

CLIPPINGS FOR TODAY OCTOBER 12, 2024

A. MANILA BULLETIN:

PH, New Zealand negotiations underway for durian export

For 3rd-year running: Philippines to emerge as top global rice importer

DOLE collaborates with gov't agencies to strengthen youth empowerment initiatives

DOLE collaborates with gov't agencies to strengthen youth empowerment initiatives

World Bank cites progress in new rural development loan to DA

Celebrating PH bananas' culinary possibilities in Tokyo

B. PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Frabelle Group opens P755-million cold storage facility in Navotas

Villar walks out, tells NDA, PCC execs: Don't make me mad; you're fooling me

C. REMATE:

Ban sa pag-iimport ng kambing mula US, inalis ng DA

D. BUSINESS MIRROR:

Villars prods DA to fast-track work on first-border facilities

MANILA BULLETIN:

PH, New Zealand negotiations underway for durian export

BY [RAYMUND ANTONIO](#)

Oct 12, 2024 02:44 PM

As the Philippines and New Zealand work on increasing their diplomatic and economic ties, President Marcos expressed hopes that the Philippine durian could soon be exported to island-country.



In downtown Davao City, a vendor sells durian in his stall. (Keith Bacongco/Manila Bulletin)

Quoting the Chief Executive in his meeting with Prime Minister Christopher Luxon, the Presidential Communications Office (PCO) said in a statement on Saturday, Oct. 12, that both the Department of Agriculture (DA) and New Zealand’s Ministry for Primary Industries “are already

in discussion on how to achieve this (durian export).”

Marcos and Luxon met for a bilateral meeting in Laos on the sidelines of the 44th and 45th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit and Related Summits.

The New Zealand Prime Minister said that both countries made good progress in various areas such as security, trade, and economy.

“I think on the economic front, we’ve talked about onions and pineapples. Pineapples are coming to New Zealand, onions [are] going to the Philippines, I hope. So, I think we’ve made some good progress there,” Luxon said, citing positive developments in education and political relation.

The meeting between the two officials came as both countries work to turn their diplomatic relationship into a comprehensive partnership, which aims to bring prosperity via the Proposed Roadmap to Comprehensive Partnership 2024-2025 between.

Marcos said during his remarks that the roadmap is currently being finalized by the concerned government agencies.

“I think, the roadmap that’s being finalized now we should have it ready by the 60th anniversary of [the] establishment of diplomatic relations between our two countries,” he stated.

“So, I think that’s well on its way. Quite frankly, there are no real obstacles. It’s just a question of finalizing the language,” he told Luxon, who earlier asked the President about the roadmap and what needs to be discussed “to keep that moving forward and to get there.”

“I think we’ve made some good progress ... and continued progress on the roadmap,” Luxon told Marcos.

The two governments have already concluded bilateral agreements on defense and military, environment, labor, air services, law enforcement to combat transnational crimes, and work holiday scheme.

These agreements also cover science and technology, geothermal cooperation, avoidance of double taxation, trade, and postal matters.

The Philippines and New Zealand established diplomatic relations on July 6, 1966, and will commemorate the 60th year of the establishment of their diplomatic relations in 2026.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/10/12/ph-new-zealand-negotiations-underway-for-durian>

MANILA BULLETIN:

For 3rd-year running: Philippines to emerge as top global rice importer

BY [BEN ARNOLD DE VERA](#)

Oct 12, 2024 02:11 PM

The Philippines is poised to be the world's top rice importer for the third-straight year as local harvest falls short, according to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The USDA-Foreign Agricultural Service's (FAS) latest "Grain: World Markets and Trade" report on Oct. 11 hiked estimated Philippine rice imports to 4.7 million metric tons (MT) during marketing year (MY) 2023-2024 from 4.6 million MT previously due to "strong buying of Vietnam rice."

For milled rice, the Philippines' MY covers the July-to-June-of-next-year period — this means MY 2023-2024 refers to July 2023 to June 2024, according to the USDA's website.

The USDA defines the local MY as "the 12-month period at the onset of the main harvest, when the crop is marketed (in effect, consumed, traded, or stored)."

Separate commodities price data of the Washington-based World Bank on Oct. 2 showed Vietnam's five-percent broken rice was on a downtrend, averaging \$542.7 per MT in the third quarter of 2024 from \$567 per MT in the second quarter, \$608.4 in the first quarter, and \$626.2 in the fourth quarter of 2023.

World Bank data showed Vietnamese exports were cheaper than most rice varieties from Thailand this year.

For the current MY 2024-2025 (July 2024 to June 2025), USDA-FAS also jacked up its Philippine rice import projection to a record-high 4.9 million MT from 4.6 million MT previously, citing a "smaller crop."

In MY 2024-2025, "global rice production is forecast up based on a substantial increase for India more than offsetting a reduction for the Philippines," USDA-FAS said.

Historical USDA data showed that the Philippines' rice imports have been climbing from 2.45 million MT in MY 2019-2020 to 2.95 million MT in 2020-2021, 3.8 million MT in 2021-2022, and 3.9 million MT in 2022-2023 -- the MY it dislodged China as the world's biggest importer.

In USDA-FAS' "World Agricultural Production" report also on Oct. 11, it said rice output in the Philippines in the current MY would be a lower 12.3 million MT (milled basis) than last month's estimate of 12.7 million MT.

In the preceding MY 2023-2024, USDA-FAS data showed milled production in the Philippines also dropped to 12.325 million MT from 2022-2023's 12.625 million MT.

This reflected two consecutive years of declining harvest.

"Harvested area is estimated at 4.7 million hectares (ha), down three percent from last month, and down one percent from last year. Yield (rough basis) is estimated at 4.15 tons per ha, down less than one percent from last month, but up one percent from last year," USDA-FAS said.

Rice is cultivated in the Philippines all-year round, with the biggest outputs usually during the October-to-September (around 38 percent of annual total) and January-to-March (23 percent) quarters of each year.

But USDA-FAS said "dryness in quarter three reduced production."

"Drier-than-normal weather observed in Western Visayas, the main producing province in the third quarter, resulted in lower-than-expected harvested area and production. Western Visayas accounts for roughly 20 percent of the third-quarter output," it noted.

Citing preliminary figures from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), USDA-FAS pointed out that third-quarter rice area and production likewise slid by 14 percent and 12 percent, respectively, year-on-year.

Prior to the drop in MY 2023-2024, rice production in the Philippines was on the rise — from 11.927 million MT in 2019-2020, to 12.416 million MT in 2020-2021, and a further jump to 12.54 million MT in 2021-2022.

With a growing population that mostly eats rice, consumption has been outpacing domestic production: 14.4 million MT were consumed by Filipinos in MY 2019-2020; 14.8 million MT in 2020-2021; 15.4 million MT in 2021-2022; 16.1 million MT in 2022-2023; and 16.6 million MT in 2023-2024, USDA-FAS data showed.

For MY 2024-2025, USDA-FAS estimated consumption of 17.1 million MT, although below the previous month's projection of 17.3 million MT.

This month, USDA-FAS projected the Philippines' rice ending stocks — estimated inventory at the end of the MY — at 3.703 million MT in the current MY, above last month's estimate of 3.603 million MT.

The updated ending stocks estimate exceeded MY 2023-2024's 3.603 million MT, 2022-2023's 3.378 million MT, 2021-2022's 3.103 million MT, and 2020-2021's 2.363 million MT.

In an earlier Oct. 3 "Grain and Feed Update" report, USDA-FAS' Manila office said damage and losses inflicted by recent successive strong typhoons such as "Carina" and "Enteng" would also reduce rice milled production.

"Typhoon 'Carina' devastated 67,432 ha of rice resulting in a 18,629-MT loss. Most of the damage and losses to rice were in newly planted and vegetative stages. Of the damage to rice farms, 73 percent of the damaged area has a chance for recovery while the remaining 27 percent is unrecoverable. Given the need to replant and reduced water availability in some areas after the typhoon, farmer contacts report delays in their cropping calendar," FAS Manila's report read.

Meanwhile, typhoon "Enteng" just last month "affected 34,935 hectares of rice resulting in a 48,646-MT loss" with "most of the damage and losses to rice were in the reproductive and maturity stages," FAS Manila said.

"Of the damaged rice farms, 80 percent were partially damaged while the remaining 20 percent were totally damaged" by "Enteng," it added.

The unpredictable weather likewise slashed corn production in the country for MY 2024-2025 to 8.3 million MT, lower than the estimated 8.5 million MT last month although higher than the preceding MY's 8.1 million MT.

From July to September, PSA data showed corn area and production were both smaller by two percent year-on-year. This quarter historically yielded about 29 percent of yearly corn output.

"The reductions come as a result of below-average rainfall observed in both the top two corn-producing regions, Cagayan Valley and Mindanao. Corn prospects in these regions are dependent on rainfall to achieve favorable yields," USDA-FAS explained.

As such, corn imports in the current MY will increase to 1.35 million MT from 1.3 million MT in the previous MY.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/10/12/ph-to-emerge-as-top-global-rice-importer>

MANILA BULLETIN:

DOLE collaborates with gov't agencies to strengthen youth empowerment initiatives

BY [TRIXEE ROSEL](#)

Oct 11, 2024 02:50 PM



(Courtesy of DOLE)

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) convened key government officials during the 49th National Advisory Council (NAC) Meeting recently to enhance strategies aimed at empowering the Filipino youth.

In a statement Friday, Oct. 11, DOLE Secretary Bienvenido Laguesma said the collaboration among government agencies is essential for effectively addressing the challenges faced by the youth, as outlined in the Youth in Nation-Building Act of 1995.

National Youth Commission (NYC) Chairperson Jeff Ortega underscored the NAC's role as a crucial platform for aligning efforts across various government sectors to support youth initiatives and aspirations.

A significant outcome of the meeting was the signing of the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 11913, which provides guidelines for observing National Youth Day every Aug. 12 and details various youth empowerment programs.

Participants also discussed the Philippine Youth Development Plan (PYDP) 2023-2028 and provided updates on the Magna Carta for Out-of-School Youth, along with the NYC report on Sangguniang Kabataan-related activities.

These discussions ensured the formulation of comprehensive strategies for youth engagement, the DOLE said.

The gathering included representatives from several key government agencies, including the Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), and Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

Other contributors included the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Philippine Sports Commission (PSC), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and Commission on Higher Education (CHED), all committed to enhancing youth-focused initiatives and policies nationwide.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/10/11/dole-collaborates-with-gov-t-agencies-to-strengthen-youth-empowerment-initiatives>

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MANILA BULLETIN:

World Bank cites progress in new rural development loan to DA

BY [BEN ARNOLD DE VERA](#)

Oct 11, 2024 01:41 PM

The World Bank has cited progress in the Department of Agriculture's (DA) rural development project scale-up, for which the Philippines borrowed \$600 million or over P34 billion last year.

"The overall project's initial implementation performance is considered satisfactory. Implementation and institutional arrangements are in place and working, including its systems and procedures which build on the experiences and lessons learned from another World Bank-assisted project," it said in an Oct. 9 implementation status and results report.

The Washington-based lender was referring to the earlier Philippine rural development project it green-lit in 2014, which is aimed at enhancing farm and fishery productivity to increase rural incomes, also currently being implemented by the DA.

The DA's new scale-up project, meanwhile, targets improving market access among farmers and fisherfolk as well as hiking incomes from the selected agri-fishery value chains.

For this scale-up loan, the World Bank reported that 35 out of the 45 infrastructure subprojects approved so far have already started the procurement process.

Another 11 enterprise subprojects are undergoing validation, the World Bank noted.

To date, 5.99 percent of the loan proceeds, amounting to \$35.95 million or more than P2 billion, have been disbursed.

This investment project financing will end in mid-2029.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/10/11/da-s-rural-development-efforts-bolstered>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Celebrating PH bananas' culinary possibilities in Tokyo

BY [CAROL RH MALASIG](#)

Oct 11, 2024 09:26 AM

If you had asked me a few weeks ago what the most surprising ingredient at an afternoon tea in Tokyo might be, I would never have guessed bananas. But on Sept. 25, the Philippine Embassy in Japan hosted a delightful twist on the traditional tea experience—aptly called the Banana Afternoon Tea at The Steakhouse, ANA Intercontinental Hotel Tokyo.

Japan is a country that loves this quintessentially British tradition, and it's also no stranger to creative culinary experiences, but this event, hosted in partnership with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), the Department of Agriculture (DA), and the Philippine Department of Tourism-Tokyo (PDOT-Tokyo), offered something unique. The afternoon tea put the spotlight on one of the Philippines' most beloved and versatile agricultural treasures. Interestingly, bananas are also the Philippines' top export to Japan, commanding the largest market share.



GOING BANANAS Chefs at the ANA Intercontinental Hotel in Tokyo showcased their talent in creating a three-course menu incorporating Philippine Bananas

Now, bananas might not seem like the most elegant ingredient for an upscale event, but trust me, this afternoon tea redefined that notion. From pastries and savory bites to banana-infused drinks, each course demonstrated the unexpected culinary potential of this humble fruit. I enjoyed tasting treats that ranged from sweet banana tarts to more complex savory creations like banana-wrapped

appetizers. It was proof that, with a little creativity, bananas could hold their own in the world of gourmet cuisine.

A Showcase of Banana-Inspired Delights
 The menu was quite a revelation, featuring ten banana-inspired dishes that highlighted both the versatility and sophistication of this tropical fruit:

1. Cheesecake and banana cream
2. Banana and pistachio financier, mango agar jelly
3. Banana and lemon clafoutis with rum flavor
4. Verrine banana and passion fruit
5. Banana and gold chocolate ganache, brown sugar sauce
6. Banana Halo-Halo
7. Chicken Taco with jalapeño and banana mole
8. Blue cheese sandwich with banana chutney
9. Lobster royal with banana toston and chicharron
10. Glazed pork ribs with banana chips

From the sweet Verrine banana and passion fruit to the savory blue cheese sandwich with banana chutney, each dish explored new flavor pairings, combining Filipino ingredients with the elevated techniques of Japanese fine dining. One standout for me was the Lobster royal with banana toston and chicharron—a delicious and creative mix of flavors I hadn’t thought possible. What made the event even more enjoyable was how it celebrated the deep-rooted agricultural relationship between the Philippines and Japan. For decades, the Philippines has been one of Japan’s top suppliers of bananas, accounting for nearly 80 percent of Japan’s fresh banana imports. It’s a relationship that supports not only trade but also thousands of livelihoods in the Philippines, particularly in Mindanao, where the banana industry serves as a major economic driver.



BANANA AFTERNOON TEA Banana-inspired cakes, pastries, and a tea caddy filled with savory-sweet treats

Philippine Ambassador to Japan Mylene J. Garcia-Albano, who warmly welcomed us, spoke about the significance of this event beyond the delicious food. “Bananas are just one of the many treasures of our country, and we are excited to see them appreciated in new, creative ways here in Japan,” she said. And I couldn’t agree more. As much as the event was about showcasing a

Philippine export, it also felt like a cultural exchange—an opportunity for two nations to connect through the shared experience of food.

Bananas as a Culinary Bridge

Chef Jane Kemmochi and her colleagues at the ANA Intercontinental even hosted a cooking demonstration, showcasing three banana-infused dishes. Their banana-inspired maruya with a twist—it was topped with taco meat—was particularly inventive, as was the roast chicken with banana puree and the classic Filipino turon. Each dish brought a unique take on bananas, reminding us how this simple ingredient can shine in both sweet and savory preparations.

As I devoured a small piece of banana cheesecake and admired the thoughtfully curated menu, I found myself reflecting on how even the simplest ingredients can build bridges between cultures. The Philippines, known for its rich biodiversity and agricultural resources, has long been exporting bananas to Japan, but this afternoon tea elevated the conversation around the fruit. It wasn't just about eating bananas; it was about appreciating the craftsmanship, tradition, and innovation behind each dish.

The event was also a celebration of the Philippines' agricultural heritage. With the banana industry employing around 700,000 people, it's clear that bananas are more than just a fruit—they are a lifeline for many Filipino families and a pillar of the country's economy. It felt particularly meaningful to be part of an event that celebrated not only a delicious product but also the hardworking individuals who grow and harvest it. And while the event was a one-day affair, its impact—both on my palate and in highlighting the cultural and economic ties between the two countries—will linger for much longer. Here's hoping it becomes a yearly tradition because I, for one, am already looking forward to seeing what else can be done with bananas.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/10/11/celebrating-ph-bananas-culinary-possibilities-in-tokyo>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Frabelle Group opens P755-million cold storage facility in Navotas

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

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 10:24 AM October 12, 2024



Frabelle Group Cold Storage Corp.logo from its website

The Frabelle Group inaugurated its P755-million cold storage facility inside the Navotas fish port complex to optimize logistics and distribution of food products.

Its subsidiary FG Cold Storage Corp. developed the refrigerated warehouse with a capacity of 7,200 pallet positions, ensuring efficient space utilization.

“Its prime location provides easy access to the international port, major highways, and skyways, streamlining the logistics process,” FG Cold Storage said in a statement on Friday.

According to the firm, the plant is designed to store frozen meat and vegetables, catering to the needs of marine traders and manufacturers.

“We invested P755 million to build the facility in response to strong demand growth from our customers and other companies operating within and outside Navotas Fishport,” Frabelle Cold Chain Group president Fay Bernardo said.

Equipped with a high-density storage racking system, the facility features docking bays and ante rooms meticulously planned for large-scale operations, with temperature control to maintain the cold chain's integrity.

It also includes eight cold storage rooms designed at -25 degrees Celsius "to uphold the highest standards of product preservation, alongside advanced shuttle racking systems that maximize storage efficiency," the company said. FG Cold Storage said farmers cooperatives may rent the refrigerated facility while the Department of Agriculture (DA) is constructing cold storage facilities in parts of the country. The Cold Chain Association of the Philippines (CCAP) projected the total cold storage capacity to increase by 8 percent to 750,000 metric tons (MT) this year.

It estimated an eight to 10 percent annual growth in storage capacity due to "steady growth" in the country's agricultural production.

"Industry data show that cold chain industry capacity has been growing by around 50,000 metric tons a year since 2021 to a total 700,000 metric tons last year," according to industry data.

Frabelle Cold Chain Group, the parent company of FG Cold Storage, operates full-service cold storage facilities strategically located near major ports and highways within the metropolitan area.

It is one of the businesses under the Frabelle Group of Companies, which holds diversified interests in deep-sea fishing, aquaculture, canning, food manufacturing and processing, food importation and trading, cold storage, shipyard operations, wharf development, real estate development, and power generation.

<https://business.inquirer.net/484686/frabelle-group-opens-p755-million-cold-storage-facility-in-navotas>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Villar walks out, tells NDA, PCC execs: Don't make me mad; you're fooling me

By: [Charie Abarca](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 02:42 PM October 11, 2024



Senator Cynthia Villar berates officials from National Dairy Authority and Philippine Carabao Center during a Senate budget hearing on October 11, 2024. (Screengrab from Senate of the Philippines YouTube)

MANILA, Philippines — A fuming Sen. Cynthia Villar couldn't help but walk out of the Senate's committee room amid a budget hearing.

She was frustrated over the [National Dairy Authority \(NDA\)](#) and the [Philippine Carabao Center's](#) (PCC) failure to properly disclose their contribution to the country's dairy production.

“I just want to see your performance kasi sinabi nyo sa akin na from one percent, naging five percent. Tapos ngayon, di nyo mae-explain?” Villar wondered on Friday.

ADVERTISING

(I just want to see your performance because you told me that it went from one percent to five percent. Then, you can't explain it?)

“Pina e-explain ko lang sa inyo para kapag tinanong ako ng [mga] senador what happened, I know what to say. E nalilito ako lalo sa inyo eh,” she told NDA and PCC officials.

(I'm just explaining to you so that when the senators ask me what happened, I know what to say. You are confusing me.)

She was presiding over the hearing of the Senate subcommittee on finance on the proposed 2025 budget.

After delivering these remarks, Villar walked out, leaving officials of NDA and PCC in the committee room.

Villar's outburst came after the agencies failed to tell the senator their contributions to Philippine dairy production.

According to the lawmaker, the country's milk production in 2019 was at one percent, adding that she was informed that it has gone up to five percent.

“Sabi nyo, five percent na. Sino [ang] nag-produce? I want to know. Sabihin nyo sa akin ngayon. Mag-usap kayo,” she told the government officials.

(You said it's five percent. Who produced it? I want to know. Tell me now. Talk among yourselves.)

“From one percent, naging five percent. Sino sa inyo? Binobola nyo ako! Sino’ng nag-produce sa inyo?” asked Villar.

(From one percent, it became five percent. Who among you (produced it)? You are fooling me! Who produced that?)

NDA Administrator Marcus Antonius Andaya replied that their agency’s present contribution to the overall dairy production is at 1.5 percent.

According to him, he was also shocked when he discovered that the country’s dairy production then was only at one percent.

“Subalit ngayon, aggressive kami pagdating sa stock farm,” said Andaya.

(But right now, we are aggressive when it comes to stock farms.)

Villar proceeded to ask Andaya whether or not this means that the NDA’s contribution to the national dairy production rate is only 1.56 percent.

“Hindi ko po alam kung saan nanggaling yung five percent. But right now po, as far NDA is concerned, nasa 1.56 percent po ang aming milk sufficiency at dyan po ay maipapakita namin ang production namin simula noong 2019,” he said.

(I don’t know where the five percent came from. But right now, as far as NDA is concerned, our milk sufficiency is at 1.56 percent and that’s where we can show our production starting 2019.)

Later in the hearing, Villar also quizzed PCC’s Executive Director Lizza Battad about her agency’s contribution to the country’s dairy production, but she failed to answer the senator’s queries.

“Finance ako eh. May total production ka noong 2019 na one percent of demand. Ilan bang liters yun? Then, ano ngayon na 2023, ilan ang share mo? Ilan ang share nila?” Villar asked.

(I’m a finance person. You had a total production in 2019 of one percent of demand. How many liters is that? Then, what about now, in 2023, how many is your share? How many are their shares?)

“Ngayon lang ako nakakita ng ganito — nililito ako. Huwag nyo akong galitin. ‘Di ko kaya yan,” she warned.

(It’s only now that this happened — I’m being confused. Don’t make me angry. I can’t do that.)

A few moments after she walked out, Villar returned, laying out the reason why she fumed over the agencies’ performances and data.

“Kaya ako naiinis, noong 2019 na-shock ako – dalawang agency in existence for 30..., [tapos] ang production, 1 percent of local demand. What did you do for the last 30 years?!” Villar asked.

(The reason why I’m annoyed, in 2019, I was shocked – two agencies in existence for 30... [then] the production is only 1 percent of local demand. What have you done for the last 30 years?!)

In an ambush interview after her outburst, reporters asked Villar whether or not it is true that the country’s dairy production is really at 5 percent.

The senator, however, said she’s no longer convinced that this is the case.

“Hindi totoo,” she simply said. “Mali yung five [percent], definitely,” she later on clarified.

(It's not true. The five percent is wrong, definitely.)

“Kaya nga pinapa-clarify ko para malaman natin at malaman din nila so they will know how to approach it kung sila’y nagsa-succeed o hindi. If you cannot explain, how can you do your job?” she wanted to know.

(That’s why I’m clarifying so that we will know and they will also know. If you cannot explain, how can you do your job?)

“You have to understand what your performance is so that you can improve on your job,” she stressed.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1991828/villar-walks-out-tells-nda-pcc-execs-dont-make-me-mad-youre-fooling-me>

R

REMATE:

Ban sa pag-iimport ng kambing mula US, inalis ng DA

October 11, 2024 17:59



MANILA, Philippines – Inalis ng DA ang pansamantalang pagbabawal sa pag-import ng mga kambing mula sa Estados Unidos.

Nauna rito, ipinagbawal ang pag-aangkat nito noong Hunyo matapos matukoy ang Coxiella burnetti, ang bacteria na nagdudulot ng Q fever, sa mga kambing na inangkat mula sa US.

Pinatay ng Bureau of Animal Industry ang mahigit limang dosenang kambing na infected ng Q fever para maiwasan ang pagkalat ng sakit, na nakakaapekto rin sa mga tupa at baka.

Kaugnay nito, inilabas ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr. ang Memorandum Order 43 noong Oktubre 8, na nagpapaalala sa pagbabawal sa pag-aangkat ng mga buhay na kambing mula sa US.

Ito ay matapos maberipika ng World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), sa pamamagitan ng World Organization Health Information System ng WOA, na walang naiulat o naitalang kaso ng Q Fever sa USA.

Bukod pa riyon, sinabi ng DA chief na nagpatupad na ng mahigpit na hakbang ang BAI para maiwasan ang pagkalat ng nakakahawang sakit sa hayop at tao.

Ang Q fever ay zoonotic, na nangangahulugang ang mga nahawaang hayop ay maaaring magpadala ng sakit sa mga tao.

Sinabi pa ni Kalihim Tiu Laurel na ang pagtitiyak ng mga opisyal ng kalusugan na ang Q fever ay hindi isang pangunahing banta sa kalusugan ng publiko ay isa ring salik sa pag-alis ng pagbabawal sa pag-import ng mga buhay na kambing.

“Ang Kagawaran ng Kalusugan ay tiniyak sa publiko na ang animal-to-human transmission ay bihira at ang impeksyon ay madaling gamutin gamit ang mga antibiotics na lokal at malawak na magagamit,” dagdag niya.

Binibigyang-diin din niya ang mga pagsasaayos na ginawa ng BAI sa mga hakbang bago ang hangganan upang matiyak na ang paghahatid ng sakit ay napapabayaan. *Santi Celario*

<https://remate.ph/ban-sa-pag-iimport-ng-kambing-mula-us-inalis-ng-da/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Villars prods DA to fast-track work on first-border facilities

Butch Fernandez and Ada Pelonia
October 11, 2024

SEN. Cynthia A. Villar on Friday called the attention of the Department of Agriculture on the deadline for the construction of first-border facilities in the country which, she has observed, is not moving.

Presiding over the Finance Subcommittee B briefing on the proposed 2025 budgets of the Department of Agriculture and its attached agencies and corporations, Villar said the hog farmers have been suffering a lot every time the African swine fever (ASF) hits the country and the first-border facility is the only way to stop the ASF from entering the country. The senator also reminded DA officials that there should be no exemption from the border facilities.

“Everybody should go to first-border facility. No exemption. Because when we put an exemption, that’s another source of corruption,” Villar said, noting that those who are not exempted would be forced to bribe authorities to be exempted from passing through the border facilities.

“That defeats the purpose of controlling ASF. I want to be clear with that,” she added. The DA is targeting to start the operations of first border control facilities for imported animal and plant products by early 2025. The first of five CEFAs or Cold Examination Facility for Agriculture is being constructed in Angat, Bulacan. A CEFA is a sanitary/phytosanitary inspection facility for imported animal, fish, plant, and other agricultural products.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. attended the continuation of the discussion on the proposed 2025 budgets of the Department of Agriculture (DA) and its attached agencies and corporations.

Laurel expressed gratitude to the Senate for supporting its budget. For 2025, the DA will receive P200.19-billion, a 19.5-percent increase in its budget under the 2024 National Expenditure Program (NEP).

Budget for ASF

At the Senate's earlier deliberations on the DA budget on Tuesday, Senator Nancy Binay sought the inclusion of a line item specific to ASF-related expenses under the DA budget for 2025.

"I think we should have a line item that's specific for ASF because it seems it will be an ongoing concern," Binay said, partly in Filipino.

Binay issued the statement after Agriculture Assistant Secretary Constante Palabrica said the indemnification for diseased pigs surrendered for culling was being taken from the Quick Response Fund (QRF).

The QRF is a standby fund that various government agencies can tap to assist areas affected by calamities or crises. Government documents showed that P1 billion has been appropriated under the DA's 2024 General Appropriations Act (GAA) for its QRF.

"With that item, the procurement of vaccine for ASF and anything related to ASF can be included," Binay said.

The DA recently increased indemnification for diseased pigs surrendered for culling, raising the compensation ceiling to P12,000 for breeders, P8,000 for medium-sized hogs, and P4,000 for piglets. Previously, the maximum indemnification was P5,000 per head.

Meanwhile, Palabrica said the department has vaccinated less than 1,000 pigs since it started its inoculation in Lobo, Batangas to curb the spread of the deadly hog disease.

He cited some reasons for the slowdown of the vaccination process, such as the absence of the department's staff in the field. He noted they were depending on local government units (LGUs) in taking blood samples to check if the hogs were negative for ASF.

Agriculture Secretary Tiu Laurel Jr. also said certain issues like farmers' reluctance to participate in the voluntary vaccination for their pigs.

However, the agriculture chief stressed that the 10,000 doses of ASF vaccine procured through emergency purchase should be used within the month.

Palabrica said he is seeking over a P300 million budget to continue with the vaccination in 2025.

“We are asking for, hopefully, P324 million for next year so we can continue vaccinations next year,” he said.

The government has allocated P300 million for the procurement of approximately 600,000 doses of the ASF vaccine developed in Vietnam, and an additional P50 million for related inoculation costs.

Figures from the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) showed that 534 barangays have active ASF cases as of October 2.

https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/11/villars-prods-da-to-fast-track-work-on-first-border-facilities/?fbclid=IwY2xjawF5UdFleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHZhlzFVvYFGOZgpIES6eW8Trv6yBGFDsVf_N6mMVn91sMiaYfY470ckQlw_aem_f_i4-Yy9RHXBbC5yS4M4_A