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**MANILA BULLETIN:**

# We will need more tech in Agri

BY [JOHN TRIA](#)

Sep 23, 2024 07:07 AM

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#MINDANAO



Over the last few years, we have seen climate variations affecting the growing and harvesting seasons of many of our crops. With these challenges, it is crucial to employ new techniques and technologies to achieve two aims for Philippine agriculture.

The first aim is to manage the uncertainties and possible weak harvests that climate variations bring. Changes in climate patterns have created additional harvest seasons for fruits such as Durian. However, extreme heat also affects poultry and may affect the irrigation of other crops. These climate variations can affect the volume of harvests and the quality of the products. It will be necessary to examine how our crops can be made more resilient to these variations.

The second aim is to improve production quality and quantity. This allows the farm to gain more income by reaching more markets that demand quality and getting better prices for the commodity. In turn, more jobs are created in the rural areas.

Old or current agricultural practices may no longer deliver the same outcomes and harvests when particularly faced with climate variations. These can reduce harvests or yields or raise costs for the farmer. The technology to be employed will, therefore, need to be affordable and cost-effective for the farmer for it to be sustainable.

That said, many large Filipino corporations such as Metro Pacific are now entering the agribusiness space by producing products such as milk (<https://mb.com.ph/2024/8/25/metro-pacific-targets-p20-billion-revenues-from-agribusiness>), targeting as much as P1 billion.

This is a major investment that shows us that the agribusiness space has become an interesting and

viable sector for investment. The use of technology will play a big part for companies to realize investment goals.

## **Great events in Mindanao**

I am congratulating the Davao City Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the 26th Davao Agri Trade Expo (DATE). This annual event serves as the biggest agribusiness event in Southern Philippines, bringing thousands interested in livestock, poultry, fisheries, crops, and fruits to the event venue. The Davao region is the nerve center of our country's center of agriculture export. It was good to see all the booths and free learning sessions that featured opportunities in Mindanao's vibrant agribusiness sectors. One thing I happily noticed is how many of the participating sponsors and booth tenants went on social media to showcase their participation. This gives a positive message to the public.

I likewise congratulate the General Santos Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) for successfully hosting the 33rd Mindanao Business Conference (MINBIZCON). Over the years, each Mindanao Business Conference has been a venue to introduce new investments to the island. I am confident that this and future conferences will bring more investor interest in Mindanao. Recent economic reforms and new infrastructure will drive interest in Mindanao's business sector. At the same time, I foresee more local governments ramping up their investment promotion activities to lure more investment.

### **Davao archdiocese@75**

This year marks the 75th year of the establishment of the Archdiocese of Davao, which serves as the metropolitan archdiocese of the various Davao provinces, including the Diocese of Digos, Tagum, and Mati. Its theme "Journeying Together as a Synodal Church living out the Spirituality of Stewardship in our Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC) / Gagmay'ng Kristohanong Katilingban (GKKs)" makes clear that basic ecclesial communities are vital in bringing the Church to small communities and organizing the participation of the laity to bring Christ to the peripheries.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/9/23/we-will-need-more-tech-in-agri>

**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

## **STAR reporter wins BFAR plum**

The Philippine Star

September 23, 2024 | 12:00am



The Philippine Star reporter Bella Cariaso

STAR / File

**MANILA, Philippines** — The Philippine Star reporter Bella Cariaso (in photo) was recognized in the recent Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR)'s Gawad Parangal sa mga Kabalikat Pangisdaan.

The BFAR selected Cariaso as one of the recipients of its Gawad Pasasalamat for using the media platform to promote fisheries conservation and protection to fellow Filipinos.

Cariaso covers the Department of Agriculture and its attached agencies.

She has joined two of BFAR's expeditions in the West Philippine Sea – to Pag-asa Island in Palawan and in Zambales – conducted as part of the government's effort to provide assistance to Filipino fisherfolk amid the tension in the West Philippine Sea.

The recognition is part of the annual Fisheries Conservation (FishCon) Week held last Friday at the Lopez Convention Hall of the Bureau of Soils and Water Management office in Diliman, Quezon City.

The FishCon Week is celebrated yearly to promote the importance of fish and other aquatic products to people's well-being and the country's economy.

With the theme "Sama-sama Tungo sa Maunlad at Likas-Kayang Pangisdaan sa Bagong Pilipinas," this year's celebration underscored the collective responsibility in ensuring the conservation and sustainable growth of the country's fisheries industry.

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2024/09/23/2387220/star-reporter-wins-bfar-plum>

**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

# ‘20,000 MT rice used as excuse for EO 62 failure’

[Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

September 23, 2024 | 12:00am



“We are doubtful whether the 20 million kilos or 20,000 tons in the pier has any impact on prices. It is less than four percent of the 530,000 tons that arrived from July to August at 15 percent,” FFF national manager Raul Montemayor said.

Philstar.com / Irra Lising

MANILA, Philippines — Farmers’ group Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) said over the weekend that the government is using the 20,000 metric tons of imported rice lying idle at the Port of Manila as an excuse to justify the failure of Executive Order (EO) No. 62 to bring down the retail price of the staple.

“We are doubtful whether the 20 million kilos or 20,000 tons in the pier has any impact on prices. It is less than four percent of the 530,000 tons that arrived from July to August at 15 percent,” FFF national manager Raul Montemayor said.

The Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) has said that traders have yet to claim the P555 million worth of imported rice inside the 888 container vans at the Port of Manila.

“At least 96 percent of the arrivals are already out in the market. Also, it doesn’t make sense why they will hold on to these stocks when prices will foreseeably go down when new harvests come in. (Officials are) just using this as an excuse for why the tariff reduction was not effective,” Montemayor added.

PPA General Manager Jay Santiago said that consignees might be deliberately delaying the withdrawal of imported rice in anticipation of higher market prices.

EO 62 took effect on July 7. Authorities said the lowering of tariff from 35 percent to 15 percent will result in at least P7 per kilo drop in the retail prices of the staple.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. has moved their forecast on full impact of EO 62 to January 2025 from October 2024, saying the demand for food usually spikes in December.

Based on the monitoring of the Department of Agriculture (DA) in Metro Manila markets, the retail price of imported regular milled rice is sold for as high as P50 per kilo; imported well-milled rice for as high as P55 per kilo; imported premium rice at P60 per kilo; and imported special rice at P65 per kilo.

Former Agriculture secretary Leonardo Montemayor said that farmers are suffering from the effects of the 15- percent drop in the farmgate of palay, saying the buying price ranged between P15 and P17 per kilo.

He warned that the farmgate prices would further go down unless the government provides the necessary interventions.

Montemayor added that the breakeven farmgate price of palay is P17 per kilo while last year, the farmgate price of palay was between P23 and P25 per kilo.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/09/23/2387241/20000-mt-rice-used-excuse-eo-62-failure>



**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

# Rice tariff collections breach P25 billion

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

September 23, 2024 | 12:00am



A worker unloads sacks of rice.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — The government has collected at least P25 billion in tariffs from over 2.8 million metric tons (MT) of imported rice from January to August, latest Bureau of Customs (BOC) data showed.

BOC data showed rice tariff collections during the eight-month period reached P25.767 billion, about 16.4 percent higher than the P22.139 billion recorded in the same period last year.

The uptick in tariff collections could be attributed to the increase in import volume coupled with the higher declared value of shipments.

The country imported 2.865 million MT of rice during the period, about 23.73 percent higher than the 2.316 million MT recorded a year ago, based on BOC data.

The average rice import price, meanwhile, rose by 31.23 percent year-on-year to \$512 per MT from \$390.25 per MT last year.

Rice export prices have remained elevated this year due to tighter global market supplies caused by the persisting export ban imposed by India on its non-Basmati rice stocks, as well as lackluster output in key producing countries caused by extreme weather conditions.

More so, the situation has been aggravated by the higher import demand from Indonesia and the Philippines as the two countries seek to plug the shortfall in their domestic supplies to arrest a spike in retail prices of the commodity.

The Philippine government reduced the rice tariff rate to 15 percent – the lowest in history – from 35 percent as it aims to pull down elevated retail prices through the entry of more affordable foreign supplies.

However, frustration continues to mount from various quarters of the rice industry as the price reductions of P5 to P7 per kilo projected by government officials have not materialized more than two months after the tariff reduction took effect.

Government officials have pointed out that traders are still disposing their old stocks to make room for the newer imports levied with lower tariff rate. However, some rice traders and importers have cautioned that export prices have surged in the global market, particularly from key supplier Vietnam, negating the slash in tariff rate.

“It does not make sense for traders to hold on to cheap stocks imported with 15 percent tariff while retail prices are still high. They are in fact maximizing their profits now instead of passing on their tariff savings to consumers,” said Raul Montemayor of the Federation of Free Farmers.

Tariff collections from rice imports in August fell by 37.5 percent on an annual basis to nearly P1.7 billion as a result of the lowering of the tariff rate on the staple.

BOC data showed that rice tariff collections last month reached P1.688 billion, some P1.014 billion lower than the P2.702 billion recorded in the same month a year ago.

Rice imports expanded by a double-digit rate for the second consecutive month as volumes last month rose by a quarter year-on-year to 383,746.531 MT.

BOC records show that over 581,000 MT of rice have entered the country at a reduced tariff rate between July and August.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. earlier projected that retail rice prices would start to soften next month with the full impact of the lower tariff rate being felt by January.

BOC data showed that the average landed cost of rice in August stood at P33.97 per kilogram, the lowest in the past nine months.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/09/23/2387192/rice-tariff-collections-breach-p25-billion>

**BUSINESS WORLD:**

# Goat, sheep flocks targeted for expansion by DA

September 23, 2024 | 12:04 am



BAR.GOV.PH

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said is studying ways to expand the Philippines' goat and sheep flocks, primarily by opening new farms and supporting established ones.

“The Goat and Sheep Expansion Project (GSEP) is aimed at promoting the growth of the small ruminant sector by introducing good genetics, strengthening livelihood of livestock farmers, and providing support to new and established goat and sheep farms and enterprises,” the DA said in a Memorandum Circular (MC).

Under MC 39, the DA plans to develop nucleus and multiplier farms for breeding stock to be introduced to production centers and farmer growers.

The project also includes the development of feed and forage components, training and capacity building, and animal health support. It will likewise establish a small ruminants registry system.

Eligible beneficiaries are established goat or sheep breeder farms led by farmer cooperatives and associations, local government units (LGUs), or the private sector.

The DA added that accredited civil service organizations and LGUs may be eligible for a nucleus farm grant aimed at producing the parent stock for the multiplier farms.

New and established goat or sheep farms are also qualified to receive production support, which includes seed for forage and planting materials, ruminant feed, and machinery for processing forage.

It added that veterinary drugs and biologics, vitamins, dewormers, and disinfectants will also be distributed to goat or sheep farmers.

Farmer training and capacity building will be offered by the Agricultural Training Institute.

“The project components involving external stakeholders such as farmers, FCAs (Farmers’ Cooperatives and Associations), LGUs, and State Universities and Colleges as beneficiaries, shall undergo an application process for availment,” the DA said.

It added that the project will be headed by the Undersecretary for Livestock, along with DA livestock agencies.  
— **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/agribusiness/2024/09/23/623066/goat-sheep-flocks-targeted-for-expansion-by-da/>

## **BUSINESS WORLD:**

# **Delays in landing imports also affecting shipments of meat**

September 23, 2024 | 12:28 am



PHOTO COURTESY OF ICTSI

PORT CONGESTION is also delaying the unloading of frozen meat, an importers group said, potentially adding another imported commodity to the list of items that cannot be brought to market promptly to mitigate high prices.

“One of the reasons for port congestion is that the containers are not released and unloaded (immediately),” Meat Importers and Traders Association President Emeritus Jesus C. Cham said.

Last week, Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. cited the need for more ports to fast-track the landing of imported farm goods.

Mr. Cham added that the requirement that shipments bear the seals of the National Meat Inspection Service, and the Bureau of Customs have also caused further delays.

“(Now) they are talking about pre-border inspection, cross-border electronic invoicing, and then you have the cold examination facilities in agriculture (CEFA), these are additional (requirements),” he said.

The CEFAs are intended to ensure that imports are disease-free, and to mitigate the risks from smuggled farm goods.

All imported agri-fishery products are to undergo a 100% examination by the various food regulators overseeing animal industry, plant industry, fisheries and aquatic resources, and meat.

Meat imports rose 9.64% by volume year on year in the first half, led by pork, chicken, and beef, the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) reported.

Shipments of imported meat amounted to 647.75 million kilograms during the first six months.

Mr. Laurel has cited the congested ports as delaying rice imports from reaching the market, blunting the intended impact of lower tariffs in containing rice prices.

Mr. Laurel had called for the Philippine Ports Authority to fast track the release of container vans stalled in Manila. About 888 shipping containers holding about 20,000 metric tons of rice have not yet been released.

“The delay in releasing the imported rice has raised concerns over food security, especially as the country faces ongoing inflation pressures,” the Department of Agriculture (DA) said in a statement.

In June, President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. signed Executive Order No. 62 which lowered the tariff on imported rice to 15% from 35% until 2028, citing the need to stabilize rice prices. The order took effect in July.

“It is doubtful whether the 20 million kilos or 20,000 MT in the pier has any impact on prices. It is less than 4% of the 530,000 MT that arrived in the July-August at 15% tariff; 96% of the arrivals are already out in the market,” Federation of Free Farmers National Manager Raul Q. Montemayor said via Viber.

Rice imports have totaled 3.01 million MT as of Sept. 12, according to data from the Bureau of Plant Industry.

Leonardo A. Lanzona, an economics professor at the Ateneo de Manila, said that the delay in landing goods is due partly to importers waiting for more favorable prices.

“Importers seem to have contributed little to the price decreases as their goods are stuck in ports. If the government subsidizes the farmers, instead of lowering tariffs and improving port infrastructure, the rice producers and consumers are protected from these importers who wish to manipulate prices,” he said via Messenger chat.

Mr. Laurel has said that the DA is studying developing 17 ports with private partners that will specialize in handling agricultural shipments.

Mr. Montemayor added that prices could drop with the influx of palay (unmilled rice) during the dry season harvest.

“It doesn’t make sense why they will hold on to these stocks when prices will foreseeably go down when new harvests come in,” Mr. Montemayor added.

“By January, we will have a lot of stocks because of the fresh harvests in September-November, plus imports at 15% (tariff). Prices will go down even without the tariff cut, not because of it,” he said.

The DA has said that the lower tariffs on rice would lead to a P5 to P7 per kilogram drop in imported rice prices. The impact on prices is expected to start showing up in mid-October, but more significant effects could be seen by January. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/09/23/623106/delays-in-landing-imports-also-affecting-shipments-of-meat/>

**BUSINESS WORLD:**

# Taiwan denounces China for discontinuing tariff exemptions on farm goods

September 23, 2024 | 12:03 am



REUTERS

TAIPEI — Taiwan denounced China Thursday for suspending tariff exemptions on agricultural imports from the island, saying it was “economic coercion” and not conducive to improving relations.

China, which claims democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory, has ramped up its pressure on Taipei over the past five years, both militarily and economically.

China’s finance ministry late Wednesday said it would suspend tariff exemptions on 34 agricultural items imported from Taiwan, including fresh fruit, vegetables, and aquatic products, effective from Sept. 25.

“Taiwan’s unilateral adoption of discriminatory measures such as bans and restrictions on the export of mainland products has seriously impeded cross-strait economic and trade cooperation,” it added.

Taiwan’s Mainland Affairs Council said China’s actions were “yet another act of economic coercion against Taiwan, which hurts the interests of farmers and fishermen across the Taiwan Strait and will only result in resentment from farmers and fishermen and the general public in Taiwan.”

“It is not conducive to the long-term development of cross-strait relations,” the council said in a statement.



In a separate statement, Taiwan's Agriculture Ministry said China had already been implementing nontariff barriers against Taiwanese agriculture, pointing to previous bans on mangoes, pineapples, and other fruits for food safety reasons.

The ministry added it continues to promote exports to "high consumption" markets outside of China.

Agriculture is not a major part of Taiwan's tech-dominated economy but it is politically sensitive given much farming takes place in the southern part of the island which is a stronghold of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party.

China has repeatedly suspended tariff exemptions for goods from Taiwan, including for some chemical imports in December shortly before Taiwan held presidential and parliamentary elections.

China detests Taiwan President Lai Ching-te, who took office in May, saying he is a "separatist." Mr. Lai says only Taiwan's people can decide their future and has offered talks with Beijing but been rebuffed. — **Reuters**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/agribusiness/2024/09/23/623065/taiwan-denounces-china-for-discontinuing-tariff-exemptions-on-farm-goods/>

**BUSINESS WORLD:**

# Four Russian grain regions in state of emergency due to heavy rains

September 23, 2024 | 12:01 am



REUTERS

MOSCOW — Russia’s vast Krasnoyarsk region declared a state of emergency Thursday due to heavy rains killing winter crops during sprouting time, bringing the total number of Siberian grain-producing regions under emergency conditions to four.

Earlier in September, a state of emergency was announced in the Tomsk, Novosibirsk, and Kemerovo regions. Together, the four regions accounted for about 5% of last year’s grain harvest in Russia, the world’s largest wheat exporter.

Declaring a state of emergency can allow farmers to claim compensation.

“Due to the abundance of rain and excessive soil moisture, farmers’ crops have suffered as the sprouting is taking place,” said Sergei Ponomarenko, first vice-governor of the Krasnoyarsk region, in a statement.

Mr. Ponomarenko estimated the affected area at more than 17,000 hectares, with preliminary financial damage exceeding 280 million roubles (\$3 million).

The resulting winter crop losses will affect next year’s harvest.

Over a dozen Russian grain-producing regions have been hit by extreme weather, from early spring frosts to drought in recent months. The bad weather has affected an area of more than 1.1 million hectares, officials said.

Despite the losses, Russia has maintained its official grain harvest forecast at 132 million metric tons, a 10% drop compared to last year, and its export forecast at 60 million tons. — **Reuters**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/agribusiness/2024/09/23/623062/four-russian-grain-regions-in-state-of-emergency-due-to-heavy-rains/>

**BUSINESS WORLD:**

# Missouri health worker who had contact with bird flu patient developed symptoms, US officials report

September 23, 2024 | 12:02 am



REUTERS

A **SECOND** Missouri healthcare worker who had contact with a hospitalized patient infected with bird flu developed mild respiratory symptoms but was not tested for the virus, US officials said Friday.

The number of people who were in contact with the hospitalized bird flu patient in Missouri and developed symptoms is now up to three, officials said. All three have recovered.

The other two symptomatic cases included a healthcare worker who tested negative for influenza and a household contact of the patient who developed symptoms at the same time as the hospitalized patient, but was never tested.

Unlike prior US bird flu cases this year, the Missouri patient had no known contact with infected animals, raising concerns the virus currently circulating in dairy cattle may have mutated in a way that makes it spread more easily in people.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) officials said in a Sept. 12 briefing that the agency has been unable to determine if the Missouri case was related to the virus infecting US dairy cattle. Missouri is leading the state's bird flu investigation with remote assistance from the CDC.

The state's health officials said in an e-mail last week Missouri is considering taking blood samples to look for antibodies that would indicate prior exposure to bird flu.

The CDC said serologic testing will be offered to the second healthcare worker. Caitlin Rivers, an epidemiologist at Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security, said the results of the blood tests will be critical.

"We'll need the serology results to assess whether this is evidence of H5 transmission," she said, adding that COVID-19 activity was also high in August and the symptoms were easy to confuse.

Michael Osterholm, an infectious disease expert with the University of Minnesota, also said it could be "any number of respiratory illnesses."

The confirmed Missouri case occurred in a patient who was admitted to the hospital with underlying health conditions and was tested for influenza as a part of their workup.

It was unclear whether the patient's underlying conditions caused the symptoms or the flu.

The Missouri case was the 14<sup>th</sup> person in the US to be diagnosed with bird flu this year. The other 13 cases were among farm workers and linked to bird flu outbreaks on poultry or dairy farms.

Bird flu has infected more than 200 dairy herds in 14 states since March, according to US Department of Agriculture data. — **Reuters**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/agribusiness/2024/09/23/623063/missouri-health-worker-who-had-contact-with-bird-flu-patient-developed-symptoms-us-officials-report/>

# Bicol gets P156M in livelihood aid

By William B. Depasupil  
September 23, 2024

THE Department of Labor and Employment (DoLE) has extended more than P156 million in emergency employment and livelihood assistance to over 31,000 workers and beneficiaries in Bicol Region.

Labor Secretary Bienvenido Laguesma said over the weekend that apart from the services, job fairs were also simultaneously conducted in the provinces of Sorsogon, Camarines Norte, Catanduanes, Masbate, and Albay where over 2,000 employment opportunities were offered to Bicolano jobseekers.

"These activities were mounted by the labor department in support of the nationwide launching of the Handog ng Pangulo: Serbisyong Para sa Lahat Program, a series of initiatives that bring government services closer to the Filipino people and help them start their livelihoods and support their daily needs," Laguesma said.

The P156 million worth of assistance were made through DoLE's Integrated Livelihood and Emergency Employment Programs or Dileep, under which are the Integrated Livelihood Program (DILP) and the Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa ating Disadvantaged Workers (Tupad) program.

The DILP or the Kabuhayan Program component provides grant assistance for the startup, enhancement, or restoration of lost livelihood for disadvantaged (vulnerable, marginalized, displaced) individuals or groups in the informal sector.

The Tupad program, on the other hand, provides temporary work to disadvantaged workers for 10 to 90 days, depending on the nature of assigned community work. Beneficiaries receive wages based on the highest prevailing minimum wage in the region.

Laguesma urged beneficiaries and job seekers to take full advantage of the opportunities presented to secure a stable future.

"To our countrymen, let us take advantage of the program. Get ready for job interviews, receive the benefits and use the livelihood packages for better life," Laguesma said.

Based on the second quarter progress report of the DoLE-Bureau of Workers with Special Concerns, a total of 1,062,499 informal sector workers have benefited from the Dileep.

Records showed that a total of 36,846 workers, primarily from vulnerable groups such as the underemployed, parents of child laborers, and marginalized farmers and fisherfolk, received DILP assistance worth P707,187,360.

Of these beneficiaries, 27,128 established new livelihood projects, while 9,065 expanded their existing ones. Additionally, 653 were assisted in restoring their livelihood through DILP.

At least 10,493 workers, or 28.48 percent of the beneficiaries assisted under the livelihood program, are from the country's 4th to 6th income class municipalities.

Tupad, on the other hand, hired some 1,025,653 workers under its cash-for-work program amounting to P5,652,212,238 in wages from April to June 2024.

Citing the same report, the Bicol Region has the highest number of assisted workers with 141,443 beneficiaries, followed by Calabarzon with 83,665 and Central Luzon with 83,163.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/09/23/regions/bicol-gets-p156m-in-livelihood-aid/1973390>



# ‘Impact of EUDR on PHL agri exports minimal’

Andrea E. San Juan  
September 23, 2024

The European Union’s (EU) implementation of a ban on imported agricultural goods linked to forest degradation would have “minimal impact” on Philippine exports, according to the international trade arm of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

“Our internal consultations have shown that the potential impact on our exports is minimal,” DTI-Bureau of International Trade Relations (BITR) Director Sherylyn D. Aquia told the BusinessMirror in a Viber message.

Nonetheless, Aquia said the government is continuing to engage stakeholders on “how future changes or expansion of regulation could adversely affect our exports.”

The EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) is a measure that would require entities to demonstrate that their products are not linked to forest degradation, covers coffee, cocoa, soy, palm oil, wood, rubber and cattle. The 27-member bloc European Union is set to implement this in December.

“We understand that the regulation reflects the preferences and demand of the EU consumers, as well as the EU’s advocacy on combating climate change,” she said.

Being a developing country, she noted that the Philippines “would need resources to comply and implement these policies.”

DTI-Export Marketing Bureau (EMB) Bianca Pearl R. Sykimte told the BusinessMirror recently that the top Philippine exports to the EU in 2023 were electronics, semiconductors, coconut oil and tuna.

Sykimte said these products accounted for more than 70 percent of total Philippine exports to the EU, amounting to \$8.37 billion.

She also noted that the EUDR may provide opportunities for the country's coconut oil exports to get a larger share of the EU market since the country's palm oil competitors will be affected by the regulation.

Based on the data processed by DTI-EMB and obtained by this paper, coconut oil ranked third among the Philippines's export products to EU, amounting to \$547.15 million in 2023.

The value of Philippine coconut oil exports jumped by 56.8 percent year-on-year to \$1.11 billion in January to July, data from the Philippine Statistics Authority showed.

This commodity posted the second-fastest growth rate among the Philippines's goods exports.

Nonetheless, Sykimte said the DTI has been closely following developments on the EUDR so the government can prepare Philippine exporters. (See: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/09/18/eu-degraded-forest-ban-favors-phl-coconut-oil-exports/>)

A recent Bloomberg report noted that the European Cocoa Association said in a letter to European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen that the absence of clarity of key elements in the EUDR has made compliance efforts "highly uncertain."

The trade group, which represents top traders, including Barry Callebaut and Cargill Inc., called for an extension of the transition period for at least six months from its December 30 kickoff.

The report also noted that the letter came barely a week after German Chancellor Olaf Scholz pushed back against the regulation, adding to objections voiced by some nations, including Brazil, Indonesia and Malaysia, which argue it will have a negative impact across global commodities markets.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/09/23/impact-of-eudr-on-phl-agri-exports-minimal/>

# **BPI: Local traders import 3.013 MMT of rice**

Ada Pelonia  
September 23, 2024

Imported rice that arrived in the Philippines breached 3 million metric tons (MMT) as of September 12, according to data from the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI).

Data from the BPI showed that 3.013 MMT of imported rice reached Philippine ports. However, the volume is less than half of what was covered by the sanitary and phytosanitary import clearances (SPSICs) issued by the attached agency of the Department of Agriculture (DA).

The BPI approved and issued 7,021 SPSICs for the purchase of 7.14 MMT of imported rice.

Of the volume that arrived in the Philippines, over 2.36 MMT came from Vietnam, which maintained its status as the country's top source of imports. Thailand was the second-largest supplier as it accounted for 394,445.74 metric tons (MT).

BPI data also showed that the Philippines imported rice from other countries like Pakistan (157,044.48 MT), Myanmar (68,007 MT), and India (21,974.54 MT).

BLY Agri Venture Trading led the 154 rice importers with a total volume of 200,946.99 MT. Orison Free Enterprise Inc. trailed behind with 173,295.45 MT followed by Macman Rice and Corn Trading with 135,958.30 MT.

Data from the attached agency of the Department of Agriculture (DA) also showed that it approved and issued 7,021 sanitary and phytosanitary import clearances (SPSICs) which covered the importation of 7.14 MMT of rice.

Rice importers are required to secure an SPSIC from the BPI before bringing in foreign rice stocks.

An SPSIC would certify that an inbound shipment is safe for human and animal consumption and would not bring in any pests that could be detrimental to the local agriculture sector.

The country's actual purchases of imported rice stood at 3.61 MMT in 2023, based on BPI data.

Meanwhile, Assistant Secretary Arnel De Mesa said the Philippines has enough rice.

“In terms sa supply, we have no problem. Imports are already at 3 MMT as of early September,” De Mesa said in a radio interview over the weekend.

“We will have a national inventory equivalent to 60 days of consumption after December.”

The DA recently said it expects a significant drop in rice prices by January as the full impact of the reduction in rice tariffs takes hold. (See: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/09/18/big-drop-in-rice-prices-once-tariff-cuts-take-hold-da/>)

“Since demand for food usually spikes in December, we anticipate seeing a more substantial drop in rice prices by January,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said in a statement.

Executive Order 62 signed by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., which reduced the tariff on rice to 15 percent from 35 percent, took effect in July.

Economic managers estimated that the tariff reduction could cut rice prices by around P5 to P7 per kilo.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/09/23/bpi-local-traders-import-3-013-mmt-of-rice/>

**ABANTE TONITE**

# **NEDA binutata sa pangakong bagsak-presyo: Tapyas-taripa wa epek sa bigas**

Habang bumagsak na sa kalahati ang presyo ng palay sa ibang mga lalawigan, barya lamang ang ibinaba ng presyo ng bigas at malayo sa pinangako ng economic managers na P7 per kilo na mababawas nang itulak ng mga ito ang paglaslas ng taripa sa imported rice sa 15% mula 35%.

Sabi ng Federation of Free Farmers, ang mga economic manager ang dapat magpaliwanag kung bakit hindi pa bumababa ang presyo ng bigas tulad ng kanilang ipinangako ng pinilit nila ang Executive Order No. 62 na nagbaba ng taripa sa bigas.

Habang pinagtatalunan ng Department of Agriculture (DA) at Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) ang nabibinbin umano na mga container ng bigas sa mga pantalan na sinisisi ng DA kung bakit hindi pa bumababa ang presyo ng bigas, nakakabingi naman umano ang katahimikan ng mga economic manager partikular na si National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Secretary Arsenio Balisacan.

“Finger pointing (nagtuturuan) time! Our economic managers are missing in action,” puna ni FFF Chairman at dating Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor.

Sabi ni Montemayor, sinasagad ng mga trader ang kanilang kita imbes na ibaba ang presyo ng bigas.

“It does not make sense for traders to hold on to cheap stocks imported with 15% tariff while retail prices are still high. They are in fact maximizing their profits now instead of passing on their tariff savings to consumers,” sabi ni Montemayor.

Sa pagbaba ng taripa, nabawasan umano ang koleksyon ng pamahalaan ng P3.4 bilyon mula sa 581,000 na toneladang bigas na inangkat mula Hulyo hanggang Agosto.

Base sa kuwenta ng FFF, bumagsak na sa P34 per kilo ang presyo ng imported rice dahil sa pagbaba ng taripa habang nasa P55 per kilo pa rin ang presyo ng bigas sa mga palengke.

Sabi ng FFF, dapat tutukan ng DA ang pagtulong sa mga magsasaka at iwan na lang sa mga economic manager ang pagpapaliwanag kung bakit hindi bumababa ang presyo ng bigas tulad ng ipinangako ng mga ito. (Eileen Mencias)

<https://tonite.abante.com.ph/2024/09/22/neda-binutata-sa-pangakong-bagsak-presyo-tapyas-taripa-wa-epek-sa-bigas/>

**ABANTE TONITE**

# **Kumpiskahin mga bigas na nakatago sa Pier – Speaker Romualdez**

September 22, 2024

Pinakukumpiska ni House Speaker Martin Romualdez sa Department of Agriculture ang mahigit sa 20 milyong kilo ng bigas na nakatengga lang sa Pier.

Ayon kay Speaker Romualdez, ”sabi ng DA, bayad na ang mga duties and taxes ng mga bigas na ito pero bakit di pa inilalabas ng mga may-ari?”

Babala ni Romualdez, “pag hindi nila ilabas yan at dalhin sa merkado, pwede na sigurong kumpiskahin ng gobyerno dahil sa hoarding.”

Matatandaang ibinulgar ni DA Sec. Francisco Laurel noong nakaraang linggo na milyon-milyong kilo ng bigas ang nasa Pier at nakatengga lang doon.

Ani Laurel, pag nadala sa mga palengke ang mga bigas tiyak na bababa na ang presyo ng bigas sa mga palengke.

“Kung inaantay ng mga importer natin na tumaas muna ang presyo ng bigas bago nila ilabas yan, aba’y mabuti pang kumpiskahin na ng pamahalaan at ibenta sa mga mahihirap,” ayon pa sa lider ng House.

Aniya, ”wag na nilang antayin na pasyalan na naman natin ang Pier at pagbubuksan sa Bureau of Customs ang mga bigas na yan.”

<https://tonite.abante.com.ph/2024/09/22/kumpiskahin-mga-bigas-na-nakatago-sa-pier-speaker-romualdez/>

# Romualdez sa DA: Kumpiskahin mga bigas na nakatago sa Pier!

**Joy Cantos**

September 23, 2024 | 12:00am

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<https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/bansa/2024/09/23/2387229/romualdez-sa-da-kumpiskahin-mga-bigas-na-nakatago-sa-pier>