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MANILA BULLETIN:

‘Enteng’ leaves P1.36-B damage to PH agri, infra

BY MARTIN SADONGDONG

Sep 8, 2024 11:36 AM



Residents of Baseco Compound in Tondo, Manila, wade through floodwaters caused by heavy rains brought by Typhoon Enteng on Sept. 2, 2024. (Photo by Arnold Quizol / MANILA BULLETIN)

Severe Tropical Storm “Enteng” left a trail of destruction in the country as losses to the agriculture and infrastructure sectors piled up and reached P1.36 billion, based on the latest report of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) on Sunday, Sept. 8.

According to a situational report by the NDRRMC, the damage to the agriculture sector due to Enteng already reached P658,997,396.12 while damage to infrastructure was pegged at P698,901,168.65.

The agriculture and infrastructure sectors in Bicol (Region 5) suffered the most as it sustained P537 million worth of damage to rice, corn, and high-value crops, affecting 18,840 farmers and fisherfolk in Albay, Camarines Sur, and Catanduanes.

ADVERTISEMENT

Cagayan Valley (Region 2) followed with agriculture loss at P83 million, Central Luzon (Region 3) at P32 million, Eastern Visayas (Region 8) at P4 million, and Western Visayas (Region 6) at P1.23 million.

Meanwhile, Bicol recorded agriculture loss amounting to P356 million as 45 infrastructure programs such as schools, road networks, bridges, flood control projects and government facilities were left completely destroyed or partially damaged.

It was followed by Cagayan Valley with infrastructure loss at P111 million, Calabarzon (Region 4A) at P87 million, Ilocos (Region 1) at P69 million, Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) at P50 million, and Eastern Visayas at P23 million.

Enteng affected 714,360 families comprised of 2,553,203 individuals in 10 regions.

Of those affected, 8,775 families or 33,430 individuals remained in 439 evacuation centers.

The death toll still stood at 20 while 26 individuals were missing and 22 others injured.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/9/8/enteng-leaves-p1-36-b-damage-to-agri-infra>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DA expects rice prices to drop further

[Romina Cabrera](#) - The Philippine Star

September 8, 2024 | 12:00am



A vendor arranges his rice products for sale at a public market along M. Dela Fuente Street in Sampaloc, Manila on July 14, 2024.

STAR / Edd Gumban

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) expects rice prices to go down further following optimistic results from the August inflation report of the Philippine Statistics Authority.

DA spokesman Arnel de Mesa said they expect a slower rate of inflation for rice, which was at 14.7 percent last month from 20.9 percent in July.

“We are expecting that rice prices will go down further. We can now see regular and well-milled rice priced at P42 to P45 to P46,” De Mesa said.

Aside from the very strong harvest this year, there have also been decreases in rice prices in the international market.

He attributed this to the active mitigation measures implemented by the DA and local government units despite the onslaught of El Niño.

However, De Mesa said there might be upcoming threats to the local agriculture industry such as the looming La Niña phenomenon and pressures in the international market such as the standing ban on rice sales in India.

The DA hopes to keep the prices of rice stable by increasing local production.

“We continue to work hard to increase local production and beat the target 20.06 million metric tons last year,” he said.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/09/08/2383586/da-expects-rice-prices-drop-further>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

A report card of our first year as Strategic Partners

[LETTER FROM AUSTRALIA](#) - [HK Yu, PSM](#) - The Philippine Star

September 8, 2024 | 12:00am

Dear Friends,

Today marks one year since President Marcos and Prime Minister Albanese upgraded ties between the Philippines and Australia to a Strategic Partnership. I want to report back to you on what we have achieved together. I can honestly say it has been a productive 12 months of turning our words of commitment into real action. The kind of action that creates a positive impact on the lives of many.

Development and economic ties

As Strategic Partners we have been building our trade and investment relationship, which is not as vibrant as it should be. Over 250 Australian companies are already invested here. Collectively they are employing over 44,000 Filipinos and having a positive impact by enhancing skills, driving tech transfer and creating new jobs. But we can do so much better. We continue to actively explore investment opportunities here in agrifood, education, infrastructure, resources and energy. I would personally love to see more Australian goods on the shelves and more Australian companies partnering with the Philippines to drive economic growth.

Australia wants the Philippines to reach its ambition to be an upper middle income economy by 2025. After all, we know that economic power equals strategic power. We are being both a supportive and practical partner. For example, this week we hosted a high-level business mission led by Macquarie Group CEO Shemara Wikramanayake. The Australian business delegation represented our major institutional funds and leading corporates. And they can potentially bring more capital and expertise to deliver complex nation building infrastructure and productivity enhancing agricultural projects for the Philippines.

The Australian Government itself is investing in inclusive programs that are responsive to this country's development needs. For example, we've been working with the Philippine Government to design an innovative economic development program worth P1.7 billion over the next five years.

We are also contributing to the prevention and control of diseases. For example, Australia supported the launch of a Tuberculosis Knowledge Hub in Manila to

support the uptake of innovative TB treatment. Better public health administration is another area of focus. Last month our health officials exchanged best practices on the emerging area of digital health.

In the justice sector, we are partnering with the Supreme Court of the Philippines, among other partners, to deliver a new P350-million investment over the next five years. The goal is to strengthen transparency and accountability in the justice system, and improve accessibility and case management. Just over a week ago, the embassy sponsored three Australian experts to travel to Manila and contribute to a Philippine consultation towards establishing an operational and independent forensics institute in the Philippines.

Defense and security ties

Over the past year Australia and the Philippines have participated in three maritime cooperative activities ('joint sails') in the West Philippine Sea. The Philippine Air Force sent four fighter jets and close to 200 personnel to Northern Australia to participate in Exercise Pitch Black. This was the PAF's first deployment offshore since 1963! Our Enhanced Defense Cooperation Program has become even more jam-packed with activities in response to the shared security priorities between our two countries. We've hosted many two-way visits between military leaders and educational opportunities. And Australia made our largest ever contribution to Exercise Balikatan this year.

The Australian Federal Police team in Manila has been busy too. It has supported the Philippine National Police-led counter-terrorism operations. This has occurred through the delivery of intelligence training, mentoring on investigations planning and the exchange of criminal intelligence. Australian police, in partnership with PNP and the National Bureau of Investigation, also support the Philippine Internet Crimes Against Children Center. Over the past 12 months, the Center undertook 48 operations which resulted in the rescue of 105 victims and 34 people charged. Of these, the arrest/charging of nine suspects and the rescue of 27 victims were a direct result of Australian Federal Police's efforts.

Agriculture and maritime ties

Under a joint AU-Phil government program, five Filipino graduate students have received full scholarships and started their PhD studies in Australia in mid-2024. Australia is investing in this country's research excellence – including in agribusiness management, soil science, horticulture and marine science. Our Australia Awards program continues to provide an excellent pathway for talented Filipino students to pursue Master's degrees in Australian universities, as well as participate in short course training programs.

Scientists from Australia's Southern Cross University and UP-Marine Science Institute are collaborating on marine environment protection research, specifically

on Mass Coral Larval Reseeding technique (Coral IVF). This is an Australian scientific breakthrough that we are sharing in five areas across the Philippines to help restore degraded coral reefs. These precious reefs are starting to demonstrate increased resilience to climate change impacts.

Australia understands agriculture and the importance of soil. We are contributing over P130 million to support the Philippines National Soil Health Strategy. The goal is to develop soil knowledge and capacity to improve the productivity of cropping systems. The Agusan del Sur provincial government is co-investing in the project through the construction of a P550-million Soil Laboratory which will follow Australian standards. Filipino farmers will benefit, thanks to improved farm productivity through science-based soil management.

As we mark our one-year anniversary as Strategic Partners, I am looking ambitiously to the future. I want to build on the excellent progress we've made across many sectors since September 2023. In my final year as Ambassador to the Philippines, I know that we will deliver just as many great results, if not more.

* * *

HK Yu is Australia's Ambassador to the Philippines. Follow her on X (formerly Twitter) [@AusAmbPH](https://twitter.com/AusAmbPH).

<https://www.philstar.com/opinion/2024/09/08/2383691/report-card-our-first-year-strategic-partners>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

BOC seizes P85-M frozen agri and beverage products in Parañaque

By: [Ferdinand Patinio](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine News Agency](#) / 04:08 PM September 08, 2024



INQUIRER FILES

MANILA, Philippines – An inspection of a warehouse in Parañaque City has yielded around P85 million worth of smuggled frozen agricultural and beverage products, the Bureau of Customs (BOC) reported on Sunday.

Commissioner Bienvenido Rubio said the operation was conducted after he issued a Letter of Authority (LOA) by the Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service-Manila International Container Port (CIIS-MICP) on Sept. 5.

Rubio said operatives of the CIIS-MICP served the LOA to a representative of the warehouse that was found containing various poultry, meat and other products from China suspected to be without proper customs duties and taxes.

“The audacity of these people to smuggle and hide agricultural products right in the heart of Metro Manila is beyond me. They belittle our laws and make a mockery of

our hardworking Customs agents by thinking they can operate these illegal activities just a few kilometers from our port,” he said in a statement.

BOC-CIIS Director Verne Enciso said they found frozen duck meat, chicken meat, pork meat and food items with Chinese markings, and assorted food and beverage with foreign markings.

“The initial inventory found that these poultry products will amount to about PHP85 million in the market. But we’re still determining the actual cost once final inventory is conducted by our examiners,” he said.

The warehouse was temporarily padlocked and sealed to protect the subjected goods as the final inventory will be conducted by the assigned Customs examiner and witnessed by warehouse representatives, CIIS and Enforcement and Security Service.

The owners of the warehouses will be given 15 days to present the proper documents to clear out allegations they were hoarding imported agricultural products.

If found without proper documents, the corresponding seizure and forfeiture proceedings will be conducted against the subject shipments for violation of Section 1400 (misdeclaration in goods declaration) in relation to Section 1113 (property subject to seizure and forfeiture) of Republic Act No. 10863, also known as the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act.

The operation was conducted in coordination with the Department of Agriculture Inspectorate and Enforcement and the Philippine Coast Guard.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1981156/boc-seizes-p85-m-frozen-agri-and-beverage-products-in-paranaque>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Group seeks repeal of Rice Tariffication law

September 8, 2024 | 8:09 pm



PHILIPPINE STAR/KJ ROSALES

A FARMER'S group has renewed its call to repeal a law that liberalized rice imports and made local traders pay a 35% tariff on grain, citing the need to reduce the country's reliance on imports.

"The entire rice industry suffers an immeasurable loss due to the low farm gate price of rice caused by the large volume of imports," Bantay Bigas Spokesperson Cathy L. Estavillo said in a Viber message in Filipino at the weekend. "It's pointless (imports) because it did not lower the price of rice."

The Senate last week approved on second reading a bill that seeks to raise yearly allocations for the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) under the Rice Tariffication Law of 2019 to P30 billion from P10 billion until 2031.

Under Senate Bill No. 2779, the Department of Agriculture (DA) will be powered to declare a food security emergency due to shortages or "extraordinary" increases in rice prices.

In emergencies, the agency may sell the National Food Authority's (NFA) rice reserves in areas suffering from shortage or "extraordinary" high prices of the grain, replenish the inventory with domestic rice and import rice if no domestic grain is available.

The higher funding for RCEF will be used for equipment to grow high quality inbred rice seeds, cash aid for farmers and the construction of solar-powered irrigation systems, among other farming technologies, according to the Senate bill.

“We should not only focus on tax collection; instead, we must resolve the issue of the Philippines being the number one rice net importer for the past three years under the Rice Tariffication Law,” Ms. Estavillo said.

The Philippines is likely to be the world’s top rice importer this year and next year, according to the US Department of Agriculture.

The House of Representatives approved its version of the measure in May, which seeks to restore the National Food Authority’s power to import rice during national emergencies. House Bill No. 10381 increased RCEF to P15 billion from P10 billion.

The Agriculture secretary may designate the importing entity, while the NFA remains barred from importing rice.

“The Senate version is far better than the House version,” former Agriculture Undersecretary Fermin D. Adriano said in a Viber message. “The challenge now is how to allocate RCEF in a more judicious and efficient manner.”

President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. earlier signed Executive Order No. 62, which reduced tariffs on imported rice to 15% from 35% until 2028 to lower the price of the grain.

Last week, Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. said the agency is not keen on recommending to raise tariffs on imported rice since retail prices have not gone down.

Imported and local well-milled rice in Metro Manila markets was being sold for P47-55 a kilo, according to DA’s price monitor as of Sept. 5. Local regular-milled rice was being sold for P43-50 a kilo, while imported regular-milled rice was P47-50 a kilo.

“It is difficult to rely on the available stock in the world market because prices are very volatile,” Ms. Estavillo said. “It is necessary to restore the mandate of the NFA to regulate rice prices.” — **John Victor D. Ordoñez**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/the-nation/2024/09/08/619687/group-seeks-repeal-of-rice-tariffication-law/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Taiwan pork producers studying PHL expansion

September 8, 2024 | 7:01 pm



REUTERS

PORK PRODUCERS from Taiwan are looking to expand their footprint in the Philippines, the Taipei-based Commerce Development Research Institute (CDRI) said.

“We will work with local distributors, and based on the demand we could expand their markets further,” CDRI Team Leader Hsieh Chung An, who helped organize a Taiwan pork expo last week, told *BusinessWorld*. “We are also looking at restaurants and hotels.”

He added that the Taiwan-based food companies are seeking to establish themselves with Philippine businesses and consumers.

Mr. Hsieh said that the CDRI had also promoted Taiwan pork products with Philippine supermarkets.

He said that the expo could also head to various cities in the Philippines, depending on demand.

Hog raisers have reported that consumers are reluctant to buy pork amid a surge in African Swine Fever (ASF) cases.

“Taiwan pork is considered among the best in the world in terms of sanitary conditions, so we want to promote our products to the Philippine market,” Mr. Hsieh said.

He added that the industry is “strictly regulated. We do not use ordinary water but purified water... we also have strict requirements for the personnel working in the slaughterhouses,” Mr. Hsieh said, adding that Taiwan has experienced no ASF outbreaks.

The recent surge in Philippine cases was due to the recent rains, which may have helped spread contaminated water in the farms, as well as the transportation of infected pigs outside the known disease zones, the Department of Agriculture has said.

As of Aug. 21, there are 115 municipalities with active ASF cases across 32 provinces, according to the Bureau of Animal Industry. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/09/08/619653/taiwan-pork-producers-studying-phl-expansion/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

LGUs to get P21B from tobacco taxes

September 8, 2024 | 7:03 pm



PHILSTAR

LOCAL government units (LGUs) will receive P21 billion from the excise taxes collected from domestically manufactured tobacco and cigarettes, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) said.

In a memorandum, the DBM said P17 billion in excise taxes on Virginia tobacco cigarettes will go to provinces, pro-rated based on the volume of production.

Some P4 billion worth of Burley and native tobacco excise taxes will go to the provinces in accordance with the volume of their leaf production.

The sharing scheme for Burley and native tobacco is 50% to the provinces and the remaining 50% shared out by volume of production among municipalities and cities.

The volume of production and trade acceptances of the beneficiary LGUs were identified based on certifications issued by the National Tobacco Administration, as endorsed by the Department of Agriculture.

Programs and projects funded by the tobacco tax allocations must be in line with the Agricultural and Fisheries Modernization Program and the Roadmap for the Philippine Tobacco Industry, the DBM said.

“Moreover, beneficiary LGUs are highly encouraged to allocate at least 25% of their total share for cooperative programs, livelihood projects, and financial support for registered tobacco farmers,” it added.
— **Beatriz Marie D. Cruz**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/09/08/619636/lgus-to-get-p21b-from-tobacco-taxes/>

REMATE:

Tulong sa pagpapalakas ng agri-workers dapat paigtingin: Trabaho Partylist

September 8, 2024 15:08



Isinusulong ng Trabaho Partylist ang mga hakbang upang mapalakas ang sektor ng mga manggagawa sa agrikultura, tulad ng pagpapalago ng “farm tourism” at paghahatid ng paunang tulong pinansyal para sa mga iba’t ibang proyekto at kagamitan.

Ayon kay Atty. Filemon Ray L. Javier, tagapagsalita ng Trabaho Partylist, sa pamamagitan ng programang ito, hangad nilang makapagbukas ng mas maraming trabaho at oportunidad sa sektor ng agrikultura at turismo.

Bukod dito, malaking tulong na rin aniya ito sa mga magsasaka, mangingisda, at iba pang kasapi ng agrikultural na komunidad.

Binigyang diin ng Trabaho Partylist, na mahalaga ang tulong pinansiyal upang matiyak ang maayos na pagsisimula ng mga proyekto.

Aniya, ang paunang suporta ay makapagbibigay sa kanila ng kakayahan at kagamitan upang mapaganda ang kanilang sakahan at magamit ito bilang tourist attraction.

Dagdag pa rito, tinitiyak din ng Trabaho Partylist ang pagmo-monitor at pagbibigay ng karagdagang suporta sa mga proyektong may oportunidad na lumago.

Isasagawa rin dito ang regular na pagsusuri upang masigurong natutugunan ang mga pangangailangan ng mga kalahok, lalo na sa mga lugar na mabilis ang pag-usbong ng farm tourism.

Bilang bahagi ng kanilang adbokasiya, makikipagtulungan din ang Trabaho Partylist sa iba't ibang ahensya ng pamahalaan upang makatulong sa marketing ng mga farm tourist spots.

Maglalatag ng mga kampanya upang makahikayat ng mga lokal at dayuhang turista na bumisita sa mga lugar na ito, kasabay ng pagpapaunlad ng mga serbisyong handog ng mga farm owners. *RNT*

<https://remate.ph/tulong-sa-pagpapalakas-ng-agri-workers-dapat-paigtingin-trabaho-partylist/>

REMATE:

P85M puslit na agri products nadiskubre sa P'que

September 8, 2024 16:46



MANILA, Philippines – Nadiskubre ng mga awtoridad ang hindi bababa sa P85 milyon na halaga ng hinihinalang smuggled na poultry products mula China na walang kaukulang duties at buwis sa loob ng isang warehouse sa Parañaque City.

Sinabi ng Bureau of Customs (BOC) na habang tinatayang nasa P85 milyon ang inisyal na imbentaryo, ang aktwal na halaga ng kargamento, kabilang ang frozen na karne ng baboy, itik at manok, at mga pagkain na may markang Chinese, ay hindi pa matukoy ng mga examiners.

“Ang kapangahasan ng mga taong ito na magpuslit at magtago ng mga produktong pang-agrikultura sa gitna mismo ng Metro Manila ay higit sa akin,” sabi ni BOC commissioner Bien Rubio sa isang pahayag.

“Minamaliit nila ang ating mga batas at kinukutya ang ating mga masisipag na ahente ng Customs sa pag-aakalang kaya nilang patakbuhan ang mga ilegal na aktibidad na ito ilang kilometro lamang mula sa ating daungan,” dagdag niya.

Sinabi ng BOC na ang mga may-ari ng warehouse ay bibigyan ng 15 araw para ipakita ang mga kinakailangang dokumento para maalis ang mga alegasyon na sila ay nag-iimbak ng mga imported na produktong agrikultura.

Ang mga mabibigong magsumite ng mga tamang dokumento ay mahaharap sa mga kaso laban sa mga probisyon ng Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA) sa misdeclaration ng mga kalakal.

Ang BOC — na inatasan na pangasiwaan at kontrolin ang clearance ng mga sasakyang pandagat at sasakyang panghimpapawid na nakikibahagi sa dayuhang komersyo — ay inatasan na mangolekta ng halos P1 trilyon ngayong taon pagkatapos na makabuo ng P883.624 bilyong kita noong 2023. *RNT*

<https://remate.ph/p85m-puslit-na-agri-products-nadiskubre-sa-pque/>

REMATE:

P1.36B danyos sa agrikultura at imprastruktura iniwan ni ‘Enteng’ sa Pinas

September 8, 2024 14:39



MANILA, Philippines – Ang Severe Tropical Storm “Enteng” ay nag-iwan ng bakas ng pagkawasak sa bansa habang ang mga pagkalugi sa sektor ng agrikultura at imprastruktura ay umabot sa P1.36 bilyon, batay sa pinakahuling ulat ng National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) nitong Linggo, Setyembre 8.

Ayon sa situational report ng NDRRMC, umabot na sa P658,997,396.12 ang pinsala sa sektor ng agrikultura dahil sa Enteng habang P698,901,168.65 ang pinsala sa imprastruktura.

Ang sektor ng agrikultura at imprastruktura sa Bicol (Rehiyon 5) ay higit na nagdusa dahil nagtamo ito ng P537 milyon na halaga ng pinsala sa palay, mais, at mataas na halaga ng mga pananim, na nakaapekto sa 18,840 magsasaka at mangingisda sa Albay, Camarines Sur, at Catanduanes.

Sinundan ng Cagayan Valley (Region 2) ang pagkalugi sa agrikultura sa P83 milyon, Central Luzon (Rehiyon 3) sa P32 milyon, Eastern Visayas (Rehiyon 8) sa P4 milyon, at Western Visayas (Rehiyon 6) sa P1.23 milyon.

Samantala, naitala ng Bicol ang pagkalugi sa agrikultura na aabot sa P356 milyon dahil naiwang ganap na nawasak o bahagyang nasira ang 45 programang pang-imprastruktura tulad ng mga paaralan, road network, tulay, flood control projects at pasilidad ng gobyerno.

Sinundan ito ng Cagayan Valley na may pagkawala ng imprastruktura sa P111 milyon, Calabarzon (Region 4A) sa P87 milyon, Ilocos (Rehiyon 1) sa P69 milyon, Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) sa P50 milyon, at Eastern Visayas sa P23 milyon.

Apektado ni Enteng ang 714,360 pamilya na binubuo ng 2,553,203 indibidwal sa 10 rehiyon.

Sa mga naapektuhan, 8,775 pamilya o 33,430 indibidwal ang nanatili sa 439 evacuation centers.

Nasa 20 pa rin ang nasawi habang 26 na indibidwal ang nawawala at 22 iba pa ang nasugatan. *RNT*

<https://remate.ph/p1-36b-danyos-sa-agrikultura-at-imprastruktura-iniwan-ni-enteng-sa-pinas/>

Infra damage from storm, southwest monsoon hits P689M

By Francis Earl Cueto

September 8, 2024

MANILA, Philippines — Damage to infrastructure left by Tropical Storm Enteng and the southwest monsoon has climbed to P689 million, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council said Sunday.

The NDRRMC said infrastructure damage in Regions 1, 2, 5, 8, CALABARZON (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon) MIMAROPA and Cordillera Administrative region reached P689,901,168.65.

Damage to agriculture was pegged at P658,997,396.12. The agency said 27,596 farmers and fisherfolk from Regions 2, 3, 5, 6 and 8 were affected.

The death toll remains at 20, with 22 injured and 26 missing.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/09/08/news/infra-damage-from-storm-southwest-monsoon-hits-p689m/1969875>

DOST, PCA push for research on coconut Cadang-cadang disease

BusinessMirror
September 8, 2024



INOCULATION of LAGT nut-derived seedling (left) and LAGT embryo-cultured seedling (right)

An initiative by government experts and researchers to mitigate the risks of Coconut Cadang-cadang Viroid disease (CCCVd) yielded promising developments in its first year of implementation.

The Department of Science and Technology (DOST)-funded project is being implemented by the Philippine Coconut Authority-Albay Research Center (PCA-ARC).

The coconut industry is among the largest contributors to the country's agriculture gross value added, a major export earner, and a source of livelihood for over 2.5 million farmers.



DOST-PCAARRD and PCA-ARC team during the M&E visit of the DOSTfunded program at PCA-ARC, Guinobatan, Albay.

However, diseases like cadang-cadang hamper the ability of the industry to continuously deliver its economic role.

A total of 691,068 cadang-cadang infected palms were still observed in a survey conducted by PCA in a 2012–2013.

The study reported that with the disease spread rated at 0.1 percent to 1.0 percent each year, a total of 3 million coconut palms or higher, are at risk of being infected in 2032.

Valued at \$100 per bearing palm, the lack of intervention can result in a loss amounting to \$300 million.

In a program review conducted by the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development of DOST (DOST-PCAARRD), Project Leader Maria Czet A. Fulleros reported that the project component, “Transcriptomic Analysis of Healthy and Cadang-cadang-infected Coconut Palms,” has identified 35 candidate gene primers potentially involved in Cadang-cadang disease progression.

This accomplishment will help the team determine the genes contributing to CCCVd tolerance or resistance.

Meanwhile, the project, “Application of Antisense Technology for the Coconut Cadang-cadang Disease: A Proof of Concept Study,” led by Dr. Cristeta A. Cueto, continues to explore antisense technology—a biotechnology tool that will be used to induce coconut resistance against CCCVd.

“The outputs of the program will aid in establishing a strong foundation for future coconut breeding initiatives and genetic analysis,” said Science Secretary Renato U. Solidum Jr.

“This may lead to more strategic methods, including the development of quality CCCVd-tolerant/resistant coconut planting materials to mitigate the risks of the CCCVd disease, eventually boosting coconut farm productivity and farmers’ income... We at the DOST will continue to fund R&D programs that will deliver solutions to challenges encountered by the coconut industry,” Solidum added.

DOST-PCAARRD’s Crops Research Division (CRD) key personnel also conducted a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) visit at the PCA-ARC headquarters to support the team as they enter their second year of implementation.

DOST-PCAARRD also assisted the team in preparing the research and development proposals, one of which aims to complement the ongoing efforts and strengthen the advancement of knowledge on CCCVd.

Ercieline A. De Torres/S&T Media Services

Image credits: [PCA-ARC PHOTO](#), [CRD](#), [DOST-PCAARRD PHOTO](#)

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/09/08/dost-pca-push-for-research-on-coconut-cadang-cadang-disease>

Regenerative agriculture through science

Sebastian Montemayor

September 8, 2024

When science becomes regenerative in agriculture, one maximizes one's output from the traditional practices to sustain the productivity of the ecosystem.

This, in a gist, was how Dr. Saturnina Halos, a renowned biotechnologist, explained “regenerative agriculture,” which has been correcting some of the farmers' practices that were proven harmful to the ecosystem.

Scientific research and practices are focused on restoring and improving the health of the soil and overall agricultural systems.

It takes technologies—both traditional and modern—which are assessed in terms of how they can improve and maintain agricultural productivity while, at the same time, mitigate effects on the environment, said Halos, who chairs the Biotechnology Coalition of the Philippines.

She noted that one of the key aspects of regenerative agriculture is providing alternatives to synthetic fertilizers and pesticides with organic, microbial and plant-based ones, often called biopesticides and biofertilizers.

Standard pesticides kill insects indiscriminately, and some products can also harm animals and people.



Samples of biofertilizers.

Synthetic fertilizers, on the other hand, when overused can change the soil structure and make it less productive over time.

Halos said that biofertilizers, which were initially developed at the University of the Philippines in Los Banos, Laguna, can reduce the use of inorganic fertilizer by up to half the recommended rate and give plants resistance to drought by promoting root growth.

She said that a biopesticide which is being reviewed by the Department of Agriculture was developed to specifically targets the pest known as fall army worm, which commercial pesticides are having a difficulty eradicating now that it has affected some crops in the country.

Biopesticides reportedly contain a bacterium and a fungus that specifically targets the insects while minimizing damage to livestock and people that might ingest it.

But biofertilizers and biopesticides are not new products, Halos said.

She cited how the Neem tree has been known as a multipurpose pesticide and fertilizer in India, where scientists began studying its effectiveness since the 1950s. Neem is native to the Indian subcontinent and parts of Southeast Asia.

“Farmers have been using it for a long time,” said Halos, but added that these natural alternatives have not been widely used mainly because of marketing issues.

Meanwhile, Halos said that genetically engineered crop varieties can also be an integral part of regenerative agriculture, considering that the variety of crops that farmers use contain in themselves the components that keep them from using synthetic pesticides and fertilizers.

Halos cited the naturally soil-occurring *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) corn and Bt eggplant, which both carried the genes that make them resistant to pests, drastically reducing the need to use pesticides.

Crop varieties that were engineered to increase their ability to utilize nitrogen means that farmers can reduce the amount of nitrogen-based fertilizer that they use, she explained.

“The primary goal of regenerative agriculture is to ensure food security by maintaining the productivity of the land,” Halos said,

“It does this by providing farmers methods and tools that are safer for both agriculture and the environment.”

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