

CLIPPINGS FOR TODAY OCTOBER 24, 2024

A. MANILA BULLETIN:

DTI imposes price freeze in Typhoon Kristine-hit areas

B. THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DTI orders price freeze in Kristine calamity areas

Philippines slaps higher tariff on imported salt

Fewer barangays log ASF cases

C. PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

PH bracing for steeper drop in rice harvest

Storm Kristine agri damage hits P9.75 million

D. BUSINESS WORLD:

PCA ties up with Japanese firm to develop coconut-based sustainable aviation fuel

Palay output officially estimated at 19.41 MMT in 2024, down 3.24%

Commercial farms sakop na ng ASF vaccination ng DA

E. ABANTE:

Suplay ng bigas tumaas sa tapyas-taripa

F. THE MANILA TIMES:

NIA-Mariis prepares as Kristine nears

Agribiotech pushed in Mindoro

Ilocos Norte gets P110.3M in farm machines

Negros Occidental boosting 'balut' industry

G. BUSINESS MIRROR:

Manila wants to use coco oil for sustainable aviation fuel

Agriculture chief: Technology needed to boost food security

Davao durian growers hike output to tap hot market

Agri groups to government: Revert to original tariffs pre-EO 62

Low prices could make farmers shun planting corn

Vaccination program to include commercial hog farms—DA

PHL rice output to fall below 20MMT this year

MANILA BULLETIN:

DTI imposes price freeze in Typhoon Kristine-hit areas

BY MANILA BULLETIN

Oct 23, 2024 01:46 PM

Following the devastation caused by Typhoon Kristine, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has implemented a price freeze on basic necessities in areas declared under a state of calamity.

As of Tuesday, Oct. 22, the DTI said Albay province and Magpet Town in Cotabato are currently covered by this measure due to widespread flooding and landslides.

“The DTI under the Marcos Jr. administration is committed to protecting consumers during this challenging time. Our on-the-ground regional and provincial offices actively monitor prices and supply levels of products within our jurisdiction in all affected areas,” DTI Secretary Cristina A. Roque said.

The automatic price freeze is mandated by Republic Act No. 7581, or the Price Act, whenever a state of calamity is declared.

The order applies to basic necessities for 60 days, including canned fish, instant noodles, bottled water, bread, processed milk, coffee, candles, laundry soap, detergent, and salt. Businesses must maintain these items at the prices existing before the calamity declaration.

Roque said the DTI is working closely with the Office of Civil Defense to ensure the price freeze is upheld.

“The DTI will take strong action against any violations, which may include administrative cases and fines,” she added.

Other government agencies, such as the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health, will also be monitoring prices and supply of their respective products, including rice, corn, cooking oil, vegetables, meat, essential drugs, and more.

Consumers are encouraged to report any businesses suspected of violating the price freeze. They can contact the DTI through the One-DTI (1-384) Hotline, and email ConsumerCare@dti.gov.ph or ReportToSec@dti.gov.

The price freeze will remain in effect for 60 days unless lifted sooner by the President.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/10/23/dti-imposes-price-freeze-in-typhoon-kristine-hit-areas>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DTI orders price freeze in Kristine calamity areas

[Louella Desiderio](#) - The Philippine Star

October 24, 2024 | 12:00am



File photo of a wet market

BusinessWorld / File

MANILA, Philippines — A price freeze on basic goods has been imposed in areas placed under a state of calamity due to Severe Tropical Storm Kristine, according to the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) .

The price freeze means basic necessities will be sold at prevailing prices for 60 days.

As of Tuesday, Albay province and Magpet town in Cotabato have been declared under a state of calamity due to widespread floods and landslides.

Business establishments that violate the price freeze will face imprisonment for a period of one year to ten years, or a fine ranging from P5,000 to P1 million or both.

Consumers can report retailers, distributors and manufacturers that sell basic necessities above their prevailing prices by calling the One-DTI (1-384) Hotline or sending an email to ConsumerCare@dti.gov.ph.

QRF

Budget Secretary Amenah Pangandaman said yesterday that government agencies at the frontline of disaster such as typhoons can now use their Quick Response Fund.

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) has released the QRF on Tuesday amid the fury of Kristine, which started pummeling the Luzon provinces, Pangandaman told the Kapihan sa Manila Bay forum.

The Department of Public Works and Highways has a P1-billion fund, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) also has P1 billion and the Department of Education has P800 million, she said.

Meanwhile, the DSWD assured the public that it has more than enough stockpiles of family food packs to be distributed to families who were victims of Kristine that inundated a large part of Bicol region.

The DSWD will send more than 100 buckets of water filtration kits to Kristine-affected areas in the Bicol region. Water filtration kits could provide clean water to 100 individuals per bucket in one day.

For his part, Health Secretary Teodoro Herbosa told Marcos that he plans to send a 30-man international medical team – complete with water, sanitation and hygiene facilities for outpatient care – to Bicol, Northern and Central Luzon.

The Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development will extend P30,000 cash assistance to typhoon victims whose houses were totally damaged and P10,000 for partial damage.

The initial damage of Kristine to the agriculture sector has reached P9.75 million and it is expected to swell amid the impact of the cyclone in the Bicol region, the Department of Agriculture said yesterday.

In another development, the Department of Information and Communications Technology has received help from the Japan International Cooperation Agency to tap a smart artificial intelligence-assisted disaster alert tool to bolster the country's disaster response. — **Bella Cariaso, Mayen Jaymalin, Delon Porcalla, Jose Rodel Clapano, Elizabeth Marcelo, Rainier Alan Ronda, Mayen Jaymalin, Brix Lelis**

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/10/24/2394805/dti-orders-price-freeze-kristine-calamity-areas>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Philippines slaps higher tariff on imported salt

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

October 24, 2024 | 12:00am



A local showcases the traditional salt making in Barangay Estancia in Pasuquin, Ilocos Norte on May 25, 2024.

STAR / Ryan Baldemor

MANILA, Philippines — Local salt industry stakeholders and experts do not think that the hike on the tariff on imported salt products implemented by the government could make any difference in the lives of Filipino salt farmers and the development of the local salt industry.

The Bureau of Customs (BOC) confirmed to The STAR that the increase in salt tariffs to nine percent took effect with the issuance of Customs Memorandum Circular 164-2024 dated Sept. 30, at least six months after Republic Act 11985 or the Philippine Salt Industry Development Act was signed into law by President Marcos.

RA 11985 created the Salt Industry Development and Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (SIDCEF) that would use the increased salt tariffs collected to finance local machinery distribution, establishment of salt farm warehouses, extension services and modernizing salt production practices.

The SIDCEF shall exist for the next 10 years with salt tariffs collected being automatically credited to a special account with the National Treasury.

“For sure the higher tariffs would help in developing the salt industry as long as the tariffs collected would be channeled to that industry,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. told The STAR.

However, experts and industry stakeholders do not see the increase in salt tariffs making a significant improvement in the local salt industry as collections would remain meager, since most salt imports are tariff-free, coming from countries that have existing free trade agreements (FTAs) with the Philippines.

Customs records showed that only P240.845 million out of the total P2.456 billion worth of salt imports last year were slapped with tariffs, since most of the shipments entered the country tariff-free under existing FTAs.

From the P240.845 million, the BOC only collected P2.43 million worth of salt tariffs.

Philippine Statistics Authority data showed that the top four salt exporters to the Philippines – Australia, China, Thailand and New Zealand – are all covered by FTAs.

“In that case, none,” said Roehlano Briones of the Philippine Institute for Development Studies when asked about the possible impact of the salt tariff collections given the current trade environment.

For example, Australia, the country’s top foreign supplier, shipped \$27.592 million of salt to the Philippines last year, all of which entered the country tariff-free.

Australia accounted for at least three-fourths of the \$36.571-million total value of salt products imported by the country, based on PSA data.

Danilo Fausto of the Philippine Chamber of Agriculture and Food Inc. urged the government to retroactively implement the higher tariff on shipments that should have been charged with the nine percent rate but were only assessed with one percent.

Marie Annette Dacul, executive director of University of Asia and the Pacific’s Center for Food and Agri Business, said the challenge for the government is to identify “alternative” approaches to “strengthen” the local salt industry to reduce reliance on tariff collections.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/10/24/2394795/philippines-slaps-higher-tariff-imported-salt>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Fewer barangays log ASF cases

[Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

October 24, 2024 | 12:00am



The BAI said as of Oct. 18, the number of ASF cases recorded in 29 barangays has decreased compared to figures recorded two weeks ago or on Oct. 2.

AFP / File

MANILA, Philippines — Outbreaks of African swine fever have decreased, with the number of barangays reporting ASF cases dropping to 505 from the previous 534, according to the Bureau of Animal Industry.

The BAI said as of Oct. 18, the number of ASF cases recorded in 29 barangays has decreased compared to figures recorded two weeks ago or on Oct. 2.

It said ASF cases were recorded in 140 barangays in North Cotabato, 75 in Batangas, 51 in Camarines Sur, 42 in La Union, 37 in Quezon, 28 in Abra, 27 in Cavite, 18 in Oriental Mindoro, 14 each in Ifugao and Ilocos Sur, and 13 in Kalinga.

Laguna recorded nine barangays with ASF cases followed by Occidental Mindoro with eight, Catanduanes with five and Rizal, three.

Camarines Norte, Leyte, Sorsogon and Zamboanga del Norte have two barangays each that reported ASF cases. Apayao, Bulacan, Maguindanao del Norte, Sultan Kudarat and Tarlac have one each.

“At least 438 cities and municipalities were upgraded from red or infected to pink or buffer zone, and 104 were upgraded to yellow or surveillance from pink zone,” the BAI said.

Earlier, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. expanded the controlled vaccination against ASF, to include commercial farms amid low participation rate among backyard hog raisers.

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2024/10/24/2394845/fewer-barangays-log-asf-cases>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

PH bracing for steeper drop in rice harvest

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

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 02:24 AM October 24, 2024

The Department of Agriculture (DA) anticipates domestic palay (unmilled rice) production to decline this year due to the combined effects of El Niño and La Niña weather phenomena and the typhoons that affected the country.

The DA revised its palay output projection for 2024 to 19.41 million metric tons (MT), a 3.1 percent decrease from the previous estimate of 20.04 million MT. The new volume is equivalent to 12.69 million MT of milled rice. Citing a forecast from the Philippine Statistics Authority, palay production is pegged at 3.35 million MT in the third quarter of this year, a decline of 11.9 percent, primarily because of significant crop damage from recent typhoons.

Agriculture Undersecretary Christopher Morales said the loss in local output is projected at 358,000 MT, based on historical damages and actual risks this quarter.

“The decrease in production would have been higher were it not for higher production yield due to better seeds, farm equipment and other support provided through the Rice fund under the Rice Tariffication Law and National Rice Program,” the DA said in a statement on Wednesday. The Philippines recorded the highest palay output of 20.06 million MT last year, 1.53 percent higher than the year prior. It surpassed the previous record of 19.96 million logged in 2019.

So far, the statistics agency reported that the country had produced 8.53 million MT of palay in the first semester of 2024, down by 5.5 percent from the same period last year.

The PSA will publish the third quarter report on the Philippine agriculture sector’s performance in November.

Enough for local consumption

Despite the anticipated decline, the DA still sees a robust rice supply of 3.83 million MT this year, enough to cover the country's consumption for 100 days.

Morales said the rosy outlook considered the updated rice stockpile data, actual import arrivals and historical trends.

“The recent cut in tariff rates further incentivized imports, allowing for greater access to global rice markets and mitigating potential shortages,” Morales said.

Early this month, the US Department of Agriculture estimated that the country would import 4.7 million MT of rice this year due to the strong buying of Vietnam rice.

The foreign agency said rice import would surge to 4.9 million MT in 2025 due to a smaller crop delivered by local farms.

Meanwhile, the US Department of Agriculture said the country's milled rice production would end at 12.7 million MT in 2024 and 12.3 million next year due to crop damage from successive typhoons and a reduction in area harvested due to land conversion.

This year, the Philippines has imported 3.59 million MT rice as of Oct. 17, based on Bureau of Plant Industry data.

Most of the imported rice came from Vietnam, which exported 2.84 million MT. Other countries such as Thailand, Pakistan, Myanmar and India supplied rice to the archipelago.

All rice stocks purchased from abroad are levied an import duty of 15 percent until 2028, based on Executive Order No. 62 signed by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. in June this year.

<https://business.inquirer.net/486255/ph-bracing-for-steeper-drop-in-rice-harvest>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Storm Kristine agri damage hits P9.75 million

By: [Faith Argosino](#) - Reporter / [@FArgosinoINQ](#)
INQUIRER.net / 04:52 PM October 23, 2024



Coast Guard Station Albay and PNP personnel conduct rescue operations in Purok 4, Brgy. Batan, Batan Island, Rapu-Rapu, Albay as Tropical Storm Kristine rages. (Official Facebook page of Coast Guard District Bicol)

MANILA, Philippines — Damage to the agriculture sector due to [Tropical Storm Kristine \(international name: Trami\)](#) has reached P9.75 million, according to the Department of Agriculture (DA).

In its 2:00 p.m. bulletin, the DA reported that Kristine affected 234 farmers and damages some 209 hectares of agricultural land with a volume of production loss of 598 metric tons.

Hence, it started conducting price monitoring for possible changes in the prices of agricultural commodities.

Below is the list of its available interventions / aid or assistance packages:

- Agricultural inputs such as rice, corn, and vegetable seeds, drugs, and biologics for livestock from DA Regional Field Offices 3, 4-A, 4-B, 5, 8, and 13;
- Up to P25,000 from the Survival and Recovery Loan Program of the Agricultural Credit Policy Council, payable in three years at zero interest
- Indemnification of insured affected farmers through the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation

Earlier, the state weather service said that Kristine is forecast to develop into a severe tropical storm before making landfall in Isabela on Wednesday night or early Thursday morning.

The storm was last located some 155 kilometers east of Casiguran, Aurora, moving northwest at 10 kilometers per hour (kph) and packing a maximum wind speed of 85 kph near the center and gustiness of up to 105 kph.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1996129/fwd-kristines-damage-to-agri>

BUSINESS WORLD:

PCA ties up with Japanese firm to develop coconut-based sustainable aviation fuel

October 23, 2024 | 8:55 pm



REUTERS

THE Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) is exploring the production of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) using local coconut oil as a key ingredient.

In a statement, the PCA announced the signing of a memorandum of understanding with Japan-based Manryu Co., Ltd. for the research and development phase of bringing SAF to market.

“The signing signifies a leap towards establishing the country as a key player in the global biofuel industry,” the PCA said.

The agency added that the partnership would optimize the use of local coconut oil in the production of biofuels.

“The partnership aims to leverage Manryu’s innovative proprietary Maeda Method for biodiesel and SAF manufacturing, which promises enhanced safety features and cost-efficient production,” the PCA said.

The Department of Energy has required all diesel fuel sold in the country to be a 3% blend of coco methyl ester (CME). The CME blend will further increase to 4% by Oct. 1, 2025 and to 5% a year later.

The PCA added that it will provide access to its research facilities and high-quality coconut oil, while Manryu will supply its technology and equipment in the production of SAF and biodiesel.

“Both organizations will jointly conduct research, experiments, and testing to refine the process and ensure it meets global standards for aviation fuel,” it said. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/10/23/630300/pca-ties-up-with-japanese-firm-to-develop-coconut-based-sustainable-aviation-fuel/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Palay output officially estimated at 19.41 MMT in 2024, down 3.24%

October 23, 2024 | 8:52 pm



NEDA

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said on Wednesday that palay (unmilled rice) production will likely decline 3.24% in 2024, due to crop losses from tropical cyclones.

“With a forecast loss of 358,000 metric tons, based on historical damage and actual risks this quarter, total annual palay production is expected to hit 19.41 million metric tons (MMT),” Agriculture Undersecretary for Rice Industry Development Christopher V. Morales said in a statement.

He added that based on the palay projections, the expected output is equivalent to about 12.69 MMT of milled rice.

In 2023, actual palay output was 20.06 MMT. The new 2024 forecast also represents a downgrade from the 20.1 MMT estimate the DA issued in August.

If the forecast is borne out, it would be the lowest production level since 2020, during which grain output totaled 19.29 MMT.

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), palay production for the third quarter is projected to decline 11.9% to 3.35 MMT, against 3.8 MMT in actual production a year earlier.

The DA said better seed, farm equipment and other support provided through the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund and National Rice Program have helped mitigate production setbacks.

The government weather service, known as PAGASA (Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration), estimated a 71% chance of La Niña occurring between September and November, likely persisting until the first quarter of 2025.

The La Niña phenomenon heightens the likelihood of tropical cyclones, low-pressure areas, and the Intertropical Convergence Zone, and intensifies the Southwest Monsoon.

So far, PAGASA has reported about 11 tropical cyclones entering the Philippine Area of Responsibility.

Meanwhile, the DA said that it is aiming for a year-end national rice inventory of 3.83 MMT, despite the projected drop in rice production. This is equivalent to about 100 days' demand.

“This projection incorporates updated rice stock data, actual import arrivals, and historical trends, ensuring the country’s rice needs are met despite the production drop,” Mr. Morales added.

The updated rice inventory forecast is higher than the 3.64 MMT estimated by the department last May, equivalent to about 95 days' demand.

The national rice inventory rose 6.8% year on year to 1.66 MMT in Sept., the PSA reported.

“The recent cut in tariff rates further incentivized imports, allowing for greater access to global rice markets and mitigating potential shortages,” he added.

As of Oct. 14, rice imports totaled 3.57 MMT, according to the Bureau of Plant Industry.

In June, President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. signed Executive Order No. 62, which reduced tariffs on imported rice to 15% from 35% until 2028, billing it as an inflation-containment measure. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/10/23/630295/palay-output-officially-estimated-at-19-41-mmt-in-2024-down-3-24/>

REMATE:

Commercial farms sakop na ng ASF vaccination ng DA

October 23, 2024 18:36



MANILA, Philippines – UPANG maprotektahan at mapabilis ang pagbabakuna laban sa African swine fever (ASF) na kontrolado ng gobyerno, pinalawak ng Department of Agriculture (DA) ang paglunsad nito sa buong bansa, kabilang ang mga komersyal na sakahan at mga baboy, sa ilalim ng Integrated National Swine Production Initiatives for Recovery and Expansion (INSPIRE) Program.

Sa isang panayam sa telepono, sinabi ni DA Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa na ang hakbang ay makadagdag sa kontroladong rollout sa maliliit na sakahan.

“Iyong bilang kasi ng small hold, less than 100 and then iyong semi-commercial malaki iyon and then commercial talagang thousands of heads. Talagang mas mabilis,” sabi niya, na tumutukoy sa mas mabilis na paglulunsad ng 10,000 dosis ng pang-emerhensiyang pagkuha ng mga bakuna sa AVAC.

“You can say exponential na mapapabilis niya kasi halimbawa dito sa Batangas, kapag inuna mo yung mga commercial, mas marami agad.”

Sinabi ni De Mesa na ang Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI)-accredited at private laboratories ay maaaring gamitin para sa pagsusuri ng mga sample ng dugo ng mga baboy sa pakikipag-ugnayan sa mga local government units (LGUs).

“Very critical kasi iyong mga samples kasi kukunin yan at the date bago mag-bakuna, after 14 days, 28 days, 120 days. So napakaraming samples iyan na ite-test and limited number yung ating laboratoryo ngayon,” sabi pa nito.

Ginawa ni De Mesa ang mga pahayag kasunod ng pagpapalabas ng Administrative Order (AO) No. 8 noong Oktubre 18.

“Ang mga komersyal na bukid na interesadong lumahok sa programa ng pagbabakuna ay kailangang magsumite ng sulat ng layunin sa Department of Agriculture – Regional Field Office DA-RFO. Ang mga Local Government Units (LGUs) ay nararapat na ipaalam sa layunin ng sakahan na makilahok sa kontroladong paggamit ng mga bakuna,” AO 8 gaya ng nakasaad.

Ang mga awtorisadong tauhan ng BAI ay dapat pahintulutan na magsagawa ng mga inspeksyon sa sakahan, kasama ng mga hakbang sa biosecurity at mga pagsusuri sa kahandaan, dagdag nito. (*Santi Celario*)

<https://remate.ph/commercial-farms-sakop-na-ng-asf-vaccination-ng-da/>

ABANTE:

Suplay ng bigas tumaas sa tapyas-taripa

Abante News

• October 23, 2024



Mananatiling mataas ang suplay ng bigas sa Pilipinas sa dulo ng taon sa kabila ng inasahang production loss dala ng La Niña at iba pang mga problema sa klima.

Ayon sa Department of Agriculture, may ina-asahang 3.83 million metric tons ng nakaimbak na bigas sa dulo ng 2024, sapat na suplay para sa isang daang araw.

“This projection incorporates updated rice stock data, actual import arrivals, and historical trends, ensuring the country’s rice needs are met despite the production drop,” saad ni DA Undersecretary Christopher Morales na siyang nakatoka sa Rice Industry Programs.

Sa tala ng Philippine Statistics Authority, bumagsak ng 11.9% ang produksiyon ng palay nitong third quarter dahil sa mga pinsalang dulot ng mga nagdaang bagyo.

Sa kabila nito, kampante naman ang DA sa supply ng bigas dahil tumaas ng 24% mula noong nakaraang taon ang inangkat na bigas ng bansa.

Dagdag ni Morales, nakatulong din ang pagtapyas sa taripa sa imported rice para masolusyunan ang posibleng shortage sa suplay dahil sa kala-midad. (Migo Fajatin)

<https://www.abante.com.ph/2024/10/23/suplay-ng-bigas-tumaas-sa-tapyas-taripa/>

THE MANILA TIMES:

NIA-Mariis prepares as Kristine nears

By Leander C. Domingo

October 24, 2024

RAMON, Isabela — The National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Magat River Integrated Irrigation System (Mariis) Dam and Reservoir Division raised its alert to the highest status with the onset of Tropical Storm Kristine's onslaught.

NIA-Mariis said it is mobilizing all necessary resources and personnel to ensure that the Magat Dam, Mariis Dam and Baligatan Diversion Dam are closely monitored round the clock.

The agency said that on October 21, it disseminated an advisory letter through local authorities regarding the preemptive opening of Magat Dam's spillway radial gate No. 4 by 1 meter on Tuesday at 1 p.m.

And on Wednesday, at 1 p.m., spillway radial gate No. 4 was increased from 1 meter to 2 meters to manage water levels further and mitigate Tropical Storm Kristine's potential impact.

"We have advised the power generating company to maximize power generation, effectively reduce water levels before the tropical storm's arrival and balance energy needs with flood prevention," NIA-Mariis said.

Also on Tuesday, NIA-Mariis said the water irrigation services under its jurisdiction were suspended on expectation that the rain brought by the tropical storm would provide sufficient water supply for irrigation during the duration, allowing the division to focus on flood management efforts.

In a statement, NIA-Mariis said it has mobilized all its offices to assess the current state of the dams and assigned its engineers to be at the forefront of providing crucial weather forecasts and dam status.

"We are doing this to ensure that the division is well-prepared for any sudden changes in water levels using advanced monitoring tools to track Tropical Storm Kristine's progress and the dams' inflow and condition, with regular updates provided to local authorities," it added.

Meanwhile, the Electro-Mechanical, Civil Works, Watershed Management and Administrative and Finance Section-General Services Unit are providing crucial support, including the availability of manpower, vehicles and equipment for 24/7 operations.

"This ensures the Division is fully equipped to respond to any urgent situations caused by Tropical Storm Kristine," NIA-Mariis said.

"We have also increased our efforts to protect the division's area of responsibility, deploying personnel across locations to maintain a 24/7 watch over the areas. The Security Services Unit is equipped to respond to emergencies during Tropical Storm Kristine, providing immediate assistance and guidance," it said.

Meanwhile, NIA-Mariis said its Flood Forecasting Warning and Hydrology Unit attended the three-day emergency meeting of the Pre-Disaster Risk Assessment with the Office of Civil Defense in Region 2 (Cagayan Valley) and the Isabela Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council to further strengthen disaster preparedness.

"We have also met with the Japan International Cooperation Agency and the Department of Public Works and Highways to discuss the ongoing Enhancement of the Flood Control Strategy in Prioritized River Basins, specifically focusing on the Cagayan River Basin," it added.

"As the situation develops, our Flood Forecasting and Instrumentation Section will provide real-time information on dam conditions, ensuring that everyone is prepared for the possible impact of Tropical Storm Kristine," NIA-Mariis said.

https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/10/24/regions/nia-mariis-prepares-as-kristine-nears/1990078?fbclid=IwY2xjawGLwrpleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHejTmTLN5zBqYaPhzFtvB2cd0_3TPd0xXT1Zn0EPVSZS-AK7U_Aj2Ky8tA_aem_mFSWLNzEpUhmXcNQMBcLdA

THE MANILA TIMES:

Agribiotech pushed in Mindoro

By Leander C. Domingo

October 24, 2024

THE Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (Searca) is capacitating public servants of Oriental Mindoro on agribiotechnology.

Searca Center Director Glenn Gregorio said that through the center's project titled "Pilot Testing of Training Module on Biotechnology for Public Servants," provincial governments are strengthened and their knowledge enhanced to promote the use and acceptance of modern biotechnology more effectively.

Gregorio said that the training of public servants in Oriental Mindoro under the project in September and October this year was held in Muntinlupa and was attended by 18 officials and staff of the provincial and municipal agriculture offices.

He said the activity was conducted as part of the Bridging and Upgrading the Mechanisms and Pathways for the Uptake of Biotech Project, an information education communication project funded by the Bureau of Agricultural Research through the Department of Agriculture-Biotechnology Program Office (DA-BPO).

It was co-organized with the University of the Philippines Los Baños-College of Development Communication (UPLB-CDC) Department of Science Communication (DSC) and the Program for Biosafety Systems (PBS).

Gregorio explained that the training module is an instructional tool and resource designed to "equip public servants with the necessary skills and knowledge on biotech through self-paced or instructor-guided learning sessions and in a hybrid or blended learning setup."

He said that baseline data collected through surveys and interviews with key local government representatives in the province earlier this year was a basis for designing the training module.

The module centers on four learning areas that are the basics of biotech; risk assessment and precautionary principle; benefits and risks of biotech in human health and the environment; and the status of biotech in the Philippines.

Gregorio said subject matter specialists developed the module lessons. They were Elaine Llarena and Reianne Quilloy, assistant professors and project collaborators from DSC at UPLB-CDC.

During the activity, Paul Limson, DA-PBO director, underscored the "value of clear and effective communication, since public perception and the acceptance of biotech is significantly shaped by the information accessible to people."

"Equipping public servants with the tools and knowledge they need becomes even more crucial as they play a key role in demonstrating the impact and benefits of the technology to their communities," Limson said.

DA-BPO senior management specialist Marcellas Antonia Barrogo gave a comprehensive overview of the Philippine government's biotech program, while Quilloy presented the baseline study results.

Maribel Zaporteza, assistant professor of the Institute of Biological Sciences, UPLB College of Arts and Sciences, presented the basics of biotech and defined biotech, differentiating traditional and modern biotechnology products used in everyday life, the concept of genes, DNA, heredity, and the importance and basics of the "central dogma of molecular biotechnology."

Carlo Custodio Jr., Philippine country coordinator of the Program for PBS, discussed the "risk assessment and precautionary principle." He focused on identifying risks present in a situation, applications of the

precautionary principle and how this principle is interpreted in the Writ of Kalikasan of the Philippines.

Gregorio said the participants also had the opportunity to engage with scientists, technology developers and farmers during the Lakbay Aral, allowing them to gain a deeper understanding of the process behind the development of biotech crops.

Their first stop was the Philippine Rice Research Institute Central Experiment Station in Nueva Ecija, where they learned about the Healthier Rice Project, including the beta carotene-enriched Malusog Rice (Golden Rice), the development of genetically modified organisms, or GMOs, and policy brokering.

The group also visited the Future Rice Farm and the laboratories at the Crop Biotechnology Center and toured the Corteva Agriscience Production Plant in Tarlac City, where Bt corn is processed into animal feed. Corteva also produces hybrid corn and rice seeds, and other crop protection products.

The provincial agriculturist of Oriental Mindoro, Christine Pine, encouraged the participants to continue "engaging in discussions on how they can support their constituents, especially farmers, in gaining a better appreciation and understanding of biotechnology."

She also underscored the importance of providing opportunities for them to participate in biotech initiatives, such as training programs and benchmarking activities.

https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/10/24/business/agribusiness/agribiotech-pushed-in-mindoro/1989784?fbclid=IwY2xjawGLwsRleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHY5GaTs5eMO2whhSBm6IwVZsoiRtzJEtELw86YDrL8y0VDYKuWxrR8bwDQ_aem_CtEYYgnSnyOlbZf4nAMdZQ

THE MANILA TIMES:

Ilocos Norte gets P110.3M in farm machines

By Leander C. Domingo

October 24, 2024

BACARRA, Ilocos Norte — The Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (PHilMech) turned over P110.3 million worth of assistance to farmer's associations and cooperatives in Ilocos Norte on October 10.

Through the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF)-Mechanization Program, PHilMech awarded to the Bacarra Zanjera Irrigators Multi-Purpose Cooperative Compound based in Barangay Buyon here a multimillion-peso rice processing system (RPS) and 68 units of various agricultural equipment.

An attached agency of the Department of Agriculture (DA), PHilMech said that equipment distributed included tractors, farm implements, precision seeders, mechanical transplanters, threshers and rice combine harvesters "to enhance productivity and yield with improved postharvest facilities and mechanization activities."



Photo shows the rice processing center awarded to the Bacarra Zanjera Irrigators Multi-Purpose Cooperative Compound based in Barangay Buyon in Bacarra, Ilocos Norte. PHOTO FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

PHilMech said the RPS is equipped with a rice mill with a capacity of 2 to 3 tons per hour, and two 12 tonner per batch capacity and two 6 tonner per batch capacity dryers.

"This will help the farmers in Ilocos Norte improve their palay (unmilled rice) drying activities, especially during the rainy season," PHilMech said.

DA Region 1 Agriculture Engineering Division chief Mark Harry Pastor delivered the message of Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr., recognizing the importance of improving the postharvest systems as well as infrastructure in the agriculture sector "to empower the farmers to become better agripreneurs while at the same time providing consumers more quality rice at an affordable price."

Joining the event was Edwin Cariño, Office of the First District Representative consultant, representing Ilocos Norte 1st District Rep. Sandro Marcos.

Cariño encouraged the BZIMP to "cater not only to the members of the cooperative but also to nonmembers where a consolidated trading must be in place."

He also underscored Denmark's best practices when it comes to consolidated farming, saying this can be duplicated through the cooperation of all the farmer's groups and associations in the province.

Cariño also encouraged local government units in Ilocos Norte to partner with various agencies to conduct marketing and trade forums for special commodities and discuss salient plans and programs to expand their market reach, including for exports.

For his part, PHilMech Deputy Director Joel Dator said the proposed extension of the RCEF-Mechanization Program will have an annual allocation of P9 billion, higher than the current P5 billion per year from 2019 to 2025.

https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/10/24/business/agribusiness/ilocos-norte-gets-p1103m-in-farm-machines/1989769?fbclid=IwY2xjawGLwsdleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHWxljYNVWEhF-ZrT8Ex0FJlnhMbnZs10xvNF7f8IT7fM5qZmB5UgCG3dfg_aem_d8HP68uXgjdqCFEa95MQvQ

THE MANILA TIMES:

Negros Occidental boosting 'balut' industry

By Philippine News Agency

October 24, 2024

THE Negros Occidental provincial government is providing a P3.5-million support package to various farmers' associations and civil society organizations to boost local balut production.

Under the Itik-Pinas (Duck) Raising for Balut Production Project implemented by the Provincial Veterinary Office (PVO), 25 groups were identified as beneficiaries, data from the Expanded Livestock Production and Livelihood Development Program on Tuesday showed.

Negros Occidental Gov. Eugenio Jose Lacson, who led the project turnover on Monday, said that while the province's hog industry is still recovering from losses brought by transboundary animal diseases, his administration is looking for other means to assist animal raisers.

"I hope we can help you through this project. The balut requirement of Negros Occidental is almost 1 million pieces a month," he added.

Balut, a popular Filipino delicacy made from incubated duck egg, is sold at a regular price of P35 each in Negros Occidental, including Bacolod City.

Third district board member Andrew Montelibano, chairman of the Provincial Board's committee on food and agriculture, said Negros Occidental has a huge market for balut but still sources supply from other provinces to meet the local demand.

"We're hoping that by next year, we will have higher production of duck eggs, and the balut that will be sold in the province will already come from you," he told the recipient associations.

According to the PVO, the project seeks to fill the gap in the province's balut supply of about 700,000 pieces a month, provide livelihood opportunities to farming communities and animal raisers affected by transboundary animal diseases and support food sufficiency initiatives.

"There is a need to fill the supply gap. The province has an insufficient supply of balut. I hope this project will be successful and help your livelihood," Placeda Lemana, provincial veterinarian, said.

The Itik-Pinas (Duck) Raising for Balut Production Project includes 5,000 heads of duckling, 25 units of incubator with 250 egg capacity and 50 bags of duck feeds.

Each beneficiary has an allocation of 200 heads of ducklings, one unit of incubator and two bags of duck feed.

"These inputs will be given to the beneficiary by way of a conditional deed of donation. The beneficiary counterpart will include housing, management, labor, feeds and other inputs," the PVO project briefer stated.

For sustainability, the provincial government will implement a roll-over scheme, which requires the recipient association to pay in-kind the same number and age of ducklings from the offspring to be given to the next-in-line beneficiary within the group, it added.

https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/10/24/business/agribusiness/negros-occidental-boosting-balut-industry/1989768?fbclid=IwY2xjawGLwsxleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHejTmTLN5zBqYaPhzFtvB2cd0_3TPd0xXT1Zn0EPVSZS-AK7U_Aj2Ky8tA_aem_mFSWLNzEpUhmXcNOMBcLdA

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Manila wants to use coco oil for sustainable aviation fuel

Ada Pelonia
October 24, 2024

The Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) and Japan-based Manryu Co. Ltd. will explore the use of coconut oil as primary feedstock in the production of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF).

PCA said it signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Manryu. The agreement, according to the attached agency of the Department of Agriculture, marked a “strategic partnership” to explore the production of SAF using coconut oil as the primary feedstock.

“The partnership aims to establish the Philippines as a leader in SAF production, leveraging Manryu’s innovative proprietary Maeda Method for biodiesel and SAF manufacturing, which promises enhanced safety features and cost-efficient production,” the PCA said.

“It optimizes the use of coconut oil, one of the country’s most abundant agricultural resources, in the production of biofuels, thus encouraging environmental sustainability and reducing reliance on traditional fossil fuels.”

According to the agency, the agreement would maximize joint research and development between PCA’s Research and Development Branch (RDB) and Manryu, which would center on conducting trials at PCA’s facilities to test the viability of the method in producing SAF.

“The method’s potential to lower production costs while maintaining safety and efficiency is expected to drive the commercialization of SAF in the Philippines, ushering the country as a pioneer in sustainable aviation fuel production in the Asean region.”

Under the MOU, the PCA would provide access to its research facilities and high-quality coconut oil, while Manryu would supply its cutting-edge technology and equipment for SAF and biodiesel production.

It added that both organizations would jointly conduct research, experiments, and testing to refine the process and ensure it meets global standards for aviation fuel.

This would also create employment opportunities, reduce carbon emissions, and open doors for further collaboration with stakeholders in the aviation and energy sectors.

“This venture sets the country as a leader in SAF production, contributing to global efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and combat climate change,” the PCA said.

“As the world looks toward more sustainable energy sources, the PCA and Manryu Co., Ltd. are taking a bold step forward, wielding the power of coconut oil to fuel the skies of tomorrow.”

https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/24/manila-wants-to-use-coco-oil-for-sustainable-aviation-fuel/?fbclid=IwY2xjawGLwMhleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHY5GaTs5eMO2whhSBm6IWVZsoiRtzJEtELw86YDrL8y0VDYKuWxrR8bwDQ_aem_CtEYYgnSnyOlbZf4nAMdZQ

Agriculture chief: Technology needed to boost food security

Ada Pelonia
October 24, 2024



Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.

AGRICULTURE Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said technological initiatives and farming techniques would bolster the country's productivity and boost farmers' income.

"If the yields increase per hectare definitely, [farmers] will have more income but it's not as easy as that," Laurel said during the 2024 International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank Group Annual Meetings on Wednesday.

The agriculture chief cited the need to use technology such as the right seeds for the right type of season, adapting to new farming techniques like alternate wet and dry system, and changing the cropping calendar in many areas to achieve a better yield.

"It's a whole bundle of things that we need to do in order for us to be able to increase the income of our farmers [...] so they would replant every season," Laurel said.

Meanwhile, he noted that they were conducting regular meetings with the private sector and other stakeholders to achieve food security.

“We want to have a merging of the minds so that both the private sector and the government have the same goal and will come up with the same roadmap to achieve the ultimate goal of food security,” Laurel said.

Earlier, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) said 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 its 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 Department of Agriculture (DA) recently said the Philippines may end 2024 with a palay output of 19.41 MMT, 3.24 percent lower than the record 20.06 MMT it produced last year. The projected 2024 palay output is equivalent to 12.69 MMT in milled terms.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa earlier said that the damage sustained by the agriculture sector due to the combined effects of El Niño and the recent weather disturbances has reached P23 billion.

He noted that rice bore the brunt of these weather disturbances, with damages placed at 373,073 metric tons (MT). Average annual losses incurred by the rice sector ranges from 500,000 MT to 600,000 MT.

https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/24/agriculture-chief-technology-needed-to-boost-food-security/?fbclid=IwY2xjawGLws9leHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHQqzjvCAYtUUqhhfKNkCtnDtnlfskwVpeLsbcBmItIXTwRiaOScBAmXX8g_aem_JJLsONgy5bt31nQ7HTabdw

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Davao durian growers hike output to tap hot market

Manuel Cayon
October 24, 2024

DAVAO CITY—Durian growers here have increased output by more than double to enjoy the continuing favorable market around Asia, including their biggest market, China, as they confront “minor” export demand issues.

Emmanuel S. Belviz, president of the Davao City Durian Industry Council, said this year’s production allowed growers to export 9,351 metric tons, more than double the export for the entire year last year of 4,808 MT.

This year’s export of the fresh fruit was only computed as of September and Belviz said fruit harvests were continuing and expected to go on until December.

China took in the bulk of exports, at 9,295 MT, or 99 percent. Last year, it imported 4,036 MT owing to the low export volume.

Singapore came in far second with its 55.7 MT imports.

Other importers of the fresh durian fruit were Japan, Hong Kong, the US, including Hawaii, and Malaysia.

Exporters here also exported the frozen durian meat mostly to Thailand. Last year, it exported 3,687 MT, higher than this year’s 3,343 MT although growers have still three months to catch up.

Thailand was the main importer of Davao durian’s fresh meat at 3,129 MT this year, and 3,235 MT last year.

Aside from Thailand, South Korea and Malaysia were the next major importers. Malaysia, Saipan and Taiwan were also building up steam as importers.

Belviz told a news briefing that the Davao Region is the main durian grower in the country, producing 60,331 MT last year. Davao City is the largest producer in the region, with its 44,404.5 MT production last year. Expansion is seen in North Cotabato, although this province is also a traditional grower, as the Soccsksargen (South Cotabato, Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani and General Santos) Region.

He said that growers have been observed to be expanding their individual farms but they were also advised by some comments from some buyers in the destination countries that some fruits were not to their desired ripeness, or maturity.

“This is the only adverse comment we are receiving so far from individual store buyers in the importing countries and it is not an industry-wide issue,” he said. “Yet, we have to address this as early as now.”

The durian council has listed 16 authorized exporters.

https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/24/davao-durian-growers-hike-output-to-tap-hot-market/?fbclid=IwY2xjawGLwtRleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHejTmTLN5zBqYaPhzFtvB2cd0_3TPd0xXT1Zn0EPVSZS-AK7U_Aj2Ky8tA_aem_mFSWLNzEpUhmXcNQMBcLdA

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Agri groups to government: Revert to original tariffs pre-EO 62

Ada Pelonia
October 24, 2024

AGRICULTURAL groups urged the government to revert to the previous tariff levied on key agricultural commodities when it conducts its periodic review and boost local production.

The National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) is set to review the comprehensive and/or specific MFN (Most Favored Nation) tariff rates listed under Executive Order (EO) 62 by November.

The EO 62, which maintained lower tariffs for key agricultural commodities like corn and pork and slashed rice tariffs until 2028, provides that the tariff scheme be subjected to a periodic review every four months from its effectivity.

For hog raisers belonging to the National Federation of Hog Farmers Inc. (NatFed), the reduction of tariffs did not lower the prices for consumers.

“We urge the government to raise back the tariffs to original levels to encourage more local production to manage our nation’s food security goals,” Alfred Ng, Vice Chairman NatFed told the BusinessMirror on Wednesday.

Ng said swine farmers had long been discouraged to raise more pigs due to competition from imported pork and the constant threat brought by the African swine fever (ASF) to the sector. He noted that prior to the ASF outbreak which devastated farms since its detection in 2019, the tariff on pork stood at 35 percent for in-quota shipments and 40 percent for out-quota shipments.

Under EO 62, the tariff rates for pork will remain at 15 percent in-quota and 25 percent out-quota. “If ibalik ang taripa to its original levels, mas may laban po ang magbababoy at maari magparami sila muli ng alaga nila [If ta-riff is returned to original levels, hog producers have a better chance and they could increase the stock they are raising],” he said.

Meanwhile, the Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura (SINAG) called for either an increase or reversion of the original tariff line for rice.

Under the Rice Tariffication Law (RTL), the tariff scheme for rice is 35 percent if rice is imported within Asean and 180 percent if above the minimum access volume (MAV) and from non-Asean countries. According to SINAG Executive Director Jayson Cainglet, however, the framework and parameters for the review of EO 62, particularly for rice, should hinge on a few factors. This includes the production cost of farmers which currently stands at P16 to P17 per kilo, the farmgate price of palay, and the actual retail price of rice notwithstanding the increase or decrease of inflation.

“As it is, the farmgate price of palay went down faster than the retail prices of rice,” Cainglet told the BusinessMirror, partly in Filipino. He noted that from the P26-P30 per kilo farmgate prior to the issuance of EO 62, prices dropped to P16-P17 per kilo for fresh or wet palay and P20-P22 per kilo for clean and dry palay.

“A big drop between P5-P10 per kilo farmgate of palay is a major concern,” Cainglet said.

“We are yet to approach peak harvest, there is concern that the farmgate price of palay will plunge even further.” For her part, Bantay Bigas spokesperson Cathy Estavillo urged the government to revoke the order and bolster support for local producers through subsidies and post-harvest facilities.

“From the start, many farmers have opposed the implementation of EO 62 because it does not guarantee that rice prices will go down since the rice industry is liberalized,” Estavillo told the BusinessMirror.

She said they therefore would prefer an “outright revocation of EO 62. We continue our advocacy to boost local production,” she said.

https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/24/agri-groups-to-government-revert-to-original-tariffs-pre-eo-62/?fbclid=IwY2xjawGLwtlleHRuA2F1bQIxMAABHWxljYNVWEhF-ZrT8Ex0FJlnhMbnZs10xvNF7f8IT7fM5qZmB5UgCG3dfg_aem_d8HP68uXgjdqCFEa95MQyQ

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Low prices could make farmers shun planting corn

Ada Pelonia
October 24, 2024

THE Philippine Maize Federation Inc. (PhilMaize) warned that low prices could discourage farmers from planting corn next season despite an anticipated increase in corn output this third quarter.

“It might [increase from last year’s], but low price could be a disincentive for our corn growers to plant next season,” PhilMaize President Romualdo Elvira Jr. told the BusinessMirror.

Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) showed that corn output stood at 2.47 million metric tons (MMT) from the July to September period last year.

Elvira expressed concern over the drop in farmgate prices of corn due to lackluster demand from poultry and livestock sectors.

“Ang isa lang na problema natin ngayon is mababa yung presyo ng mais [One problem right now is the low price of corn],” he said.

Elvira noted that the demand dropped due to the poultry and livestock sectors being hard-hit by animal diseases such as African swine fever (ASF) and bird flu.

“The swine industry is truly affected by ASF and then you have [bird] flu affecting chickens, so the effect on demand is big,” he said.

Elvira noted that farmgate prices as low as P14 for clean and dry corn have already been recorded in some areas.

“The planter’s margin is too low there,” he said, noting that farmgate prices should range between at least P17 to P20, a rate which offers a better margin for farmers.

The PhilMaize president said the drop in prices could pose a problem for the corn industry since it might push growers to plant a different crop.

Elvira then urged the government to review the Executive Order (EO) 62 which maintained the tariff rates on some agricultural commodities, such as corn until 2028. The tariff on corn remained at 5 percent in-quota and 15 percent out-quota.

The National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) is set to review the comprehensive and/or specific MFN (Most Favored Nation) tariff rates listed under EO 62 by November.

EO 62 provides that the tariff structure be subjected to a periodic review every four months from its effectivity. “The corn growers seem to be at a disadvantage because the tariff is low, demand is low,” he said.

https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/24/low-prices-could-make-farmers-shun-planting-corn/?fbclid=IwY2xjawGLwt5leHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHWxljYNVWEhF-ZrT8Ex0FJlnhMbnZs10xvNF7f8IT7fM5qZmB5UgCG3dfg_aem_d8HP68uXgjdqCFEa95MQvQ

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Vaccination program to include commercial hog farms—DA

Ada Pelonia
October 24, 2024

The Department of Agriculture (DA) will include commercial farms and swine herds under its hog repopulation program for the controlled vaccination against African swine fever (ASF) to fast-track its implementation following the low turnout from backyard raisers.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. signed Administrative Circular (AC) 8, which indicated the need to expedite the vaccination program due to the low participation rate of smallhold farms.

The commercial farms and swine herds covered by the Integrated National Swine Production Initiatives for Recovery and Expansion (Inspire) Program would now be included in the controlled inoculation, based on the circular.

The DA initially prioritized the vaccination of healthy animals in smallhold farms located in ASF-negative barangays within designated red zones and cities or municipalities under pink zones.

“To effectively increase the vaccination rate, achieve the desired coverage, and facilitate the assessment of the vaccine’s efficacy for ASF prevention and control, there is an urgent need to fast-track the implementation of the ASF vaccination program, particularly for commercial farms and swine populations under the INSPIRE Program,” AC 8 read.

Under the circular, commercial farms interested in participating in the vaccination program should submit a letter of intent to the DA regional field office.

The participating commercial farms should also allow authorized personnel from the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) and the provincial veterinary office to conduct an inspection on the farm. This would assess the farm’s biosecurity measures and its readiness to implement the vaccination program.

It also noted that the commercial farms' licensed veterinarian may collect and submit blood samples from eight percent of the pig population for testing against ASF.

“Only farms with negative test results for ASF shall be eligible to receive ASF vaccine allocation,” the circular read, noting that the vaccine should only be administered to grower pigs.

The DA said the commercial farm should submit regular reports on the progress of the vaccination program, including the number of pigs vaccinated, sample collection details, test results, and any observed adverse events.

“The farm shall grant DA- RFO and Provincial Veterinary personnel access to conduct monitoring activities. All such activities shall be performed in accordance with the biosecurity protocols of the farm.”

The Inspire program and the Bantay ASF sa Barangay aim to help hog farms repopulate and recover through community clustering, distribution of piglets, and firming up of biosecurity management.

Figures from the BAI showed that 505 barangays have active ASF cases as of October 18.

Ada Pelonia

https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/24/vaccination-program-to-include-commercial-hog-farms-da/?fbclid=IwY2xjawGLwutleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHQz5COHaXT_mz43OkjltcrHMYwgvspZ1Jijgn1zwu_axEDGIprcD6xoD2g_aem_N54KM-ILOTzoIR8nKmDokA

BUSINESS MIRROR:

PHL, Lao PDR keen on setting up rice gene bank

Ada Pelonia
October 24, 2024

The Philippines and Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) are looking at establishing a joint genetic bank for rice development in their bid to promote innovation in crop cultivation.

The initiative to establish this genetic bank would be contained in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) set to be signed by Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. and Lao PDR's Minister of Agriculture and Forestry Linkham Douangsavanh next year.

"The proposed agreement marks a significant step forward in strengthening agricultural cooperation with our ASEAN partner, Lao PDR," Laurel said.

"It will provide a framework for collaboration on a wide range of agricultural issues."

Other key initiatives were also outlined in the MOU, such as enhancing the value chains for various agricultural products, including rice, corn, coffee, fruit trees, tea, livestock, and fisheries and implementing best practices for efficient water usage in agriculture.

Joint efforts to tackle agricultural challenges through shared research initiatives and prioritizing effective pest control practices to safeguard crops were also included in the agreement.

The DA said the Southeast Asian countries plan to develop strategies to address the impacts of climate change on agricultural productivity and facilitate trade in agricultural products like rice, sugarcane, and coffee, as well as addressing imported commodities in the Philippines.

They also aim to collaborate to bolster the overall food security of the ASEAN region.

“The proposed agreement signals a commitment to fostering resilient agricultural sectors in both countries, ultimately aiming for a more secure and sustainable food future in the region.”

Meanwhile, the agriculture chief recently met with Italian Minister of Agriculture Francesco Lollobrigida to strengthen agricultural partnerships and affirm the two countries’ commitment to sustainable food systems and trade.

The Philippines and Italy also agreed on a draft MOU with the goal of improving the country’s productivity to benefit millions of farmers, according to Laurel.

“Italy’s agricultural machinery industry is world-class, and the Philippines can greatly benefit from this expertise as we modernize our agricultural sector.”

Laurel also stressed opportunities for Italian firms to contribute through smart agriculture technologies and irrigation systems, aligning with the Philippines’s goals of agro-industrialization and climate-resilient agriculture.

“Our partnership in agriculture reflects the shared vision of our two nations. We look forward to finalizing our agreements and ensuring sustainable, inclusive, and resilient food systems.”

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/24/phl-lao-pdr-keen-on-setting-up-rice-gene-bank/?fbclid=IwY2xjawGLwu9leHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHaHAvLjz1fraNNzMNy2Rzao9vqfvRYnG6ALTZMw FWoFaowm-7YjbsVSw aem KazvMT 65Pf 9g5jPLbRkg>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Vaccination program to include commercial hog farms—DA

Ada Pelonia
October 24, 2024

The Department of Agriculture (DA) will include commercial farms and swine herds under its hog repopulation program for the controlled vaccination against African swine fever (ASF) to fast-track its implementation following the low turnout from backyard raisers.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. signed Administrative Circular (AC) 8, which indicated the need to expedite the vaccination program due to the low participation rate of smallhold farms.

The commercial farms and swine herds covered by the Integrated National Swine Production Initiatives for Recovery and Expansion (Inspire) Program would now be included in the controlled inoculation, based on the circular.

The DA initially prioritized the vaccination of healthy animals in smallhold farms located in ASF-negative barangays within designated red zones and cities or municipalities under pink zones.

“To effectively increase the vaccination rate, achieve the desired coverage, and facilitate the assessment of the vaccine’s efficacy for ASF prevention and control, there is an urgent need to fast-track the implementation of the ASF vaccination program, particularly for commercial farms and swine populations under the INSPIRE Program,” AC 8 read.

Under the circular, commercial farms interested in participating in the vaccination program should submit a letter of intent to the DA regional field office.

The participating commercial farms should also allow authorized personnel from the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) and the provincial veterinary office to conduct an inspection on the farm. This would assess the farm’s biosecurity measures and its readiness to implement the vaccination program.

It also noted that the commercial farms' licensed veterinarian may collect and submit blood samples from eight percent of the pig population for testing against ASF.

“Only farms with negative test results for ASF shall be eligible to receive ASF vaccine allocation,” the circular read, noting that the vaccine should only be administered to grower pigs.

The DA said the commercial farm should submit regular reports on the progress of the vaccination program, including the number of pigs vaccinated, sample collection details, test results, and any observed adverse events.

“The farm shall grant DA- RFO and Provincial Veterinary personnel access to conduct monitoring activities. All such activities shall be performed in accordance with the biosecurity protocols of the farm.”

The Inspire program and the Bantay ASF sa Barangay aim to help hog farms repopulate and recover through community clustering, distribution of piglets, and firming up of biosecurity management.

Figures from the BAI showed that 505 barangays have active ASF cases as of October 18.

Ada Pelonia

https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/24/vaccination-program-to-include-commercial-hog-farms-da/?fbclid=IwY2xjawGLwwpleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHejTmTLN5zBqYaPhzFtvB2cd0_3TPd0xXT1Zn0EPVSZS-AK7U_Aj2Ky8tA_aem_mFSWLNzEpUhmXcNQMBcLdA

BUSINESS MIRROR:

PHL rice output to fall below 20MMT this year

Ada Pelonia
October 24, 2024

The country's unmilled rice production could fall below 20 million metric tons (MMT) by the end of the year due to El Niño and storms that struck plantations, according to the Department of Agriculture (DA).

The DA said the Philippines may end 2024 with a palay output of 19.41 MMT, 3.24 percent lower than the record 20.06 MMT it produced last year. The projected 2024 palay output is equivalent to 12.69 MMT in milled terms.

DA Undersecretary Christopher Morales said the agency sees losses of 358,000 metric tons (MT) based on historical damages and actual risks this quarter.

Despite this, Morales said the national rice supply would still be "robust," with 3.57 MMT of imported rice having arrived in the country as of October 14, some 24 percent lower than last year's level.

"The recent cut in tariff rates further incentivized imports, allowing for greater access to global rice markets and mitigating potential shortages."

According to the DA official, the Philippines is expected to have 3.83 MMT of rice supply by yearend, which can feed the nation for 100 days.

"This projection incorporates updated rice stock data, actual import arrivals, and historical trends, ensuring the country's rice needs are met despite the production drop."

Citing data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), the DA said palay production is projected to decline by 11.9 percent to 3.35 MMT in the third quarter due to crop damage exacerbated by recent typhoons.

“The decrease in production would have been higher were it not for higher production yield due to better seeds, farm equipment, and other support provided through the Rice Fund under the Rice Tariffication Law [RTL] and National Rice Program.”

The DA said experts believe that the combination of imports and proactive management of domestic production would help ensure that the Philippines “remains resilient in the face of climatic challenges.”

“The government continues to monitor the situation closely, aiming to stabilize prices and maintain food security for the population.”

Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa had said that the damage sustained by the agriculture sector due to the combined effects of El Niño and the recent weather disturbances has reached P23 billion. (See: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/09/05/farm-damage-from-el-nino-storms-now-at-p23b-da/>)

De Mesa noted that rice bore the brunt of these weather disturbances, with damages placed at 373,073 metric tons (MT). Average annual losses incurred by the rice sector ranges from 500,000 MT to 600,000 MT.

He said the country may breach the average annual rice losses this year due to the effects of La Niña.

Data from the PSA showed that the unmilled rice production in 2023 was 1.56 percent higher than the 19.76 MMT recorded in 2022.

https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/24/phl-rice-output-to-fall-below-20mmt-this-year/?fbclid=IwY2xjawGLwuNleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHQwgsZg8-ZPcb_W85saQBm2chP-bYcgtRpIIjYIhdD8twh9MfPSs1s23hw_aem_2ZuAV9QQ-gpoY3QsGSbolA