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MANILA BULLETIN:

Ban on cattle, meat products from UK lifted after mad cow case ‘ended’

BY [JEL SANTOS](#)

Oct 16, 2024 05:05 PM



(DA PHOTO)

The ban imposed on the importation of live cattle and meat products from the United Kingdom (UK) was lifted, the Department of Agriculture (DA) announced on Wednesday, Oct. 16.

On Oct. 11, DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. signed Memorandum Order (MO) 45 lifting the import ban after official reports of the UK to the World Organization for Animal Health showed that the mad cow case “has ended with resolved status and no additional outbreaks after 07 August 2024.”

In a statement, Laurel noted that UK authorities also “provided evidence to show that food safety measures are in place and are equivalent to guidelines in the Philippines.”

As a country recognized by the WOAHA with “negligible” risk of the mad cow disease, he said “the acceptance of all in-transit and incoming shipments from the United Kingdom may commence provided with verified equivalence from the United Kingdom Veterinary Authority.”

It can be recalled that agriculture department ordered on May 30 a ban on importation of live cattle, meat and meat products, bovine processed animal proteins and semen derived from cattle originating from the UK in response to reported cases of Bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or mad cow disease.

The import ban sought to mitigate potential health risks to consumers and protect the local livestock industry.

Mad cow disease, or bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), is a neurodegenerative disease that affects cattle.

The disease leads to severe neurological symptoms in affected cows, including changes in behavior, lack of coordination, and eventually death.

Reports said mad cow disease can be transmitted to humans through the consumption of contaminated beef, leading to a similar fatal condition called variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (vCJD).

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/10/16/ban-on-cattle-products-from-uk-lifted>

MANILA BULLETIN:

USDA: Global coconut oil market puts pressure on local biodiesel

BY [GABRIELL CHRISTEL GALANG](#)

Oct 16, 2024 01:30 PM

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) has raised concerns about a potential shortage of biodiesel in the country, which could lead to higher pump prices.

In a recent report, the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) indicated that the supply of coco methyl ester (CME), a key component of biodiesel, has been dwindling locally due to increased exports of coconut oil (CNO).

According to the USDA FAS, CNO producers are prioritizing foreign markets where they can command higher prices, resulting in a reduced domestic supply.

This situation has already driven up the cost of CME from P57 per liter in 2021 to between P90 and P95 per liter in 2024, consequently increasing biodiesel prices.

To exacerbate matters, the USDA FAS forecasts a 15 percent decline in coconut oil production for the 2024/2025 marketing year, further limiting the availability of CME.

The Department of Energy has already mandated a gradual increase in the biodiesel blend in diesel fuel.

Starting from Oct. 1, 2024, all diesel fuel must contain at least three percent CME (B3), an increase from the previous two percent (B2).

Industry estimates indicated that this new mandate will significantly boost demand for biofuel, requiring an additional 450 million liters.

The mandate will continue to rise, reaching four percent (B4) in October 2025 and five percent (B5) in October 2026.

“An estimated 900 million additional coconuts will be needed as feedstock to produce around 100-120 million liters (88,000-105,000 MT) of additional CME to satisfy a one percent mandatory increase in the CME blend,” the USDA FAS stated.

In response to the impending biodiesel feedstock shortage, the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) has outlined several potential solutions, including the need to expand coconut production areas, which currently span 3.6 million hectares with approximately 300 million trees.

Revitalizing existing plantations through rehabilitation efforts is another key strategy cited by the PCA, as it can significantly boost coconut yields.

The PCA noted that the Philippines currently produces 15 billion coconuts annually.

Of that total, two billion are allocated to CME production, 11 billion are exported as CNO, and the remaining two billion are consumed domestically.

“Despite some of the programs mentioned to increase CME supply, fuel oil companies remain concerned that the current supply cannot sustainably meet the B3 blend mandate,” the USDA FAS said.

“The CNO export market remains more lucrative, leading to unpredictability in sourcing CME,” it added.

On Sept. 30, D&L Industries, Inc., the parent company of the country’s largest biodiesel maker, Chemrez Technologies Inc., assured that it is prepared to repurpose its existing factory lines to cater to the higher biofuel demand in the country.

Chemrez has also opened a new factory in Batangas.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/10/16/increased-biodiesel-blend-could-strain-supply-usda>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Agricultural modernization in Bohol pushed

BY [CALVIN CORDOVA](#)

Oct 16, 2024 05:32 PM

CEBU CITY – A lawyer who is gunning for a congressional seat in the first district of Bohol vowed to defend and uplift farmers in the province by championing the modernization of the agriculture sector.



CONGRESSIONAL candidate Jordan Pizarra (in red shirt) vows to push for reforms that will uplift the lives of the farmers in Bohol province. (Contributed photo)

Atty. Jordan Pizarra, who wants to be known as Tigpanalipud sa mga Bol-anon (Defender of Bol-anons), said that he is advocating for the establishment of agricultural high schools in key towns across the district to help revolutionize farming practices and empower local farmers.

“That’s our plan. We will put up agricultural high schools in key areas in the first district especially in towns where there is a huge number of farmers,” Pizarra said.

He emphasized that these schools will provide essential training for the youth, equipping them with modern farming technologies that are crucial for the future of agriculture in Bohol.

Pizarra stressed the importance of bolstering the agricultural sector, not just in Bohol, but also throughout the country.

"The agricultural sector is the backbone of our economy, yet it has been lagging behind due to outdated methods. We need to modernize farming and adopt mechanization to make it more efficient and sustainable," he said.

He cited Israel as a model of agricultural innovation. "Look at Israel, a small country with limited resources, but through innovation and technology, it has become one of the world's top exporters of agricultural products. There's no reason why we can't achieve the same."

Pizarras said his vision aligns with the urgent need to modernize the Philippine agricultural industry.

He said that for years, Filipino farmers have been left behind, relying on traditional methods that are no longer enough to meet the demands of a growing population and the challenges of climate change.

By adopting mechanization and investing in education, Pizarras believes that Bohol and the entire country can significantly boost agricultural productivity. "We need to train young Bol-anons in modern farming techniques," he said.

Pizarras said he is committed to ensuring that the farmers of Bohol are not left behind in the march towards progress.

He envisions a future where the youth are well-trained in modern agricultural methods, capable of competing on a global scale, while addressing the immediate needs of their local communities.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/10/16/agricultural-modernization-in-bohol-pushed>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Retail price of ginger hits P350/kilo

[Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

October 17, 2024 | 12:00am



“That (hoarding) is possible, that’s why it is important to check the imported ginger as there is importation. The cold storage facilities should be checked,” SINAG chairman Rosendo So said.

Andy Zapata Jr. / The Philippine STAR)

MANILA, Philippines — Farmers’ group Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura (SINAG) yesterday asked the Department of Agriculture (DA) to inspect cold storage facilities for possible hoarding of ginger amid the spike in its retail price despite importation.

“That (hoarding) is possible, that’s why it is important to check the imported ginger as there is importation. The cold storage facilities should be checked,” SINAG chairman Rosendo So said.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary and spokesman Arnel de Mesa said that at least 4,248 metric tons (MT) of imported ginger from China have arrived.

“That corresponds to 30 percent of the total volume that we are expecting. Most of the ginger came from China but we opened up (importation to other countries),” he said.

According to De Mesa, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. has allowed the importation as ginger-producing areas like Calabarzon and parts of Sierra Madre were affected by recent typhoons.

De Mesa said the retail price should only be below P100 per kilo.

So added that despite the current low production in Nueva Ecija, they expect the local production to normalize in November or December. Based on monitoring of the DA in Metro Manila markets, the retail price of ginger ranged between P220 and P350 per kilo.

SINAG also asked the Supreme Court to issue a temporary restraining order against Executive Order 62, which allowed a lower tariff on imported rice, saying the revenue losses reached P6.2 billion but the retail price of the staple remains high.

“The retail price of imported rice did not move. Based on the data released by the Philippine Statistics Authority, the difference on the well-milled rice was only 20 centavos, meaning the reduction of tariff did not help,” So said.

EO 62 took effect on July 7.

According to So, at least 1.15 million MT of imported grains have arrived since the implementation of EO 62.

“That’s about 23 million cavans of 50 kilos of rice. The National Economic and Development Authority should return the original tariff (of 35 percent) in imported rice. We already lost P6.2 billion (in tariff collection). Up to end of the year, the revenue losses will reach P12 billion,” So said.

He noted that the prevailing retail price of rice ranged between P50 and P52 per kilo.

“The P43 (per kilo) of rice can only be found in the Kadiwa centers but the retail price is not going down in the general market,” So said.

He noted that government authorities have vowed that the retail price of the grains will go down by as much as P7 per kilo with the implementation of EO 62.

Based on monitoring of the DA in the Metro Manila markets, the retail price of imported regular milled rice is sold as high as P48 per kilo; imported well-milled rice, as high as P55 per kilo; imported premium rice, as high as P60 per kilo and imported special rice, as high as P63 per kilo.

Peasant leaders led by SINAG, Federation of Free Farmers, United Broiler Raisers Association, Sorosoro Ibaba Development Cooperative and Magsasaka party-list have asked the high tribunal to declare the order null and void and unconstitutional.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/10/17/2393109/retail-price-ginger-hits-p350kilo>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DA lifts ban on the importation of cattle from UK

[Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

October 17, 2024 | 12:00am



Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.

STAR / Jesse Bustos

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) has lifted the ban on the importation of cattle from the United Kingdom, saying the outbreak of mad cow disease was already addressed.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. has issued Memorandum Order 45 allowing the importation of live cattle, meat and meat products, bovine processed animal proteins and semen derived from cattle from the said country.

ADVERTISING

On May 30, Tiu Laurel ordered a ban on the importation of cattle from the UK in response to reported cases of Bovine spongiform encephalopathy or mad cow disease from the said country.

The DA chief explained that the import ban was meant to mitigate potential health risks to consumers and protect the local livestock industry.

“Based on the official report of the United Kingdom in the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), the case has ended with resolved status and no additional outbreaks after Aug. 7, 2024,” Tiu Laurel said.

According to Tiu Laurel, upon careful evaluation of the submitted documents and relevant information, none of the products from the case of mad cow has entered the production system nor has been exported to the Philippines.

“Competent authorities from the UK also provided evidence to show that food safety measures are in place. As a country recognized in WOAH with negligible BSE risk, the acceptance of all in-transit and incoming shipments from the UK may commence provided with verified equivalence from the United Kingdom Veterinary Authority,” he said.

The DA said mad cow disease could cause fatal nerve damage in cattle and its entry or possible spread in the country could undermine the livestock industry and compromise food safety.

The agency added that it is zoonotic in nature and causes Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease in humans manifested through brain shrinkage and deterioration.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/10/17/2393006/da-lifts-ban-importation-cattle-uk>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Megaworld wins big in digital awards

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

October 17, 2024 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Property builder Megaworld Corp. has won two recognitions from an international award-giving body that judges the ability of organizations to adapt to the digital era.

Megaworld ended up as winner in two out of eight categories at the 2024 Future Enterprise Awards Philippines of International Data Corp. (IDC).

Megaworld chief data scientist Francis Adrian Viernes was named Chief Information Officer of the Year for leading the company in its digital transformation and urban safety programs.

In particular, Viernes was cited for his work on SafeGuardAI: Drone Enhanced Vision for Secure Townships, which, in itself, was given the Special Award for Smart Cities. The program incorporates the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in securing Megaworld's townships.

The IDC said SafeGuardAI led to a 93 percent drop in accidents within Megaworld's properties. It believes the program demonstrates how AI can be maximized in urban management.

Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.'s RCBC Pulz won as Best in Future of Customer Experience for enabling Filipinos to transfer funds both locally and overseas through its network of partners BancNet, Instapay, PDDTS, PESONet and SWIFT.

InLife's Agile Academy secured the Best in Future for Enterprise Intelligence for giving employees a consistent schedule of bootcamps, masterclasses and workshops.

E-wallet pioneer GCash bagged the Best in Future of Trust for deploying a security wall so tough that it blocked 11.7 million account attacks and rejected 1.5 million takeover attempts in 2023.

Manila Electric Co.'s Powertech Innovation and eXperience Lab (PIXL) took the Best in Future of Work for rendering metaverses based on actual data for educational

purposes. The IDC selected the PIXL as winner for this category given its contribution to stabilizing Meralco's operations.

UNO Digital Bank was given the Special Award for Digital Innovation for attracting Filipinos to join the banking system. The IDC saw that 30 percent of UNO account holders were first-time participants of formal banking.

The Department of Agriculture's Philippine Rice Information System was conferred the Special Award for Sustainability for becoming the country's first satellite-based rice production monitor.

For topping the country level, the winners advance to the Asia-Pacific competition, which would be judged by IDC analysts, industry leaders and members of the academe, with the awarding set on Nov. 19 at the Sands Expo and Convention Centre in Singapore.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/10/17/2393028/megaworld-wins-big-digital-awards>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Livestock, poultry raisers may get P15 billion from tariff collection

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

October 17, 2024 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Livestock, poultry and dairy (LPD)raisers may expect at least P15 billion in funding support once the government passes a law that would earmark tariff collections for local industry development.

Agriculture officials disclosed that the possible tariff collections that would be earmarked for the livestock, poultry and dairy competitiveness enhancement (LPD fund) under the proposed livestock bill would exceed the earlier estimated P7 billion amount.

“The tariffs collected from livestock is even bigger than what we thought it was. We are looking at P15 billion for the livestock sector,” Agriculture Undersecretary Asis Perez said.

“As we look at it more granularly, it would appear it is really more than P7 billion,” Perez added.

Legislators and executive officials are looking at utilizing the tariffs collected from imported livestock, poultry and dairy commodities to bankroll programs that would help improve and develop the concerned domestic industries which have been heavily dependent on private sector investment for decades.

Under the proposed fund, the tariff collections will be used for various programs such as repopulation, herd build-up, disease control, shared service facilities like slaughter houses, food safety and animal support extension as well as animal feed production.

“We will set a clear strategic direction for the LPD industry, strengthen the organizational structure and institutional capacity of relevant agencies and ensure that adequate resources are provided to support the growth and competitiveness of the industry,” Sen. Cynthia Villar earlier said.

The Senate has already passed its version of the bill, principally authored by Villar, last August.

The bill aims to ramp up government support for the three industries amid various production challenges from rising raw material costs to spread of animal diseases such as bird flu and African swine fever.

The bill would set up development road maps for the three sectors and create the LPD fund which will be in place for the next 10 years. The LPD fund was patterned after the rice competitiveness enhancement fund that was created by Republic Act 11203.

However, the version of the bill passed by the Senate has stipulated that the LPD fund must not exceed P7.8 billion, which was based on earlier tariff collection estimates.

Lawmakers and industry players are hoping that the bill would be passed into law before the end of the year so that the beneficiaries, especially small-hold farm raisers would get much-needed support to thrive amid recurring animal disease outbreaks.

There are already counterpart bills filed at the House of the Representatives but are still pending at the committee level.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/10/17/2393007/livestock-poultry-raisers-may-get-p15-billion-tariff-collection>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Farmers, fishers groups call for stronger support from gov't

By: [Jason Sigales](#) - Reporter / [@jasonsigalesINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 03:56 PM October 16, 2024



Photo from Pamalakaya

Article continues after this advertisement

MANILA, Philippines – Farmers’ and fishers’ groups observing World Food Day on Wednesday pinned the blame of the country’s food insecurity to the government and called for stronger support for the agriculture sector and end reliance to importation.

World Food Day is celebrated every October 16, to mark the founding of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization.

Progressive agriculture groups Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP), Amihan National Federation of Peasant Women and Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya), in statements on Wednesday, urged President Ferdinand “Bongbong” R. Marcos Jr. and the Department of Agriculture (DA) to bolster local food production.

“Marcos truly doesn’t care about people’s right to food. It’s clear he has no intention of developing the agriculture sector and supporting our farmers to produce food for our

people because, from the start, he relies on importation,” Amihan Secretary-General Cathy Estavillo said in Filipino.

Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority showed that the [Philippines imported US\\$37 million](#) more farm goods from April to June this year compared to the same period a year prior.

“We condemn the DA for its continued reliance on importation instead of bolstering local production by genuinely supporting farmers and fishers.” Pamalakaya Vice Chairperson Ronnel Arambulo said, also in Filipino.

“The President envisions that no Filipino will go hungry by 2027, but how will this be if the DA and the government’s programs always fail to lower rice prices? Marcos Jr.’s promise to lower rice prices to P20 per kilo will always be thorn in his chest,” the KMP, meantime, pointed out.

Food program and hunger stats

Last year, the Department of Social Work and Development rolled out food stamps as part of the [“Walang Gutom \(No Hunger\) 2027”](#) program.

Marcos declared it a government flagship project.

Lowering the price of rice to P20 per kilo was a key promise made by Marcos in his 2022 presidential campaign.

Only [4% of Filipinos believe](#) the President kept his promise, according to a July 2024 Pulse Asia survey.

A recent [Social Weather Stations \(SWS\) survey](#) showed that 46% of Filipino families described themselves as “food-poor” and 17% as “food borderline.”

A previous SWS survey showed that more families reported experiencing involuntary hunger at least once, from 14.2 percent in March to 17.6 percent in July this year.

Additionally, a [United Nations report said 51 million Filipinos](#) experienced moderate to severe food insecurity from 2021 to 2023, the worst in Southeast Asia.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1993191/fwd-farmers-fishers-groups-no-right-to-food-under-marcos>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

PSA forecasts poor palay output due to typhoons

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

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 02:16 AM October 17, 2024

The recent typhoons made a dent on local food production as the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) estimated the country produced less palay (unhusked rice) in the third quarter of this year.

Palay production for the July to September period is projected at 3.35 million metric tons (MT), declining by 11.9 percent from the actual output of 3.8 million MT in the same period a year ago, based on the statistics agency's report.

The volume was also 1.2-percent lower than the PSA's initial forecast of 3.39 million MT last July 1.

The PSA pegged the total harvest area at 796,277 hectares (ha), down by 14.1 percent, while the palay yield per hectare could have increased by 2.4 percent to 4.20 MT.

It noted that only 39 percent or 310,778 ha of crops could be harvested, equivalent to 1.31 million MT of produce. Of these, 83.5 percent were at the maturing stage and the remaining 16.5 percent at the reproductive stage.

Corn production, on the other hand, could have climbed by 2.4 percent to 2.526 million MT from 2.47 million MT in the same period last year.

It said harvest area decreased by 2 percent to 806,362 ha, with one hectare yielding 3.13 MT, up by 4.3 percent.

About 42.9 percent or 346,226 ha of corn would be harvested, for a total of 1.07 million MT of the produce. Of these, 88.6 percent were at the maturing stage while 11.4 percent were at the reproductive stage.

Rice and corn were some of the commodities most battered by the El Niño phenomenon, characterized by dry weather, decreased rainfall and typhoons.

This week, the Department of Agriculture (DA) said 2024 proved to be “a litmus test” for the farm sector as it grappled with a “perfect storm” of challenges caused by high fuel and input costs, droughts and floods also due to the La Niña phenomenon and disruptions in the value chain.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said lessons “from recent challenges should push the agency to do a better job next year.”

The DA had estimated the country loses an average of 500,000 MT to 600,000 MT in palay production annually because of typhoons and other natural calamities.

For Supertyphoon Julian (international name: Krathon) alone, the farm sector sustained losses totaling P607.38 million.

<https://business.inquirer.net/485189/psa-forecasts-poor-palay-output-due-to-typhoons>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Pangilinan: Profitable farm enterprises to lure youth to agri sector

By: [Dianne Sampang](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 05:35 PM October 16, 2024



Former senator Francis “Kiko” Pangilinan (L) files his Certificate of Candidacy on October 8, 2024, for the 2025 Senate race. (Official Facebook page of Kiko Pangilinan)

MANILA, Philippines — Senate aspirant and former senator Francis “Kiko” Pangilinan on Wednesday said that increased budget support for farm enterprises could encourage the youth to work in the [agricultural sector](#).

“Just like any industry, if this does not yield enough profit or income, the youth will not be interested, so it is important to ensure that agriculture is supported to provide good income,” Pangilinan said in Filipino during the Kiko-Bam campaign launch on Wednesday.

Pangilinan also mentioned the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) budget increase throughout the years, which he said should also be applied to the agriculture sector.

“That is what should happen in agriculture, where there will be five to seven times more [increase] in the next six to 10 years so the support for agri enterprise is good, the income and profit will increase so the youth will be encouraged to join the farming industry.” he added.

Pangilinan likewise emphasized that the full implementation of Republic Act No. 11321 or the Sagip Saka Act will help develop farm enterprises.

He was the principal author of the law that seeks to strengthen the enterprise development program for farmers and fisherfolk.

Pangilinan also shared the story of Camarines Sur Multipurpose Cooperative, where direct rice purchases by the local government units contributed to an increase in their year-end sales amounting to P60 million.

“If an enterprise has a profit of P6 million a month, I think the youth will be interested,” he pointed out.

The law also mandates the government to purchase goods directly from fishermen and farmers for their various programs.

Pangilinan previously said that he is eyeing to [address food security in his Senate comeback bid](#).

He also mentioned that what made him run again for senator in the 2025 elections is the public’s clamor to address increasing prices of basic commodities.

<https://www.inquirer.net/417772/pangilinan-profitable-farm-enterprises-to-lure-youth-to-agri-sector/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

FAO working to expand Philippine Anticipatory Action project

October 16, 2024 | 8:53 pm



THE Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said that it is seeking to expand its anticipatory action (AA) project in the Philippines.

“We’re working very closely with the Department of Social Welfare and Development to be able to scale up our pilot anticipatory action work in three provinces,” FAO Social Policy and Program Coordinator Ruth Honculada-Georget told *BusinessWorld* on the sidelines of a forum at the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.

“So right now, it’s just limited. But FAO is planning,” she added.

Since 2021, the FAO, an arm of the United Nations, had been conducting simulations in disaster-prone regions of the Philippines.

The FAO said AA covers measures taken to reduce the humanitarian impact of expected disasters before they happen or before its acute impacts can be felt.

The FAO had also partnered with the Department of Agriculture (DA) to address food insecurity and protect the livelihoods of farmers and fisherfolk from natural disasters.

She added that the Philippines needs more risk information, early warning systems and a reliable information system to reduce crop losses from climate-related risks.

Agricultural production had been affected by the recent El Niño, where cropland endured droughts and dry spells.

La Niña, meanwhile, increases the chances of tropical cyclone activity in the coming months.

“We need to be better in not just understanding the forecast but communicating that information to our farmers so that they can prepare better... even local government units who really are there at the frontlines to help farmers,” she said.

The DA, FAO, and PAGASA, the government weather service, will pursue a seven-year project seeking to promote climate resilient agriculture.

The project will be rolled out in the Cagayan Valley, the Cordillera Administrative Region, Bicol, Northern Mindanao, and Soccsksargen, covering nine provinces and 100 municipalities.

Ms. Honculada-Georget added that the FAO will continue to work with the government and civil society organization to bring in technical expertise to scale up the program.

“It’s the government that has the resources to reach the most vulnerable and poorest households in at-risk areas,” she said.

She added that financial constraints continue to hinder the wider adaption of AA.

“There’s a lot of challenges in the sense that when you talk about financing, the knee-jerk reaction would be that (it) is not enough,” Ms. Honculada-Georget said.

According to an FAO report, the Philippine government has been making policy and legislative changes to enable local governments to access their Quick Response Fund on the declaration of an imminent disaster.

“From our end, it’s important for us to recognize that the challenge may seem like it’s just the financing, but it’s more about having the systems, the laws in place to make available those resources,” she added.

Legislators have filed bills seeking to establish a mechanism to ensure AA measures are in place ahead of natural disasters. Senate Bill No. 2643 was filed in April, while a similar bill was filed before the House of Representatives in February.

The Philippines is among the top countries most prone to climate risk disasters, according to the World Bank. The country experiences about 20 tropical cyclones each year. It is also located within the Pacific Ring of Fire, an area with active seismic activity. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/10/16/628486/fao-working-to-expand-philippine-anticipatory-action-project/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Palay farmgate price up 12.7% in September

October 16, 2024 | 8:53 pm



REUTERS

THE average farmgate price for palay or unmilled rice rose 12.7% year on year to P22.43 per kilogram in September, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

The PSA said that most regions reported growth in the average farmgate price of palay during the month, while three regions — the Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, and Mimaropa — reported falling prices.

The highest palay prices for September were posted in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), where palay prices rose 95.8% year on year to P26 per kilo.

The lowest farmgate price was recorded in Mimaropa at P19.7 per kilo, down 1.2% year on year.

The National Food Authority (NFA) said last week that it will set the buying price for palay at P23 to P25 per kilo depending on location and grain quality, allowing it to better compete with private traders for grain to build up its inventory.

On a month-on-month basis, the farmgate price slipped 4.5% from August.

The PSA said 11 regions posted higher farmgate prices month on month, while five regions posted declines.

Mimaropa reported the highest decline of 22.65%, from P24.15 per kilo a month prior.

BARMM saw a 10.1% increase month on month from August.

The PSA reported that palay production is expected to decline by 11.9% year on year to 3.35 million metric tons during the three months to September. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/10/16/628485/palay-farmgate-price-up-12-7-in-september/>

REMATE:

122 baboy tepok sa ASF sa Apayao

October 16, 2024 13:44



LUNA, Apayao – Iniulat ng Office of Agricultural Services ng Calanasan, Apayao na nakapagtala ang munisipyo ng 122 African Swine Fever na namamatay mula Setyembre 1 hanggang Oktubre 8.

Labinlimang magsasaka ang naapektuhan – 12 mula sa Poblacion, dalawa mula sa Sabangan, at isa mula kay Eleazar.

Pinirmahan naman ni Calanasan Mayor Shamir M. Bulut ang Executive Order No. 10 na pansamantalang nagbabawal sa paggalaw ng mga buhay na baboy at mga produktong baboy sa loob ng munisipyo para mapigilan ang pagkalat ng mga kaso ng ASF.

Aktibong sinusubaybayan at nagsasagawa ng surveillance ang munisipal na pamahalaan sa loob ng 500 metrong radius ng mga apektadong bukid.

Noong 2021, 801 hogs, kabilang ang 106 mula sa demo farm ng lokal na pamahalaan, ang namatay at 145 na magsasaka ang naapektuhan dahil sa ASF sa Calanasan.

Binigyang-diin ni Dr. Reah Vivian M. Piagan, Veterinarian II at Municipal Livestock Focal Person, ang kahalagahan ng pagtutulongan ng komunidad sa laban na ito laban sa ASF.

“Dapat nilang palakasin ang pangangalaga sa kanilang lupang sakahan para maiwasan ang ASF. Sa mga naapektuhan, kailangan nilang dumaan sa tamang proseso at rules.”

Umaasa si Piagan na makakuha ng bakuna sa lalong madaling panahon at umaasa na makakuha ng pondo mula sa pamahalaang panlalawigan. **RNT**

<https://remate.ph/122-baboy-tepok-sa-asf-sa-apayao/>

REMATE:

P3.5M puslit na ‘yellow onion’ mula Tsina nasabat

October 16, 2024 09:46



TINATAYANG nasa P3.5 milyon halaga ng “yellow onion” ang nasamsam ng mga awtoridad na may katumbas na 25 metric tons (MT) o 25,000 kilo na inangkat mula sa China, iniulat ng Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) nitong Martes.

Nabatid sa BPI na dumating ang shipment sa Port of Manila ang isang 40-foot container van sakay ng Green Pacific noong Hulyo 16, 2024.

Matapos maberipika ng BPI ang pagdating nito sa pamamagitan ng Inward Foreign Manifest (IFM), inalerto nito ang Bureau of Customs (BOC) na pigilin ang nabanggit na kargamento.

Napag-alaman na ang kargamento ay walang sanitary at phytosanitary import clearance (SPSIC), na naging dahilan upang maglabas ang BOC ng warrant of seizure at detention para sa inspeksyon.

Ayon sa BPI, ang deklarasyon para sa nasabing sibuyas noong Hulyo ay kasabay ng suspensyon sa SPSIC na nagbigay ng tip sa kanila sa aktibidad ng smuggling.

Pinapayagan lamang umano ng Department of Agriculture ang pag-iisyu ng SPSICs para sa yellow onion noong Agosto.

Samantala, muling iginiit ng BPI na ang pagkonsumo ng mga ilegal na inangkat na produktong agrikultura ay nagdudulot ng panganib sa kalusugan.

Kaugnay nito, tiniyak ng BPI na matatag ang suplay at presyo ng parehong pula at puting sibuyas para sa natitirang bahagi ng taon.

Ayon sa BPI, nasa 7,000 hanggang 8,000 MT ng imported yellow onions ang dumating ngayong buwan. Nauna nang inaprubahan ng DA ang limitadong pag-aangkat ng 16,000 MT ng puting sibuyas bago ang inaasahang lokal na ani sa Enero sa susunod na taon.

Para sa mga pulang sibuyas, sinabi ng DA na sapat na ang stock ng bansa hanggang Marso 2025.

<https://remate.ph/p3-5m-puslit-na-yellow-onion-mula-tsina-nasabat/>

ABANTE:

Import ban sa mga karne galing UK, inalis na

Abante News

• **October 16, 2024**



INALIS na ng Pilipinas ang pagbabawal sa pag-angkat ng mga buhay na baka at mga produktong karne mula sa United Kingdom (UK).

Ito ay matapos alisin ng mga bansa sa Europa ang pagkalat ng mad cow disease na nakakaapekto sa sektor ng mga hayop nito.

Sa isang pahayag nitong Miyerkoles, sinabi ni Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. na naglabas na ang ahensiya ng Memorandum Order No. 45, noong Oktubre 11, na nag-aalis ng import ban na inilabas halos limang buwan na ang nakararaan.

Naunang inilabas ng Agriculture chief ang MO 45 matapos ang mga opisyal na ulat ng UK sa World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) na nagpakita na may Bovine spongiform encephalopathy o kaso ng mad cow disease sa bansa sa Europa.

Napansin din ni Tiu Laurel na ang mga awtoridad ng UK ay nagbigay din ng ebidensya upang ipakita na ang mga hakbang sa kaligtasan ng pagkain ay nasa lugar at katumbas ng mga alituntunin sa Pilipinas.

Matatandaan, noong Mayo 30, iniutos ng DA ang pagbabawal sa pag-aangkat ng mga buhay na baka at mga produktong karne, bovine processed animal proteins at semilya na nagmula sa mga baka na nagmula sa UK bilang tugon sa mga naiulat na kaso ng Bovine spongiform encephalopathy, o mad cow disease. (VP)

<https://www.abante.com.ph/2024/10/16/import-ban-sa-mga-karne-galing-uk-inalis-na/>

THE MANILA TIMES:

PROJECT SYNDICATE

Building a buffer against food-price

By Isabella M. Weber , Jayati Ghosh and Sudeep Jain

October 17, 2024

BOSTON, Massachusetts — Of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals to be achieved by 2030, eliminating hunger used to be seen as the most feasible. But in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, 15 years of progress on improving access to food have been lost. Despite global agricultural production being more than sufficient to meet the world's nutritional needs, food insecurity is significant and rising everywhere, even in rich countries. Especially worrying are the significant increases in hunger in lower-income countries.

Soaring food prices are to blame for this damaging reversal. Worse, more such shocks are likely to emerge as climate change worsens and geopolitical tensions mount. The Group of 20 (G20), under Brazil's presidency this year and South Africa's in 2025, must devise a new stabilization playbook to address these risks.

Although food prices have fallen globally from their 2022 peaks, they have remained high or continued to rise in many countries, with the sharpest increases often occurring in the poorest economies. By September 2023, the food price index produced by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations had fallen by around 11.5 percent from the previous year. During that same period, average food prices in low-income countries rose by 30 percent — an alarming situation, given that people in these countries spend 30 percent to 60 percent of their disposable income on food.

One major reason for persistent food-price inflation in the Global South, despite cooling agricultural prices worldwide, is currency depreciation, which has made imported food and fuel more expensive. The influx of capital into developing countries after the 2008 global financial crisis, driven by quantitative easing in advanced economies, has reversed in recent years following interest-rate hikes in the United States and Europe. These capital outflows have weakened developing-country currencies, forcing their own central banks to raise interest rates, even at the risk of triggering an economic downturn. At the same time, the interest-rate hikes have led to high debt-servicing costs, depleting these countries' foreign reserves and impeding their ability to pay for food imports.

Developing countries' dependence on global commodity and capital markets is undermining their efforts to ensure food security. To counter this, advanced and developing economies should work together to develop international strategies aimed at regulating financial and commodity markets and addressing sovereign debt problems. But even in the absence of such cooperation, developing countries can reduce the destructive effects of this dependence by forging partnerships to accumulate buffer stocks of essential commodities and coordinate capital-account-management policies.

Public buffer stocks of certain staples — especially grains — can help prevent price spikes, which hurt consumers, and avoid price collapses, which hurt farmers. Some countries, including India and China, have long used buffer stocks to enable such countercyclical open-market operations, as well as to guarantee supplies during emergencies. Another advantage of buffer stocks is that they allow governments to establish public procurement policies that incentivize sustainable cultivation practices and crop diversification.

Countries that lack the fiscal space to build substantial buffer stocks could work with regional partners to create joint stockpiles. For

example, South Africa, as the continent's largest economy, could lead a regional buffer-stock initiative in coordination with the African Union.

Developing countries should also consider implementing macroprudential and capital-account-management policies to prevent destabilizing capital flows. Such policies could include setting limits on and establishing minimum lock-in periods for foreign investment in local financial assets, imposing reserve requirements for inflows and using differential tax rates for domestic and foreign asset holdings. Global South governments successfully used this approach in the 1990s, and they should do so again.

Rich-country central banks have begun cutting interest rates owing to cooling inflation. The anticipated increase in global liquidity should make it easier to introduce capital-account-management policies, whereas doing so now when financial conditions are tighter, risks exacerbating capital flight. Moreover, developing countries are less likely to face backlash from global financial centers if they coordinate their efforts to manage capital accounts rather than go it alone. As large middle-income countries, Brazil and South Africa are well-placed to spearhead this effort.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/10/17/opinion/world/building-a-buffer-against-food-price-shocks/1985610>

THE MANILA TIMES:

DoST pushes AI-based farm management tech

THE Department of Science and Technology (DoST) has developed an artificial intelligence (AI)-based system utilizing drones to optimize farm management.

Specifically, the DoST's Harmonized Aerial Watch and Knowledge-Based Survey (Asimov-Hawks) group developed Hawks AI that utilizes drones equipped with cameras that capture real-time visuals, enabling crop disease detection, crop inventory and other related applications. A key feature of the technology is its ability to generate measurements, such as crop count.

The AI-based system is also applicable in other productivity areas, performing optimized searches and mapping regions efficiently.



The Hawks AI system utilizes drones for various field monitoring applications. PHOTO FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

"An important part of our mandate is to provide relevant solutions to persistent challenges in productivity sectors such as the agri-banana industry," said Jose Ildefonso Rubrico of the Asimov-Hawks team.

The Philippines is the second-largest banana producer globally since 2018. However, reports indicate that total banana exports have declined from 2019 to 2022 due to the spread of Panama disease, high production costs and rising fertilizer expenses.

Asimov-Hawks serves as the aerial component of the DoST flagship research and development program in AI and robotics. It is funded by DoST-Philippine Council for Industry, Energy and Emerging Technology Research and Development, and is implemented by the department's Advanced Science and Technology Institute.

The technology was recently presented at the second day of the Regional Science, Technology and Innovation Week in Soccsksargen (South Cotabato, Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani and General Santos) that also featured discussions on farming precision and waste management by Lorilyn Daquioag, chief executive officer of Waste4Good Technologies; and the development of Halal-compliant restructured goat meat products by Cyril John Domingo, director of the Institute for Food Innovation and Nutrition at Sultan Kudarat State University. Also, Bernardo Sepeda, executive director of DoST-National Research Council of the Philippines, introduced their agency and its projects.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/10/17/business/agribusiness/dost-pushes-ai-based-farm-management-tech/1985775>

THE MANILA TIMES:

Searca, IRRI foster rice policy discussion

By Leander C. Domingo

October 17, 2024

THE Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (Searca) based in Los Baños provided insights and fostered a healthy discussion on rice policy innovation at a recent International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) training workshop.

Addressing critical issues related to food security, food self-sufficiency and the challenges of agricultural pricing policies, the training workshop in September reviewed various policy approaches, assessing their strengths and weaknesses, and examined the role of agriculture in poverty reduction and combating malnutrition.

It was participated by 23 researchers and policy influencers from IRRI, Caraga State University, the Department of Agriculture (DA), DA-Philippine Rice Research Institute, Department of Finance, and International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center.

As a speaker in the panel discussion on "Rice Trade Liberalization and Improving the Competitiveness of the Philippine Rice Sector," Searca Center Director Glenn Gregorio provided an in-depth analysis of the Rice Tariffication Law (RTL) and its impact on the Philippine rice industry. During the event that was part of the three-day Training Workshop on Self-sufficiency, Food Security and Agricultural Transformation by IRRI, Gregorio explained how "the law replaced quantitative import restrictions with tariffs to enhance the competitiveness of local rice farmers."

He emphasized the need for the full implementation of the Philippine Rice Industry Roadmap 2030 that aims to have a "rice-secure Philippines" by ensuring rice is available, affordable, accessible, safe and nutritious for all Filipinos.

Gregorio explained that the road map "focuses on improving competitiveness, enhancing resiliency to disasters and climate risks, and guaranteeing the availability of safe and nutritious rice."

He highlighted the significance of the Rice Competitive Enhancement Fund that supports the National Rice Program of the DA focusing on four key areas, namely rice farm mechanization, inbred rice seed development and promotion, expanded rice credit assistance and rice extension services.

Stressing the crucial role of innovation in driving transformational change within the rice sector, Gregorio explained that "innovation is critical in several areas, including policy innovation, which

involves creating more inclusive services, identifying new funding sources and implementing supportive policies."

He added that institutional innovation is also necessary for improving governance and building stronger partnerships while social innovation plays a key role in addressing community needs and driving development.

On the other hand, Gregorio said technological innovation is also essential for scaling solutions and enhancing education, while conceptual innovation introduces new ways of thinking and working that improve governance and organizational effectiveness.

Also during the panel discussion, the panelists discussed the advantages and disadvantages of RTL, its potential amendments and the role of researchers in supporting its effective implementation.

Panelists included Roehlano Briones, senior research fellow at the Philippine Institute for Development Studies; Fermin Adriano, The Manila Times business columnist and former member of the Advisory Council at the Asian Development Bank Institute; and Bruce Tolentino, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas former Monetary Board member. Valerien Pedraza, IRRI Transformative Policies and Investments Unit head, was the moderator.

Briones said the RTL is "pro-consumer" and that, for many years, restrictive import policies had driven up the retail price of rice.

"When import restrictions were lifted, prices fell," he said, but acknowledged that while the reform lowered rice prices, it reduced the income of rice farmers.

Rather than scrapping the law, Briones said enhancing the domestic rice industry's competitiveness and reducing the cost of rice production will help Filipino farmers compete with their counterparts in Thailand, Vietnam and other major rice-exporting countries.

Calling for greater competition among traders to promote a more democratic and competitive market, Tolentino emphasized the need for broader participation in rice importation, currently limited to a select group of private traders and that "we need to democratize the way our trade operates by allowing more traders to participate and compete."

Adriano highlighted the importance of fully understanding and appreciating the reform, and that enacting reforms without the confidence of implementers is a significant challenge.

For his part, Gregorio emphasized the importance of research and development, particularly creating new climate-smart rice varieties to boost productivity and competitiveness under the RTL.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/10/17/business/agribusiness/searca-irri-foster-rice-policy-discussion/1985774>

THE MANILA TIMES:

Cagayan, Isabela fishers get P71-M assistance

By Leander C. Domingo

October 17, 2024

THE Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) Regional Office 2 in Cagayan Valley has distributed P71 million worth of assistance to fishers in Cagayan and Isabela.

The assistance included fiberglass reinforced plastic (FRP) boats, fishing gear, duckweeds and fingerlings.

BFAR Region 2 Director Angel Encarnacion said the assistance aims to "support the fishing community and enhance sustainable fishing practices in the Cagayan Valley region."

Encarnacion said fishers in Cagayan received seven nonmotorized flat-bottom FRP boats and 482 motorized flat-bottom FRP boats, along with 20,000 tilapia fingerlings, 171 fish cages, 37 fyke nets, 34 oyster rafts and 35 pieces of fishing.

In addition, he said three units of livelihood inputs for sea salt making using a hybrid method (high-density polyethylene and cooking) and a techno-demo project on salt production also using a hybrid method were given to the Cagayan fishers led by provincial fishery officer Jennifer Tattaog.

On the other hand, fishers in Isabela received a total of 30,000 tilapia fingerlings, five units of gill nets, P5-million rehabilitation assistance, 12 motorized FRP boats, three nonmotorized FRP boats, a 62-footer boat, six cooler boxes, 26 fish containers, two fish crates and two stainless working tables. The distribution was facilitated by Gerico Gibe, provincial fishery officer.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/10/17/business/agribusiness/cagayan-isabela-fishers-get-p71-m-assistance/1985773>

THE MANILA TIMES:

Cagayan town boosts 'sarakat' weaving industry

By Leander C. Domingo
October 17, 2024

TO boost the sarakat (pandan)-based industry in Santa Praxedes in Cagayan, the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 2 (DA-RFO2) has launched the Sarakat Sub-Convergence Area Development Plan (CADP).

The launching of the CADP was in time with the fourth business meeting of the DA Regional Convergence Initiative for Sustainable Rural Development 2 in Santa Praxedes on October 11, gathering key stakeholders, including representatives from various partner agencies.

These agencies are the Department of Agrarian Reform, the Department of the Interior and Local Government, the Department of Public Works and Highways, the National Irrigation Administration, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and Cagayan State University, among others.



Photo shows the various products made from sarakat (pandan). PHOTO FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Aiming to foster sustainable rural development, among the highlights of the meeting was the presentation on the establishment of the Rural Transformation Center and the Sarakat Weaving Center. Sarakat is a local product of Santa Praxedes under the One Town, One Product initiative of the DTI.

"The Sarakat Weaving Center represents more than just a facility and embodies our aspirations for sustainable development, empowerment and a brighter economic future for all," Santa Praxedes Mayor Esterlina Ancheta Aguinaldo said.

She said the center will be a hub for innovation, tradition and economic empowerment, particularly benefiting local women weavers.

"This modern facility aims to enhance the quality and volume of production, create job opportunities and promote entrepreneurship, giving our artisans a platform to showcase their craft to a wider market," Aguinaldo said.

Emphasizing that the Sarakat weaving industry is rooted in the town's history, she said "the development plan not only symbolizes unity but also taps into our rich local tradition of sarakat weaving as a key driver for economic growth."

Aguinaldo also disclosed the local government's allocation of 2.1 hectares of land for housing the Sarakat Production Center, a municipal abattoir, and a plantation for vegetables and fruit trees such as calamansi, rambutan and lanzones.

Aguinaldo also called for continued collaboration to transform Santa Praxedes into a center of sustainable development and economic opportunity.

The meeting was also participated by the local government units of Abulug, Pamplona, Sanchez Mira, Claveria and Santa Praxedes, and the DA-RFO2 focal heads for programs like corn, high-value crops, livestock, organic farming and rice underscored the collaborative spirit of the gathering.

Kay Olivas, DA-RFO2 regional technical director for research and regulations and focal person for the regional convergence initiative, also underscored the collaborative efforts that have been made toward advancing local programs.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/10/17/business/agribusiness/cagayan-town-boosts-sarakat-weaving-industry/1985772>

THE MANILA TIMES:

Isabela coop gets P184-M rice processing system

By **Leander C. Domingo**
October 10, 2024

A RICE processing system (RPS) worth P184.40 million has been turned over to a farmers cooperative in Naguilian, Isabela.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. led the turnover of the RPS to the Providers Multipurpose Cooperative (MPC) on October 3.

"As we aim to significantly enhance their agricultural productivity and efficiency, this can be done through the provision of advanced machinery and postharvest facilities which will help our farmers in their livelihood and eventually increase their income," Tiu Laurel said.



Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. (center) leads the turnover of a rice processing center to Providers Multipurpose Cooperative based in Naguilian, Isabela. DA REGION 2 PHOTO "You can dry your crops as well as process rice and will help the community," Tiu Laurel said during the event, adding that the project will be able to cater to the needs of some 759 farmer-members of Providers MPC.

The agriculture secretary said that with the RPS, rice farmers in Naguilian will no longer be forced to sell their produce to traders at a cheap price as the farmers can dry and process their palay (unmilled rice) harvest.

The RPS was funded through cost sharing between the Department of Agriculture (DA) with P40.50 million, Philippine Center for Postharvest Research and Mechanization (PHilMech) through the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund-Mechanization Program with P65.02 million and Providers MPC with P69.94 million.

DA Regional Field Office 2 Executive Director Mary Rose Aquino said the department's share involved the construction of two buildings while the Providers MPC provided services for on-site development, operational capital, trucks, office, silos, truck weighing scales and other rice mill accessories.

PHilMech Director Dionisio Alwindia said the center's share were the rice mill that can mill 2 to 3 tons of rice per hour, a recirculating dryer with a capacity of 6 tons of rice and two dryers with a capacity of 12 tons of rice.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/10/10/business/agribusiness/isabela-coop-gets-p184-m-rice-processing-system/1981760>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

PHL rice imports hit 3.4 million metric tons as of mid-October—DA's BPI

Ada Pelonia

October 17, 2024

THE country's rice imports hit 3.4 million metric tons (MMT) as of mid-October, or about 95 percent of the actual shipments of 3.61 MMT last year.

Data from the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) showed that rice arrivals from January 1 to October 10 reached 3.43 MMT.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa earlier said that since rice shipments tend to pick up during the last quarter, it would be possible to surpass the total imports recorded in the previous year.

Rice shipments in August and September rose to nearly 400,000 metric tons (MT), which was the average arrival from the first semester, based on BPI data.

This, after shipments in July slowed to 167,407.26 MT following the issuance of Executive Order (EO) 62, which lowered the tariffs to 15 percent and took effect in the same month.

Of the volume that arrived in the Philippines, BPI data showed that over 2.72 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 435,112.28 MT.

India, the world's largest exporter, recently lifted its ban on non-basmati white rice shipments and set a minimum export price (MEP) of \$490 per MT.

Government official and industry sources said India easing its export restrictions could affect world and domestic rice prices.

It could also open the country to an alternative source of imported rice, considering its lower quotation on the commodity in contrast with other exporting countries.

“Considering that it is cheaper compared to Vietnam and Thailand, it can be an option for additional rice supply and import diversification,” University of Asia and the Pacific’s Center for Food and Agribusiness (CFA) Executive Director Marie Annette Galvez-Dacul said.

However, the volume of rice shipments as of October 10 is less than half of what was covered by the sanitary and phytosanitary import clearances (SPSICs) issued by the BPI.

The BPI approved and issued 7,995 SPSICs for the purchase of 7.9 MMT of imported rice.

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

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said a number of factors would account for the nonuse of the import clearances issued by the government.

For one, the lack of ships and tropical storms discouraged traders who will have to comply with the government directive to bring in rice within a prescribed period.

“When there is news that tariffs will decline, importers put on hold their importation plans. So, they reapply after their SPSICs expire,” the DA chief told the BusinessMirror.

“Then when there was a tender from Indonesia and Malaysia. There were Vietnamese suppliers who canceled contracts to try to get a better price, so traders were not able to use their SPSICs.”

Laurel noted that since rice is liberalized, the department could not stop anyone from applying for an import permit.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/17/phl-rice-imports-hit-3-4-million-metric-tons-as-of-mid-october-das-bpi/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

PHL fruit exports cited as Caexpo sales climb to \$49M

Andrea E. San Juan
October 17, 2024

SALES from Philippine fruit exports such as durian, coconut and banana products at the annual China-Asean Expo (Caexpo) climbed by nearly five-fold to reach an all-time high of \$49 million in 2024, according to the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Philippine Trade and Investment Center.

In a statement on Wednesday, the Trade department said the Philippine delegation secured \$49 million in negotiated sales, the highest in the country's history at Caexpo. This is a 381-percent increase from the \$10.19 million generated in 2023.

The Trade department attributed this "success" to the growing demand for "high-quality" Philippine produce in the Chinese market.

According to DTI, the Philippine Commodity Pavilion at Caexpo was organized by the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions (Citem), the export promotions arm of DTI. Caexpo was held from September 24-28, 2024 in Nanning, China.

Top-selling commodities at the China-based annual international trade event, DTI said, included durian, banana chips and personal care products.

In fact, DTI said one of the Durian exporters attributed the "impressive" sales generated to consumers becoming more aware of the health benefits of eating durian.

The fruit is increasingly recognized for its positive effects on digestion, bone strength, and immune system support.

Aside from the top commodities, the pavilion offered other products such as liqueur, dried vegetable leaves, coconut products, guyabano, kangkong chips, banana, pineapple, local wearables, bags and accessories, banking and finance products and services, oils and liniments.

It is worth noting that despite sending the same number of companies as last year, Citem's OIC for Corporate Planning, Katrina Pineda, reported "encouraging" sales figures from Philippine exporters at the five-day China expo.

Food industry leaders present at the trade event were Eng Seng Food Products (Davao), Cale88 Foods Corporation (Davao), Raspina Tropical Fruits (Davao), KKK Food Corporation (Quezon City), and Three Sisters Home Made Banana Chips (Marinduque).

Manufacturers like Dry Tech Manufacturing (Mindoro) demonstrated their capabilities, while financial institutions like BDO Unibank, Inc. (Makati) explored potential collaborations, the DTI said.

Other notable participants included BRICS Ventures (Laguna), Cervia Global Trading Inc. (Makati), Heart Of Islands Holding Inc. (Marinduque), Abra Diocesan Teachers and Employees Multi-Purpose Cooperative (ADTEMPCO Abra), Anmari's Fashion House (Bulacan), Jegen Swe Enterprises (Pampanga), and Kit Silver Jewellery (Bulacan).

According to DTI, this year's Philippine delegation to the Caexpo was spearheaded by Philippine Ambassador to Beijing Jaime FlorCruz, the Philippine Consul General to Guangzhou Iric Cruz Arribas, Citem's Katrina Pineda, Philippine Trade and Investment Center (PTIC)-Beijing Commercial Counselor Glenn Peñaranda, and PTIC Guangzhou Vice Consul Froilan Pamintuan.

DTI also noted that for this year's edition, the Philippines had a National Pavilion supported by Citem and the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Inc.

Delegates from the Philippines also engaged their counterparts from other Asean nations and China in a wide range of activities focused on trade, investment, tourism, and cultural exchange, DTI said. The Philippines has consistently participated in the Caexpo, held annually in Nanning, China.

"This vital platform fosters trade and cooperation between China and Asean member states, providing valuable opportunities for businesses to forge connections and expand their global reach," DTI said in a statement on Wednesday.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/17/phl-fruit-exports-cited-as-caexpo-sales-climb-to-49m/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Rice output seen lower as harvest area shrinks

Ada Pelonia
October 17, 2024

The country's unmilled rice output likely fell by more than a fifth in the third quarter, when typhoons and monsoon rains affected production areas, based on the Philippine Statistics Authority's (PSA) survey of standing crops.

PSA said its data indicated that palay production in July to September may have declined by nearly 12 percent to 3.35 million metric tons (MMT), from last year's actual output of 3.8 MMT.

The latest figure is also 1.2 percent lower than the agency's initial estimate of 3.39 MMT.

As of September 1, the PSA said the total palay harvest area during the period likely shrank by 14.1 percent to 796,280 hectares (ha) from the 926,920 ha recorded in the same period last year.

"As of 01 September 2024, about 310,780 hectares or 39.0 percent of the 796,280 hectares updated harvest area of standing crop have been harvested. This translates to palay output of 1.31 million metric tons," it said.

"Of the total area of 485,500 hectares of standing palay yet to be harvested as of 01 September 2024, 16.5 percent were at the reproductive stage and 83.5 percent were at the maturing stage."

Meanwhile, the PSA said results of its survey showed that corn output may have gone up by 2.4 percent to 2.526 MMT from last year's 2.47 MMT.

However, the latest estimate is slightly lower than its earlier projection of 2.533 MMT.

PSA said corn harvest area during the period may have contracted by 2 percent to 806,360 ha from the 822,400 ha recorded in the previous year while yield per hectare

may have inched up by 4.3 percent to 3.13 metric tons (MT) from 3 MT.

“As of 01 September 2024, about 346,230 hectares or 42.9 percent of the 806,360 hectares updated harvest area of standing corn have been harvested, translating to a 1.07 million metric tons of corn output,” it said.

“Of the total area of 460,140 hectares of standing corn yet to be harvested as of 01 September 2024, about 11.4 percent were at the reproductive stage and 88.6 percent were at the maturing stage.”

Rice stockpile

The country started September with a higher rice stockpile compared to last year as the commercial sector and the National Food Authority (NFA) had a bigger inventory.

Data from the PSA showed that rice stocks grew by 6.8 percent to 1.66 million metric tons (MMT) from last year’s 1.55 MMT.

“This month’s rice stocks inventories registered annual increases from the NFA depositories by 196.7 percent and from the commercial sector by 16.4 percent. On the other hand, an annual decrease was noted from the households by 23.7 percent,” the PSA said.

However, the PSA noted that the September stock inventory was lower than the 1.87 MMT recorded in August.

PSA said 63.3 percent or some 1.05 MMT of rice were held by commercial entities while 27.6 percent or 457,820 MT were stored by households.

It added that rice stocks in the NFA warehouses as of September 1 reached 151,160 MT, accounting for 9.1 percent of total inventory during the reference period.

“In comparison to the August 2024 rice stocks levels, decrements were noted from the households by 17.0 percent, and from the commercial sector by 9.8 percent. Meanwhile, rice stocks inventory from the NFA depositories increased by 0.3 percent.”

In the same report, the PSA said total corn inventory as of September 1 declined by 22.1 percent to 625,120 MT from 802,570 MT last year.

It added that the latest total corn inventory was lower than the 666,480 MT recorded in August.

PSA data showed that the corn inventory in commercial entitled reached 591,980 MT while corn stocks in households were at 33,130 MT.

“From the same month of the previous year’s level, corn stocks inventory in September 2024 recorded annual decreases from the households by 47.8 percent and from the commercial sector by 19.9 percent.”

Farmgate prices

Meanwhile, PSA data showed that local traders bought palay at a higher price in September.

The last month of the lean season for rice saw the average quotation for unmilled rice rise by 12.7 percent to P22.43 per kilo in September, from P19.91 per kilo last year. The lean season for rice starts in July and ends in September.

“Farmgate prices refer to the prices received by farmers for the sale of their produce at the first point of sale net of the total marketing cost paid by the farmers,” the PSA said.

“These prices are determined at the farmgate or first point of sale transactions and are also known as ‘producer prices.’”

On a monthly basis, the average farmgate price of palay in September declined by 4.3 percent from P23.44 per kilo registered in August.

PSA data showed that the highest increase was observed in Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), where the average price registered a year-on-year growth of 95.8 percent.

The average palay farmgate price in BARMM reached P26.04 per kilo in September, higher than the previous year’s P13.30 per kilo.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/17/rice-output-seen-lower-as-harvest-area-shrinks/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Government keen on using bamboo to repel onion armyworms

Bless Aubrey Ogerio
October 17, 2024

The Forest Products Research and Development Institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST-FPRDI) is investigating the use of bamboo pyroligneous liquid (PL) as a natural pesticide to help combat onion armyworms and cutworms.

The project, titled “Bamboo LIQUOR Ph: Local Innovation for Quality Use of Organic Pesticide Resource in the Philippines,” aims to develop an affordable and eco-friendly pesticide from this liquid.

“A cost-effective and more environment-friendly pesticide from bamboo PL can translate into higher yield and reduced production cost for local onion farmers. It can also open new economic opportunities for bamboo growers who rely mostly on its traditional uses,” DOST-FPRDI OIC Director Rico Cabangon said.

Bamboo pyroligneous liquid is produced as a by-product during charcoal production, resulting from the collection and condensation of smoke through a process known as pyrolysis, which heats plant biomass in the absence of oxygen. This has a range of uses, including as a disinfectant and organic pesticide, and finds applications in medicine and food processing.

DOST Secretary Renato Solidum, Jr. said the project has the potential to provide “innovative solutions” for onion farmers and promote the local bamboo industry.

“The potential of bamboo as a cost-effective solution to enhance the local production of high-value crops opens exciting market opportunities for our farmers.”

Bamboo's rapid growth and high yield make it a sustainable resource, while the use of pyroligneous liquid presents an environmentally friendly alternative to conventional chemical pesticides, according to the agency.

DOST said onion armyworm and cutworm are the larval stages of moths that cause crop damage to plantations in the Philippines, particularly in high-yielding areas such as Nueva Ecija, which is known as the country's onion capital.

Earlier this year, the Bureau of Plant Industry said 366 hectares of the 10,217 hectares of onion farms were struck by armyworm.

To combat these pests, the DOST plans to conduct field validation of various formulations of bamboo pyroligneous liquid against armyworms.

Trials are set for a half-hectare plot in Sto. Domingo, Nueva Ecija, following a Memorandum of Agreement signed last August 22 between DOST-FPRDI and the Rice, Onion, and Corn Growers Association.

The DOST is collaborating with the BPI for this initiative, which is funded by the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development. It also forms part of the "Establishment of Philippines-China Joint Program on Bamboo Research," in partnership with China's Jiangxi Academy of Forestry.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/17/government-keen-on-using-bamboo-to-repel-onion-armyworms/>