooth and efficient movement and value chain for food and agricultural commodities.

This initiative stemmed from the DA's call to develop the country's limited resources in seaports, roads, bridges, and irrigation, which would benefit farmers and fishermen.

"The DA is also proposing a project under the World Bank's Program for Results, or P4R, provide incremental funding to accelerate DA's initiatives and enhance the impact of its programs, and emphasize achieving sustainable outcomes and building institutional capacity," Tiu Laurel added. He emphasized that the World Bank's P4R utilizes government systems and procedures rather than the bank to expedite processes and aim for tangible results.

"P4R project is part of the World Bank's strategy to expand the impact of development interventions through a results-oriented approach," the agriculture chief elaborated.

Furthermore, the Tiu Laurel underscored the DA's collaboration with the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) for the Philippine solar-powered irrigation project that would develop 8,000 units nationwide to provide farms with accessible irrigation, thus boosting farm yields.

Aside from this, the DA is expanding the cold chain storage network to mitigate crop overproduction and its losses.

"In addition, we will be building food terminals along with cold storage facilities that will also be strategically established regionally. These facilities are very crucial to address the food logistical cold chain issues," he added.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/9/19/da-seeks-additional-funds-from-foreign-partners>

**MANILA BULLETIN:**

# Agriculture and food security

**BY [JAIME ARISTOTLE B. ALIP, PHD](#)**

Sep 20, 2024 06:07 AM

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## **FROM THE MARGINS**



There is no truer statement: food is everyone’s business. This was the theme of the “Agriculture and Food Security Summit” that the Makati Business Club (MBC) held last Sept. 16 at the BGC Arts Center. This is part of its ongoing efforts to engage stakeholders and find ways for the private sector to help drive sustainable development in agriculture. I am glad to have been part of this initiative, since I believe that increasing agricultural productivity and farmers’ income remains one of the most important ways to improve our economy and uplift people’s lives.

More than 200 people attended the event, which was graced by no less than Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, Jr. He underscored the crucial role of government and private sector partnership in modernizing agriculture, emphasizing the need to mechanize farm processes, improve infrastructures and logistics, and open up new markets. The Secretary said these challenges must be faced head-on, given climate change.

“Our focus remains on boosting agricultural production to ensure accessibility to affordable, safe and nutritious food while also developing agriculture and fisheries as profitable industries for all stakeholders in the value chain,” Sec. Tiu Laurel said.

### **Public-private partnership**

Recognizing that the MBC summit is “a timely and essential platform for dialogue between government and the private sector,” Secretary Tiu Laurel lauded organizers for providing a forum for stakeholders to exchange ideas and forge partnerships to ensure food security. He also announced his department’s formation of consultative councils that would meet monthly, ensuring that their policy and program directions will be more timely and responsive. I am very happy that this became part of a subsequent press release that is now posted on the DA website. Working with stakeholders is the best strategy to combat the sad state that MBC Chairman Ed Chua lamented: Despite the country’s agricultural heritage, Filipinos often pay higher food prices than their Southeast Asian neighbors.

## **Panel discussions**

The summit also featured a series of panel discussions. I was asked to lead the panel discussion on cooperatives, emphasizing their role in community development and supporting local businesses' value chains. MBC Trustee Doris Magsaysay-Ho led the session on logistics, with the end in view of streamlining our supply chains and finding ways to reduce food waste. MBC member Dickie Buhain led the session on agri-tech, which explored new technologies that may be used to make farming more efficient.

Our panel on cooperatives included DA Undersecretary Asis Perez, Gisela Tiongson of Jollibee Group Foundation (JGF), and Sylvia Paraguya of National Confederation of Cooperatives (NATCCO). Dr. Cielito Habito was our moderator. We had a very lively panel discussion on how the cooperative sector plays a big role in agriculture. We all agreed that capacity building for agri-cooperatives is crucial, especially in professionalizing management, strengthening governance, financing, and facilitating market access so they can bring their produce directly to the consumers. Sec. Tiu Laurel is right: helping agri-cooperatives is one of the best ways to increase farmers' productivity and income, as well as lowering the prices of commodities.

After the panel discussions, MBC signed partnerships with CARD Business Development Service Foundation, JGF, NATCCO, Cargill Philippines, and AGREA Foundation – these are all aimed towards working together and empowering cooperatives. MBC also joined “Kain Tayo Pilipinas,” a program of the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP). This partnership between the private sector and government will surely make an impact in addressing food security and malnutrition concerns.

## **Helping food producers**

The government needs to work strategically with the private sector to reduce food prices and ensure food accessibility for all Filipinos. I appreciate MBC's goal of achieving food security by supporting partnerships between business and farmer cooperatives to improve the agricultural value chain and lower the cost of production.

Jollibee Foods Corporation Philippines President Joseph Tanbuntiong shared his company's partnership with cooperatives. He said that the private sector can contribute to transforming food systems, sharing innovative strategies and collaborative opportunities for the private sector to drive impactful changes in food security.

“To build a sustainable food system, we must put smallholder farmers at the center of this transition. Their participation and inclusion are not just beneficial but essential to achieving long-term food security,” Tanbuntiong said.

MBC Trustee Manolito Tayag also called for support for farmers. He lamented the fact that the producers of food do not benefit from high prices and that farmers compose the biggest group of workers, yet they remain among the poorest in the country. I wholeheartedly support his call:

“The business sector, learning from the success of our individual industries, should apply the same success factors to agriculture and food security.”

\* \* \*

“It’s clear that agriculture, done right, is the best means the world has today to simultaneously tackle food security, poverty, and environmental degradation.” —Irene Rosenfeld

*(Dr. Jaime Aristotle B. Alip is a poverty eradication advocate. He is the founder of the Center for Agriculture and Rural Development Mutually-Reinforcing Institutions (CARD MRI).)*

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/9/20/article-2719>



**MANILA BULLETIN:**

# ‘Habagat’ damage to agriculture in Negros Occidental tops P104 M

BY [GLAZYL MASCULINO](#)

Sep 19, 2024 09:36 PM

BACOLOD CITY – The Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council reported on Thursday, September 19, that Negros Occidental has sustained P104.9 million in damage to agriculture due to the southwest monsoon or “habagat” enhanced by recent weather disturbances.



**THE town of Hinigaran in Negros Occidental was declared under a state of calamity on Wednesday, September 18. (Photo courtesy of Choy Lando Photography via Facebook)**

Rice and other crops in 121 barangays recorded P101.7 million in damage; fisheries, P1.7 million in 15 barangays, and P1.4-million livestock in 172 households.

A total of 55,341 families composed of 200,782 persons were evacuated from 256 barangays in 25 cities and municipalities.

Almost 3,000 families or 12,571 individuals are still inside evacuation centers and 592 families or 1,906 persons are staying outside.

Twenty-nine areas were flooded but the water has subsided. Nine landslide incidents occurred and eight have been cleared.

The PDRRMC reported 460 damaged houses, 34 totally destroyed and 426 partially damaged. All roads and bridges are now passable.

Three local government units (LGUs) have declared a state of calamity – San Enrique, Hinigaran, and La Carlota City.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/9/19/habagat-damage-to-agriculture-in-negros-occidental-tops-p104-m>

**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

# Farmers hit hard as 'Ferdie' wreaks P107M in agricultural losses

[Ian Laqui](#) - Philstar.com

September 19, 2024 | 4:54pm



Damaged rice crops in Sipalay City, Negros Occidental due to Tropical Cyclone Ferdie.

Sipalay City Agriculture Office

MANILA, Philippines — Tropical cyclone Ferdie combined with the effects of the southwest monsoon over the past week resulted in agricultural losses amounting to P107.42 million.

The Department of Agriculture's disaster operations center reported on Wednesday, September 18 that the adverse weather conditions caused a loss of 4,749 metric tons in agricultural products, affecting 1,327 farmers nationwide.

Rice production suffered the most significant damage, with approximately 4,340 metric tons lost, valued at P98.34 million, particularly impacting Palawan.

The agency also reported that corn production losses were valued at P6.06 million, while high-value crops incurred losses of P2.99 million. Damage to livestock and poultry, meanwhile, amounted to P29,000.

No damage or losses have been reported from cyclones Gener and Helen so far.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Laurel assured the public that there will be no food shortages.

“In terms of food, the volume of food—we’re sure that there’s food in the market, on the shelves, and nothing to worry about. I think all the industries are playing their role to provide food for everybody,” Laurel said in a mix of English and Filipino during an ambush interview with the press on September 18.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/09/19/2386447/farmers-hit-hard-ferdie-wreaks-p107m-agricultural-losses>

**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

# **P500 million rice imports stalled in Port of Manila**

[Elijah Felice Rosales](#) - The Philippine Star

September 20, 2024 | 12:00am



Port officers guard containers of imported rice ahead of an inspection by Philippine Ports Authority officials of a warehouse at the Port of Manila yesterday. More than 700 shipping containers of rice are waiting to be picked up by their importers, according to the PPA.

RYAN BALDEMO

MANILA, Philippines — Half a billion pesos worth of rice is sitting at the Port of Manila, waiting to be picked up by their importers, making the government worry that this may cause an artificial increase in consumer prices.

Based on records from the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA), more than 700 shipping containers of rice are waiting to be taken out of the Manila International Container Terminal (MICT) and the Manila South Harbor.

Estimates showed that these rice imports might be worth over P555 million, based on the capacity of the containers and the volume inside.

Jay Santiago, PPA general manager, is not discounting the possibility that rice traders are intentionally holding on to the shipments at the ports because they are waiting for rice prices in the market to increase.

Santiago said the rice shipments have been at the MICT and South Harbor for over 20 days now, even if the containers have already been cleared by the Bureau of Customs, meaning they can be withdrawn from the ports any time.

Santiago is concerned that keeping the rice imports at MICT and South Harbor longer may hurt the supply of the staple in the Philippines, which could lead to an artificial shortage in the market, pushing retail prices up to the detriment of consumers.

“We measure the containers on the basis of 20-foot equivalent, and per TEU can handle 540 sacks of rice weighing 50 kilograms per sack,” Santiago told The STAR.

He denied speculations that port congestion is causing a delay in the unloading of grain shipments.

Santiago said the PPA-regulated ports have recorded a utilization rate of 70 percent and consignees withdraw shipments other than rice within an average of 5.4 days. Notably, this is one of the lowest dwell times in PPA history and is just 0.4 days above the free storage period of five days.

“This means that many of the container vans have been released once their free storage period has lapsed, except for some containers with rice as its cargo that have remained in the container yard for more than 20 days, even after they have already gotten clearance from the Bureau of Customs (BOC). As a result, there is a delay in the delivery of rice and a possible artificial increase of its price,” Santiago explained.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. earlier said it takes more than a week for rice shipments to be released from ports, adding that importers would have to pay a demurrage of as much as \$7,000 per ship per day for these delays – creating a risk that this cost might be passed on to consumers.

“We are thankful that the PPA has acted promptly on the information we provided and recognized the potential issue of hoarding of imported rice in Manila ports... We respectfully urge the PPA to prioritize the movement of these rice stocks to help increase supply for this essential food staple and potentially lower retail prices,” Tiu Laurel said.

Santiago said consignees might be deliberately delaying the withdrawal of imported rice in anticipation of higher market prices.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/09/20/2386643/p500-million-rice-imports-stalled-port-manila>

**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

# UK keen on shipping more poultry to Philippines

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

September 20, 2024 | 12:00am



UK Ambassador Laure Beaufils welcomed the recent decision of the Department of Agriculture (DA) to lift the temporary import ban on British poultry products since March 5, 2021.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — The United Kingdom is keen on regaining its lost market share in the Philippine poultry market after finally being allowed to resume exports to the country following a three-year import ban due its bird flu outbreaks.

UK Ambassador Laure Beaufils welcomed the recent decision of the Department of Agriculture (DA) to lift the temporary import ban on British poultry products since March 5, 2021.

With the resumption of poultry trade between the two countries, Beaufils said both Philippine and British traders have to get “reacquainted” and recognize the market opportunities that they can tap.

“The first thing is to go back to where we were before. We have lost three years sadly,” Beaufils told reporters during a recent reception she hosted to celebrate the resumption of poultry trade between the two countries.



“Once they (get reacquainted) I think the sky is the limit because they will be importing large quantities. Poultry was in the past our second largest export to the Philippines,” she added.

Beaufils said that the UK shipped over 35 million kilos of poultry products to the Philippines from 2018 to 2022.

The UK was the country’s sixth-largest source of poultry imports, especially in the mechanically deboned meat segment.

The envoy also disclosed that the UK successfully forged a regionalization agreement with the Philippines concerning its poultry products.

Regionalization is an internationally recognized guideline on animal diseases wherein a country may limit its import ban only within the area of its trade partners that confirmed disease outbreaks.

That way, animal diseases will not hamper the bilateral trade of meat products.

Previously, the Philippines through the DA imposes a country-wide import ban on UK even if there is only one reported bird flu case in a small area or district.

Both the Meat Importers and Traders Association (MITA) and the Philippine Association of Meat Processors Inc. (PAMPI) welcomed the reopening of the British market for poultry sources.

The groups said the lifting of the import ban would expand the options of traders and importers for their poultry supplies, thus, ensuring the country’s poultry meat security.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/09/20/2386484/uk-keen-shipping-more-poultry-philippines>

**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

# DA seeks foreign funding for key agriculture infrastructure projects

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

September 20, 2024 | 12:00am



Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr..

STAR / Jesse Busto

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) is now aggressively pursuing foreign funding to fast-track the construction and completion of key infrastructure projects that would uplift farmers' welfare and reduce food costs.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said the government has limited resources to undertake major projects such as seaports, roads and bridges, and irrigation that are needed to modernize agriculture and improve the income of farmers and fishermen.

Tiu Laurel has been emphasizing that the country has a 27-year investment backlog in the agriculture sector.



“Your department is working at finding other funding sources from official development partners to implement necessary and relevant interventions needed to address critical sectoral and institutional challenges and investment gaps,” he said.

For example, Tiu Laurel disclosed that the farm-to-market roads and bridges projects of the government has been proposed to the French government.

The proposal involves improving the infrastructure linking farm production sites, fisheries, coastal landing points and post-harvest facilities to markets and major highways.

“The project will also facilitate trade to ensure smooth and efficient movement of agricultural products to reduce trade barriers and develop a more effective value chain for food and agricultural commodities to ensure they reach their destinations more efficiently,” the agriculture chief said.

Tiu Laurel said the DA is also proposing a project under the World Bank’s Program for Results, or P4R, that would provide incremental funding to accelerate the department’s initiatives and enhance the impact of its various programs.

The World Bank’s P4R approach uses government systems and procedures rather than the bank’s, streamlining the process and focusing on tangible results, Tiu Laurel added.

“P4R project is part of the World Bank’s strategy to expand the impact of development interventions through a results-oriented approach,” he said.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/09/20/2386495/da-seeks-foreign-funding-key-agriculture-infrastructure-projects>

**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

# DBP wants partners for APP program

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

September 20, 2024 | 12:00am



DBP board director Roberto Antonio.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — The Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) is keen on partnering with other government agencies, including the Maharlika Investment Corp. (MIC), to beef up the funding of its new credit program that seeks to improve rice farmers' productivity and welfare.

DBP board director Roberto Antonio is calling on other government agencies with budget surpluses to park their excess funds with the state-run bank to bankroll its Agri-Puhunan at Pantawid (APP) program.

The APP is a joint program between the DBP and the Department of Agriculture (DA) with an initial budget of P3 billion that seeks to provide low-cost credit program to individual rice farmers.

Under the program, rice farmers would get P60,000 to cover their input costs as well as have a monthly subsistence for the months that they are waiting for harvest.

The program charges a minimal interest fee of one percent per cropping season or two percent per annum.

“I am asking other agencies who have excess budget to put their money in this program. That fund would go to the farmers,” Antonio said in a press briefing.

Antonio said he would set an appointment with MIC officials to discuss the possibility of partnership for the APP program.

“I will seek for an appointment with the people from Maharlika and ask if they might want to join. I am willing to meet with anyone willing to help us expand the program,” Antonio said.

“The President wants this because he really means well for the farmers and he is all out for it. Let’s help (the government) and most of all let’s help our farmers,” he added.

The APP program was launched last Sept. 13 during the birthday of President Marcos. The program initially targets to cover 50,000 farmers planting in irrigated areas in the upcoming wet season.

For the entirety of the program, the government targets to cover 1.2 million hectares of rice farms.

Under the program, farmer-beneficiaries will get a net amount of P58,000. Of the amount, P32,000 will serve as their subsistence allowance which can be withdrawn over a four-month period at P8,000 per month.

Farmer-beneficiaries of the program would also have a guaranteed market and support price as they can sell at least five metric tons to the National Food Authority (NFA) for its buffer stocking needs.

Former finance secretary Gary Teves commended the program, noting that it would address farmers’ need for financing as well as ensure a stable market for their harvests through the NFA that would reduce their risk of income loss.

However, Teves cautioned that many rice farmers may still opt to get financing from loan sharks for their urgent needs given their current mindset that government support does not need any repayment.

He also recommended that the government seek private sector collaboration to boost the funding of the program as well as bring in technology and expertise to scale it more effectively.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/09/20/2386498/dbp-wants-partners-app-program>

**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:**

# PH, UK forge new poultry import rules; total ban lifted

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

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 08:20 AM September 19, 2024



FILE / STOCK

The Philippines has agreed to do away with a total ban on imports of poultry products from the United Kingdom, a move that is expected to increase shipments of British poultry products to the country.

Under a “regionalization” agreement forged by the two nations, the Philippines will just impose an import moratorium on specific areas or districts in the UK with disease outbreaks.

This means that trade with disease-free areas of the UK continues uninterrupted, even amid potential HPAI (highly pathogenic avian influenza) outbreaks, the British Embassy Manila said in a statement.

“It specifies that farms, hatcheries, and slaughterhouses in affected districts will be ineligible to export, while those in unaffected areas can proceed under strict health protocols,” it added.

UK Ambassador Laure Beaufile said the resumption of British poultry trade following a three-year import ban would lead to the arrival of more poultry products to the Philippines.

“I think importers and traders have first and foremost to get reacquainted with the UK market, with UK suppliers and recognize the opportunity that is presented to them, the quality of our products, the quality of our birds and of course the incredibly strong standards that we have,” Beaufile said.

“Once they do, I think the sky’s the limit because they’ll be importing large quantities,” she said in a briefing.

Meat Importers and Traders Association president emeritus Jesus Cham said the UK-PH regionalization agreement was “a step in the right direction.”

“This is a step in the right direction which will be science-based and it means that the protectionist policies of the government cannot be politicized,” Cham said.

To recall, the Department of Agriculture (DA) lifted last month the temporary ban on the importation of domestic and wild birds and their products including poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs and semen from the UK.

The DA imposed the temporary import ban in March 2021 as British authorities informed the World Organization for Animal Health of bird flu outbreaks in South Derbyshire in England affecting birds.

The UK-Philippines trade reached an all-time high of £2.8 billion or approximately P205.9 billion in 2023, an increase of 8.1 percent from a year prior, based on the data provided by the British embassy.

British meat was the second-most exported commodity at £37.2 million as of the first quarter of this year.

Back home, the UK exported 13.47 million kilograms of meat products to the country in the first semester of 2024, according to the Bureau of Animal Industry. Of these, pork accounted for 10.39 million kg of the total.

The UK is one of the country’s leading sources of imported meat, with more than 35 million kilograms of the commodity traded between 2018 and 2022.

<https://business.inquirer.net/480865/ph-uk-forge-new-pork-import-rules-total-ban-lifted>

**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:**

# Deaths due to cyclones rise to 23; over 1M people in 13 regions affected

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

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 05:36 AM September 20, 2024



**RICE FIELD GONE** This vast rice field at Barangay Abongay in Taytay, Palawan, is submerged in floodwaters on Tuesday due to heavy rains brought by the southwest monsoon and intensified by Tropical Depression “Gener.” —JHIE SOPRESENCIA/CONTRIBUTOR

MANILA, Philippines — Three more people have died due to the combined effects of Tropical Cyclones Ferdie, Gener, and Helen and the southwest monsoon (habagat), raising the death toll to 23, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) said in its latest bulletin on Thursday.

Of the 23 deaths, nine were recorded in Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon, Palawan), four each in Western Visayas, Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and Zamboanga Peninsula, and two in Central Visayas.

On the other hand, 15 individuals were missing—12 in Mimaropa, two in Zamboanga Peninsula and one in Western Visayas—while another 15 were injured in various parts of the country.

According to the NDRRMC, 1,061,421 people or 298,633 families were affected by the weather disturbances in the following regions: Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Mimaropa, Bicol, Western Visayas, Central Visayas, Zamboanga Peninsula, Northern Mindanao, Davao Region, Soccsksargen, Caraga, BARMM and Cordillera Administrative Region.

Central Luzon accounted for the highest number of affected families at 113,141 or 354,926 individuals.

### **Displaced families**

Around 69,360 families or 18,466 families were staying in evacuation centers as the NDRRMC reported that 1,008 houses sustained partial damage while 235 were destroyed.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) reported that based on its initial assessment, damage to the farm sector due to Ferdie was at P107.42 million with 1,327 farmers affected in the regions of Mimaropa, Western Visayas and Zamboanga Peninsula.

The volume of production loss was estimated at 4,749 metric tons spanning 1,646 hectares of agricultural areas.

There was no information yet on the estimated damage and losses due to Gener and Helen, according to the DA.

Rice comprised 91.54 percent of the overall damage at P98.74 million covering 4,340 MT.

Corn came next with 5.65 percent or P6.06 million of the total while high-value crops accounted for 2.78 percent or P2.99 million.

### **Subject to validation**

“These values are subject to validation,” the DA said, adding that it was coordinating with local governments and disaster risk reduction and management offices concerned to assess the impacts of the cyclones and monsoon on the agriculture sector.

“Best possible efforts are also being undertaken to carry out assistance and appropriate interventions to affected farmers. Furthermore, price monitoring is being conducted for possible changes in the prices of agricultural commodities,” it added.

Ferdie left the Philippine area of responsibility (PAR) on Sept. 14, a day after it entered the country, while Gener and Helen also exited PAR on Sept. 18.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1985124/deaths-due-to-cyclones-rise-to-23-over-1m-people-in-13-regions-affected>



**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:**

# DA to PPA: Speed up release of 20M kilos of imported rice

By: [Jeannette I. Andrade](#), [Jordeene B. Lagare](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:40 AM September 20, 2024



Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. —NIÑO JESUS ORBETA/INQUIRER  
FILE PHOTO

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) on Thursday called on the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) to fast-track the release of over 800 container vans filled with around 20 million kilograms of rice which had been sitting in Manila ports for months.

“We respectfully urge the PPA to prioritize the movement of these rice stocks to help increase supply for this essential food staple and potentially lower retail prices,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said in a statement.

PPA General Manager Jay Santiago, who led the media in inspecting some of the container vans, said that consignees might be deliberately delaying the release of imported rice until market prices went up.

The DA earlier informed the PPA about the potential issue of imported rice being hoarded in Manila ports.

Tiu Laurel said on Monday that port congestion and the delayed release of rice imports were keeping retail prices of the staple food high.

He added that around 20 ships were waiting to unload their cargo in Bataan province while there were others docked at ports in Subic, Manila and Batangas.

### **Port congestion**

“There’s port congestion then there’s delays ... Unloading is slow,” he said then. “The idea, when it arrives, [it] should be unloaded immediately. But we have, I think, boats now waiting for a week or two.”

A party list lawmaker echoed the DA’s call as he also called on the Bureau of Customs and the PPA to speed up the unloading process for rice shipments in ports to increase supply of the staple grain and lower prices.

“We need to work quickly and efficiently as every delay in unloading rice cargoes not only adds to costs but also worsens the situation for consumers, especially with inflation,” Agri party list Rep. Wilbert Lee said.

Lee proposed increasing manpower and implementing round-the-clock shifts at the ports to address bottlenecks and ensure faster processing of shipments, saying, “We need all hands on deck. Increasing workforce or having 24/7 operations will significantly reduce backlogs and lower the prices of rice.”

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1985116/da-to-ppa-speed-up-release-of-20m-kilos-of-imported-rice>

**BUSINESS WORLD:**

# Agricultural damage from recent storms tops P107 million

September 19, 2024 | 8:44 pm



MAFAR BARMM

AGRICULTURAL DAMAGE from recent tropical cyclones working in tandem with the effects of the southwest monsoon was estimated at P107.42 million, according to the Department of Agriculture (DA).

Citing initial reports, the DA said Tropical Cyclones Ferdie, Gener, and Helen affected 1,372 farmers and fisherfolk.

The initial reports were filed at DA regional field offices in Mimaropa and the Western Visayas. Volume losses were estimated at 4,749 metric tons (MT) across 1,547 hectares of farm area.

Rice sustained most of the damage at 91.5% of the total. Lost volume was estimated at 4,340 MT valued at P98.3 million, with the damaged areas spanning 1,536 hectares.

“Most of the damage and losses were to rice in the reproductive and maturity stages,” the DA said, noting that the reports are subject to validation.

Lost corn volume was 336 MT, with most of the crops in the reproductive and maturity stage. The losses were valued at P6.06 million, affecting 91 hectares of farmland.

Damage to high-value crops was valued at P2.99 million, with lost volume of 74 MT, spanning 19 hectares.

The recent tropical cyclones also resulted in the loss of 14 head of livestock, including chicken, swine, and goat, valued at P29,000.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu-Laurel, Jr. has said that overall farm production could be affected by the increased number of storms expected to enter the Philippines during La Niña.

The government weather service, known as PAGASA (Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration), reported a 55% probability that La Niña will occur during the fourth quarter, lasting until early 2025.

The climate event is expected to increase the likelihood of tropical cyclone activity in the coming months.  
— **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/09/19/622789/agricultural-damage-from-recent-storms-tops-p107-million/>

## BUSINESS WORLD:

# Rice prices seen to further fall

September 20, 2024 | 12:31 am



A worker unloads sacks of rice along Dagupan St., Manila. — PHILIPPINE STAR/RYAN BALDEMOR

DOMESTIC RICE PRICES are likely to decline further with the entry of more imports under lowered tariffs, the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) said.

“There’s a great amount of imports coming in from the effects of the tariff reduction plus of course the development of the global market,” NEDA Secretary Arsenio M. Balisacan told reporters on the sidelines of an event late on Tuesday.

President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. issued Executive Order No. 62, which slashed tariffs on rice imports to 15% from 35% previously, until 2028. The lower tariff rates on rice took effect on July 5.

Agriculture officials have previously said the lower tariffs are expected to bring down rice prices by P6-P7 per kilo.

“We should expect a greater translation of the tariff reduction into lower prices. But don’t expect too much because the world prices are still high,” Mr. Balisacan said.

The Food and Agriculture Organization’s (FAO) All Rice Price Index, which follows rice prices in key exporting countries, rose to 137.3 as of end-August from 127.9 in the same period a year ago. A higher price index means a rise in commodity prices over the period, while a lower index means otherwise.

In a Viber message, Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. Chief Economist Michael L. Ricafort said the full effect of lower tariffs on rice imports will likely be felt as early as the fourth quarter “as a function of competition from local and import rice amid lower world prices of rice.”

Leonardo A. Lanzona, an economics professor at the Ateneo de Manila University, said rice prices may fall by October.

“It is possible for prices to fall next month as a series of typhoons had destroyed domestic production. Importers would usually store their rice in anticipation of higher prices. Since immediate price increases are expected, then the release of imports would also be immediate,” he said in a Facebook Messenger chat.

However, Mr. Lanzona noted that rice prices may not drop “significantly” despite the lower tariffs.

“Port congestion can delay the influx of imported rice in the market. But more than this, since domestic production is weak, importers or through their collusions now have an incentive to control and limit the decrease in rice price,” he said.

To avoid this, Mr. Lanzona said the government should encourage greater domestic production.

“But government support for local production is also hampered by the decreased tariffs. In effect, we are caught in a situation where rice prices can still remain high and market supply is below the needs of the households,” he said.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. on Monday said port congestion has caused delays in the release of rice imports. He said rice prices are projected to begin dropping in October, but a more significant drop is likely by January 2025.

“But since demand for food usually spikes in December, we anticipate seeing a more substantial drop in rice prices by January,” he said in a statement.

On Wednesday, the Philippine Ports Authority noted that consignees are taking longer to withdraw rice container shipments, leading to “possible artificial increases in rice prices.”

Despite this, the PPA recorded a 70% yard utilization, indicating that the country’s ports are not congested.

Mr. Balisacan also called on the need to invest in port development to lessen shipment traffic.

The latest data from the Agriculture department showed that imported regular milled rice costs P46.73 per kilogram this week, a P3.73 increase from P43 in the same period last year.

On the other hand, the price of well milled rice is at P51.45 per kilo, P6.45 higher than the P45 recorded a year ago. — **B.M.D.Cruz**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/top-stories/2024/09/20/622674/rice-prices-seen-to-further-fall/>



**REMATE:**

# Agri losses sa hagupit ni Ferdie, ‘habagat’ sumampa sa P107M

September 19, 2024 16:54



MANILA, Philippines- Umabot na ang pinsala sa agrikultura dahil sa pinagsamang epekto ng enhanced southwest monsoon at Tropical Cyclone Ferdie sa P107.42 milyon, ayon sa Department of Agriculture (DA).

“Based on the initial assessment of DA Regional Field Offices (RFO) in Mimaropa, Western Visayas, and Zamboanga Peninsula on the combined effects of the Southwest Monsoon enhanced by Tropical Cyclone Ferdie, which exited the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) on September 14, damage and losses have been reported on rice, corn, high-value crops, and livestock,” pahayag ng DA-Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Operations Center nitong Miyerkules.

Halos 4,749 metric tons (MT) ng volume loss ang natamo, na nakaapekto sa 1,327 magsasaka sa bansa.

Naitala ang pinakamalaking halaga ng pinsala sa rice production sa halos 4,340 MT na nagkakahalaga ng P98.34 milyon, sa Palawan.

Iniulat din ng DA-DRRM ang pinsala sa corn production na nagkakahalaga ng P6.06 milyon; sa high-value crops sa P2.99 milyon; at P29,000 para sa livestock at poultry.

Samantala, hindi pa naiuulat ang pinsala at pagkalugi mula sa Tropical Cyclones Gener at Helen, batay sa DA-DRRM.

Tiniyak naman ng DA ang distribusyon ng rice, corn, at vegetable seeds, maging bio-control measures, availability ng P25,000 interest-free at maaaring bayaran sa loob ng tatlong taon, at indemnification funds.

Noong Setyembre 9, nakapagtala ang DA-DRRM ng 51,728 metric tons ng volume loss sa agrikultura na nagkakahalaga ng P2.26 bilyon dahil sa Severe Tropical Storm Enteng. **RNT/SA**

<https://remate.ph/agri-losses-sa-hagupit-ni-ferdie-habagat-sumampa-sa-p107m/>



**REMATE:**

# Suplay ng pagkain sapat sa kabila ng sunod-sunod na bagyo

September 19, 2024 10:33



MANILA, Philippines – Tiniyak ni Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. nitong Miyerkules ang sapat na suplay ng pagkain sa kabila ng epekto ng sunud-sunod na sama ng panahon sa bansa.

“Basta tungkol sa pagkain, sa rami ng pagkain, siguradong may pagkain sa merkado, sa shelves, nothing to worry about. I think all the industries are playing their role to provide food for everybody,” anang kalihim sa isang ambush interview.

Idinagdag ni Tiu Laurel na ang mga kakulangan sa ilang mga bilihin ay pansamantalang isinasaalang-alang ang mga hamon sa logistik.

“Palagi lang talagang may problema sa bagyo, there might be shortages from time-to-time kung anong tinamaan ng bagyo. It’s a logistics matter, pero meron tayong stocks,” dagdag pa niya.

Ginawa ni Tiu Laurel ang pahayag habang iniulat ng DA-Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Operations Center ang 51,728 metric tons ng volume loss sa agrikultura na nagkakahalaga ng PHP2.26 bilyon noong Setyembre 9.

Karamihan sa nasabing pinsala ay naitala sa produksyon ng palay, na naka-peg sa PHP1.11 bilyon, na sinundan ng pinsala sa mga pasilidad ng irigasyon na nagkakahalaga ng PHP1.08 bilyon, pagkalugi sa produksyon ng mais na nagkakahalaga ng PHP42.66 milyon, mataas na halaga ng mga pananim na PHP26.66 milyon, kamoteng kahoy sa PHP1.98 milyon, at PHP16,000 halaga ng pagkalugi sa mga alagang hayop at manok.

Ang DA ay hindi pa naglalabas ng kanilang ulat sa pinsala sa agrikultura tungkol sa Tropical Storm Ferdie at Tropical Depression Gener.

Nauna rito, nag-ulat ito ng hindi bababa sa PHP23 bilyon na halaga ng pinsala sa agrikultura dahil sa pinagsamang epekto ng El Niño phenomenon, shearline, northeast monsoon, trough ng low-pressure area, Typhoon Aghon, Super Typhoon Carina, at southwest monsoon. **RNT**

<https://remate.ph/suplay-ng-pagkain-sapat-sa-kabila-ng-sunod-sunod-na-bagyo/>

## PEOPLE'S JOURNAL:

# DOST trains 14 Jasaan milk producers on food safety and good manufacturing practices

Thursday, September 19, 2024 Journal Online



**Mr. Michael Vincent V. Marte, DOST Misamis Oriental's Food Technologist, discusses Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) with the training attendees.**

In its mission to enhance its production standards, the United Livestock Raisers Cooperative (ULIRCO) underwent training on Food Safety and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) from the Department of Science and Technology—10 (DOST 10).

ULIRCO is a National Dairy Authority-supported group that produces pasteurized milk under the brand name “Fresh Moo” in Jasaan, Misamis Oriental.

Fourteen staff and on-the-job trainees attended the training from DOST 10 on September 10, 2024.

ULIRCO, a recipient of DOST's Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (SETUP), had previously benefited from milk processing equipment and laboratory analysis services provided through the program in 2022. The cooperative also received consultancy support through DOST's Manufacturing Productivity Extension Program (MPEX).

The cooperative is obtaining the FDA License to Operate (LTO) and Certificate of Product Registration (CPR). These certifications are crucial as they will enable ULIRCO to expand its product range and reach larger markets, including regional mall outlets, thereby increasing its market share and revenue.



**Senior Science Research Specialist Joanah S. Magto discusses Food Safety with the training attendees.**

ULIRCO's chairman, Wilfredo Perez, expressed his profound gratitude to DOST for their unwavering technical support. He emphasized that the training was not just a refresher but a crucial step towards securing their FDA LTO, a prerequisite for market expansion. Perez also expressed ULIRCO's eagerness to participate in more DOST programs in the future, recognizing DOST's pivotal role in their journey.

The session was led by Joanah S. Magto, Senior Science Research Specialist of DOST Misamis Oriental, who addressed the importance of identifying and mitigating food safety hazards, particularly given the perishable nature of milk. Michael Vincent V. Marte, a Professional Food Technologist of DOST Misamis Oriental, followed the discussion on Good Manufacturing Practices, underscoring the role of GMP in ensuring food safety and quality.

With DOST's Consultancy and Training Services, industries and MSMEs, like ULIRCO, are assisted in improving their compliance with Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) requirements. *(Michael Vincent V. Marte/DOST Misamis Oriental)*

#ProvidingSolutionsOpeningOpportunities

#ScienceForThePeople

#OneDOST4U

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About DOST-10

The Department of Science and Technology—Region 10 (DOST 10) envisions being an effective and competent catalyst of inclusive development by providing world-class and innovative Science and technology services in Region 10.

<https://journal.com.ph/dost-trains-14-jasaan-milk-producers-on-food-safety-and-good-manufacturing-practices/>

# **Increasing farm productivity**

## **FINER POINTS**

**By Dr. Fermin D. Adriano, PhD**

**September 20, 2024**

LAST week's column discussed how agricultural trade policy reforms could lead to lowering agricultural and food prices. However, ultimately bringing down prices of any goods or services necessitates significantly raising supply, which in turn is a function of increasing productivity.

Sadly, Philippine agriculture productivity is woefully low. Comparative studies measuring total factor productivity (TFP) among leading Southeast Asian countries reveal that the Philippines has one of the lowest. TFP is a measure of the ratio of aggregate output to aggregate inputs or, in layman's terms, how inputs were efficiently used in producing a particular output. The worrying problem is that as the years have passed, Philippine TFP has gone from bad to worse.

There is a proliferation of literature analyzing why Philippine agriculture is in the doldrums. Foremost among the findings is the fragmentation of our farmlands into miniscule sizes due to protracted implementation of the agrarian reform program. A decline in productivity of around 17 percent was noted as a result of the never-ending pursuit of agrarian reform (Adamopoulos and Restuccia, 2019). Studies also indicate that the bigger the land size, the more likely that it will be more productive than small farms.

The reason is commonsensical. Small farmers cannot afford to buy productivity-raising agricultural technology because of the very low income they derive from miniscule farms. Despite cost and return studies showing a hefty return on investment from palay (unmilled rice) farming of over 20 percent, the revenue derived ends up too small for the needs of the farmer and his family. Exacerbating this problem is that the highest return on investments in agriculture is realized by investing in technology. Without funds to invest in new technology and farm machinery, small farmers have little chance of dramatically raising their productivity and income.

The solution is through farm clustering and consolidation so that it will be easier for the government to deliver support services to small farmers. The government does not have the resources and capability to deal with millions of individual farmers but can do so if they are organized into associations and cooperatives.

Again, the sad fact is that the government has not seriously invested in organizing and mobilizing farmers. It thinks that by dangling incentives and subsidies, farmers will automatically organize themselves into associations and cooperatives. Some have but after availing of the incentives revert back to their old ways, only waiting to reactivate their organizations when the next round of dole outs is launched. A more definitive response to the land size problem is to increase the retention

ceiling from the current 5 hectares for a couple tilling land to 20–25 hectares. This will allow the emergence and growth of middle-class farmers. They are far more entrepreneurial than the small farmers because they are better educated, have access to small capital, know the market better and can negotiate with banks for bigger working capital.

Many of our small farmers are aging and no longer want to farm. Many of their kids also do not want to farm, which accounts for their pursuit of nonagricultural-related courses in college. It is indeed bewildering why our land policy wants to consign people to agriculture when many of our farmers and their kids no longer want to engage in farming while those who love to farm are denied from owning a farm large enough to be economically viable.

A third factor to ensure higher farm productivity is to become more sensitive to the challenges of climate change. The old agronomic practices need to be changed or tweaked. Longer and hotter dry seasons might be a bane for some crops (e.g., rice) but a boon to others (tropical fruits such as mango and pineapple) if irrigation facilities are present. Better knowledge of the challenges of climate change is needed.

The fourth and final factor is the need to strengthen the capability of institutions involved in agricultural development. The Department of Agriculture (DA) must recruit top-notch technical experts and scientists who can properly steer its productivity-enhancing programs based on economic viability and not political consideration. On another issue, the DA is still claiming that global rice prices remain high. This is not true. Global rice prices have gone down by \$100 per metric ton. The Food and Agriculture Organization has noted that the 5-percent Vietnamese broken rice is around \$550 from a high of \$650. Similarly, the 25-percent Vietnamese broken rice is now around \$500 from \$600.

The DA has explained that rice prices remain high because rice traders are exhausting old stocks for which they paid a 35-percent tariff. Why the agency has to make an excuse for cartel-like behavior instead of implementing measures to reduce rice prices for Filipino consumers is bewildering. With a lower tariff of 15 percent as provided by Executive Order 62, traders importing rice from Vietnam (where we get almost 90 percent of our rice imports) are now laughing their way to the bank. Given the 15-percent tariff and an exchange rate of P58 to a dollar, rice importers are realizing a profit of at least P10 per kilo. If the DA had encouraged more traders to import at the lower tariff rate and with global prices down, retail prices would have gone down by around P10 per kilo.

But the DA has declared that rice prices will only start to fall in October — the peak palay harvest season when rice prices historically decline. Once that happens and with the entry of massive rice imports, palay prices will drastically decline. I expect the DA to then petition for an increase in the rice tariff, supposedly to protect small palay farmers. By that time, traders will have made a killing of buying local palay harvests at low prices. And when the petition for high tariff is finally approved, peak palay harvest season will be over and incoming Christmas festivities will be jacking up rice prices due to higher demand.

In other words, the DA's rice price calculation is not meant to protect small palay farmers, much more than the over a hundred million Filipino consumers. It caters primarily to the interests of rice

traders who are backed by highly influential lobby groups, both from the business sector and so-called farmers' organizations.

**fdadriano88@gmail.com**

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/09/20/business/top-business/increasing-farm-productivity/1972758>



# China to tax Taiwan agricultural imports

By Agence France-Presse

September 20, 2024

**BEIJING** — China will begin imposing tariffs on agricultural imports from Taiwan in retaliation to similar moves by the island's government, Chinese state media said Wednesday.

From September 25, 34 Taiwanese agricultural products, including fresh fruit, vegetables and aquatic products, will be subject to customs duties, state broadcaster CCTV said, citing a government committee.

"Bans, restrictions and other discriminatory measures imposed unilaterally by the Taiwan region on the export of mainland [Chinese] products have severely hindered cross-Straits economic and trade cooperation," CCTV said.

State news agency Xinhua said that "in view of this, the State Council's Customs Tariff Commission recently issued a notice deciding to stop implementing the policy of exempting 34 items of Taiwanese agricultural products from import tariffs."

The reports provided no details on the tariffs' level.

China claims self-ruled Taiwan as part of its territory and has ramped up military, political and economic pressures on the island in recent years.

Tropical fruit from Taiwan are highly prized in China, a major outlet for the island's producers.

Chen Binhua, a spokesman for China's Taiwan Affairs Bureau, told Xinhua that tariff exemptions on Taiwanese agricultural and aquatic products date back to 2005 and 2007, and benefited Taiwanese producers.

But, he added, relations between Beijing and Taipei have worsened since Taiwanese leader Lai Ching-te took office in May.

**Beijing regards Lai as a "dangerous separatist" and denounced his inaugural speech as a "confession of Taiwan independence."**

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/09/20/business/foreign-business/china-to-tax-taiwan-agricultural-imports/1972691>



# ‘Strategic policy moves will bolster farm productivity’

Ada Pelonia

September 20, 2024

STRATEGIC policy interventions are pivotal in bolstering agricultural productivity that could lower food prices, according to a research study.

De La Salle University Professor Marites Tiongco stressed the need for blended short-term and long-term measures guided by well-crafted legal frameworks, which are crucial in overcoming the complexities of the Philippine agri-food system and fostering resilience and sustainability.

Tiongco, DLSU Professor Albert Lamberte, and Ateneo de Manila University Lecturer Karlo Fermin Adriano wanted to know through their research how policymakers can “effectively intervene in the agricultural sector to ensure food security and preserve households’ purchasing power when it comes to food and agricultural goods.”

Its study noted that the issues revolving high food prices, such as inefficiencies in the agri-food system, legislative barriers, and institutional challenges in governance and policy, are “intricately linked with food security and poverty alleviation.” This is especially for the most economically vulnerable households, who allocate approximately 60 percent of their income to food expenditures, it added.

Tiongco asserted that the Philippines’ total factor productivity (TFP) stagnation and decline, which falls under technological constraints, “weakens our agri-food system.”

“[The country’s TFP] has been lagging behind compared to our neighboring countries like Indonesia [...] especially because of the technological constraints in agriculture production that results in restricted supply and higher prices,” she said in the recent presentation of the study.

“This low productivity would further increase the Philippines’ import dependence, and so we are really vulnerable to global food chain shocks, and that’s how our food prices are affected.”

According to Tiongco, the spike in fertilizer prizes and the “slow” growth of irrigated land also contribute to high production cost which translates to elevated food prices.

## Possible interventions

Tiongco said that among the recommendations in the study were targeted social assistance programs and expedited title distributions for short-term interventions.

She explained that the assistance programs would ensure access to essential food items and inputs for their production.

“The accelerated land title distribution may streamline land ownership, but might [also have] a gradual effect on the food prices, as it influences longer-term efficiency.”

Meanwhile, education and awareness legislation together with research and development legal support were proposed for medium-term measures.

“There has to be education and awareness legislation. Long-term education can lead to more sustainable farming practices, potentially improving productivity,” Tiongco said.

She added that a continuous R&D can lead to innovations in agriculture, enhancing productivity which “can contribute to stabilizing or lowering the food prices” in the long term. For legal frameworks, Tiongco said the study recommended amendments to agrarian reform laws and agricultural credit laws.

She noted the value of introducing amendments to the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) to lift land ownership limits, promoting consolidation of lands while safeguarding the rights of beneficiaries.

Tiongco also stressed the need for enhanced laws on credit, which would “facilitate better credit access for farmers, ensuring they can invest in land improvements and modern agricultural practices.”

“It would lead to increased productivity, which could then lead to lowering food prices as improved production efficiency takes effect.”

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/09/20/strategic-policy-moves-will-bolster-farm-productivity/>

# DA woos foreign funders for agriculture investment gaps

Ada Pelonia  
September 20, 2024



Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) is seeking more foreign funding to plug investment gaps in the agriculture sector.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said the department recognized that the government has limited resources to undertake major projects such as seaports, roads and bridges, and irrigation that were needed to modernize agriculture and improve the income of farmers and fishermen.

“Your department is working at finding other funding sources from official development partners to implement necessary and relevant interventions needed to address critical sectoral and institutional challenges and investment gaps,” Laurel was quoted in the statement as saying.

Laurel said the development of “Build Better More” farm-to-market roads and bridges has been proposed to the French Government to improve the infrastructure linking farm production sites, fisheries, coastal landing points, and post-harvest facilities to markets and major highways.

He noted that the project would also facilitate trade to ensure the smooth and efficient movement of agricultural products to reduce trade barriers and develop a more effective

value chain for food and agricultural commodities to ensure they reach their destinations more efficiently.

Laurel said the program is expected to address significant infrastructure gaps that currently hinder the efficient distribution of agricultural goods.

The agriculture chief noted that the department is also proposing a project under the World Bank's Program for Results (P4R) to provide incremental funding to accelerate DA's initiatives, enhance the impact of its programs, and emphasize achieving sustainable outcomes and building institutional capacity.

He pointed out that the World Bank's P4R approach uses government systems and procedures rather than the Bank's, streamlining the process and focusing on tangible results.

The DA said the P4R project is part of the World Bank's strategy to expand the impact of development interventions through a results-oriented approach.

Meanwhile, Laurel also underscored the DA's collaboration with the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) in pushing forward with the Philippine Solar-Powered Irrigation Project that would initially install 8,000 units across the country to provide farms with rapid access to irrigation, boost harvest, and increase farm yields.

NIA was recently transferred to the Office of the President (OP) to fast-track irrigation projects. He also pointed to efforts in expanding the cold chain storage network to address issues of overproduction and post-harvest losses, particularly in high-value crops.

"In addition, we will be building food terminals along with cold storage facilities that will also be strategically established regionally. These facilities are very crucial to address the food logistical cold chain issues," Laurel said.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/09/20/da-woos-foreign-funders-for-agriculture-investment-gaps/>

# Fruit and seafood are the latest front in escalating Taiwan-China tensions

Christopher Bodeen | The Associated Press  
September 19, 2024



People buy fruit at a stall in Taipei, Taiwan on Sept. 20, 2021.

TAIPEI, Taiwan—Taiwan said Thursday that China's ban on imports of its fruit, vegetables, seafood and other goods violates trade rules, in the latest escalation of tensions between the self-governing island republic and its massive neighbor, which claims Taiwan as its own territory and has vowed to annex it by military means.

The Taiwanese government's Mainland Affairs Council said the ban, which takes effect next week, ignores rules laid out by the World Trade Organization, of which both sides are members.

The move comes amid growing military, political and economic pressure on Taiwan's government to concede to Beijing's control. Taiwan's semi-tropical climate and fertile soil have nurtured an agricultural industry valued at around \$500 billion dollars, alongside high-tech corporations that produce the world's most cutting-edge computer chips.

China's move "harms the interests of farmers" on both sides of the Taiwan Strait and does nothing to improve relations between the two, the council said. China and Taiwan should seek dialogue through the WTO to resolve their differences, it added.

The WTO is one of the few forums through which discussion is possible between the two sides, which divided amid civil war in 1949. Chinese diplomatic pressure has barred Taiwan from the United Nations and reduced its number of official diplomatic allies to 12.

The Chinese ban appears to target rural Taiwanese, who for the past two decades have largely voted for pro-independence candidates but whose local officials have been courted by China with all-expense vacations and other enticements.

China has used trade pressure on countries such as Australia, South Korea and Norway over perceived political slights, using its market for resources and consumer goods as leverage, with mixed results.

Image credits: [AP/Chiang Ying-ying](#)

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/09/19/fruit-and-seafood-are-the-latest-front-in-escalating-taiwan-china-tensions/>



# ‘UK to regain status as one of PHL’s top poultry suppliers’

Ada Pelonia  
September 19, 2024

The United Kingdom aims to reclaim its status as one of the Philippines’s top suppliers of poultry products following Manila’s decision to lift a 3-year ban it imposed on British poultry due to the highly pathogenic avian influenza.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. issued Memorandum Order (MO) 34 last August which authorized the lifting of the ban. He said the Department of Agriculture (DA) found that there was “negligible risk of contamination” from British poultry meat.

“Poultry was, in the past, our second largest export to the Philippines. Why not become the (largest) sometime in the years to come?” British Ambassador to the Philippines Laure Beaufile told reporters on the sidelines of a trade event in Makati City on Tuesday.

“We’ve lost three years, sadly, so I think importers and traders have to get reacquainted with the UK market, with UK suppliers, and recognize the opportunity that is presented to them. Once they do, I think the sky’s the limit because they’ll be importing large quantities [of poultry products].”

To bolster confidence among industry stakeholders, the embassy said a regionalization agreement has been forged between the UK and the Philippines last May.

“This agreement specifies that farms, hatcheries, and slaughterhouses in affected districts will be ineligible to export, while those in unaffected areas can proceed under strict health protocols,” the British embassy said in a statement.

Beaufile said the regionalization agreement with the Philippines showed that the DA and the UK’s Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs have forged a “strong relationship based on trust but also on science and data.”

She added that this would also entail a sustained trade despite bird flu cases in certain areas of the UK.

“That’s the whole idea of regionalization. Even where there may be a region where there’s avian flu, that will not detract from exporting from other regions in the country. The flow can be steady again, which is ultimately what importers want here as well.”

Meanwhile, the Meat Importers and Traders Association (Mita) said the regionalization was a “step in the right direction.”

“This regionalization of bird flu for the UK is a good sign because the DA now is also requesting for position papers on the regionalization of ASF countries,” Mita President Emeritus Jesus Cham told reporters.

Data from the British embassy showed that bilateral trade between the UK and the Philippines reached an “all-time high” of £2.8 billion in 2023, with UK meat becoming the second-most exported commodity at £37.2 million.

“With UK poultry back on the menu, we anticipate significant growth in these figures.”

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/09/19/uk-to-regain-status-as-one-of-phls-top-poultry-suppliers/>



**ABANTE TONITE**

# **Modus ng mga rice importer kalusin – PPA**

September 19, 2024

Kinalampag ng Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) ang Department of Agriculture (DA) para bigyan ng ultimatum ang mga rice importer upang i-pull out sa mga pantalan ang kanilang shipment.

Ayon kay PPA General Manager Jay Santiago, nagpadala na sila ng liham sa DA nitong Huwebes, Setyembre 19. Nabatid na hanggang ngayon halos 900 container pa rin ng imported rice ang nakatengga sa Manila International Container Port (MICT) at South Harbor.

Sabi ng PPA, posibleng hinihintay ng mga consignee na sumirit ang presyo ng bigas sa mga palengke bago kunin ang kanilang shipment.

Ani Santiago, maituturing na rin ito bilang hoarding at ang kaibahan lamang ay nasa mga pantalan pa ang bigas at wala sa mga pribadong bodega.

Wala umanong hurisdiksyon ang PPA sa paggalaw ng mga naturang shipment kaya dapat na ang kaukulang mga ahensiya ang gumawa ng paraan para mailabas sa merkado ang milyon-milyong kilo ng nakatenggang bigas.

Giit ni Santiago, dapat na isabay sa pamimigay ng permit to import ang kasunduan kung hanggang kailan lamang puwedeng ilagak sa mga pantalan, hindi lang ang bigas, kundi pati na rin ang iba pang agricultural products.

Sa ganitong paraan, umpisa pa lang ay malinaw na aniya sa mga consignee na hindi maaaring patagalin sa mga pantalan ang kanilang shipment.

Dagdag pa ng PPA na alam nito kung gaano kahalaga na maagang nakakarating ang bigas sa mga palengke kaya ginagawa ng ahensiya ang lahat para hindi atrasado ang mga shipment dito. (Andrea Salve/Eileen Mencias)

<https://tonite.abante.com.ph/2024/09/19/modus-ng-mga-rice-importer-kalusin-ppa/>

# Dagdag na pondo mula sa international partners kailangan ng DA

**Angie dela Cruz**

September 20, 2024 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Naghahanap ang Department of Agriculture (DA) ng karagdagang pondo mula sa mga international development partners upang matugunan ang mga hamon sa sektor ng agrikultura.

Ayon kay Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr. kinikilala ng DA ang limitadong resources ng gobyerno upang magsagawa ng mga pangunahing proyekto tulad ng mga daungan, kalsada, tulay, at irigasyon na kailangan upang gawing moderno ang sektor ng agrikultura at mapabuti ang kita ng mga magsasaka at mangingisda.

Kabilang sa mga iminungkahing proyekto ng DA ay ang pagpapaunlad ng farm-to-market roads at mga tulay sa pakikipagtulungan sa French Government, at ang isang proyekto sa ilalim ng Program for Results ng World Bank upang magbigay ng karagdagang pondo para mapabilis ang mga inisyatibo ng DA.

Binigyang-diin din ni Sec. Tiu Laurel ang pakikipagtulungan ng DA sa National Irrigation Administration sa pagsusulong ng Philippine Solar-Powered Irrigation Project na may malaking tulong upang mapalakas ang ani, at mapabuti ang kabuuang kalagayan ng sektor ng agrikultura sa Pilipinas.

<https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/metro/2024/09/20/2386599/dagdag-na-pondo-mula-sa-international-partners-kailangan-ng-da>