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THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

BFAR suspends ludong fishing

Bella Cariaso

October 3, 2024 | 12:00am



Photo shows the Ludong, also called President's Fish.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) has declared a closed fishing season for ludong or President's fish, to save the country's "most expensive fish" from extinction.

The ban against catching ludong or banak will remain in effect from Oct. 1 until Nov. 15.

"Catching, selling, buying, transporting or possessing ludong, including its parts or derivatives, is strictly prohibited during this period to allow this endangered species to spawn," the BFAR said.

The agency issued Administrative Circular 247, declaring a closed fishing season for ludong from Oct. 1 to Nov. 15.

Violators of the circular will face penalties, it said.

“Let’s work together to conserve ludong, a symbol of our heritage and biodiversity, for future generations,” the BFAR said.

Ludong is said to be the most expensive freshwater fish in the country, reportedly costing about P5,000 per kilo.

Overfishing, dredging and mining activities have reduced the population of ludong over the years.

The fish is a river mullet endemic in Cagayan River and other river systems located in the northern part of the country.

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2024/10/03/2389761/bfar-suspends-ludong-fishing>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

DA: Higher rice imports in 2024 possible

By: [Stephanie Sevellano](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

Philippine News Agency / 09:50 PM October 02, 2024



STABLE SUPPLY. Workers move sacks of rice to another truck along Dagupan Street in Tondo, Manila on Sept. 9, 2024. Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel De Mesa said Wednesday (Oct. 2, 2024) rice imports may surpass last year's volume to supplement the country's strong harvest and maintain a stable rice supply in the country. (PNA photo by Yancy Lim)

MANILA – The Department of Agriculture (DA) said Wednesday a higher import volume is possible this year compared to 2023.

In an interview, DA Assistant Secretary Arnel De Mesa said importers may surpass last year's volume to supplement the country's strong harvest in terms of maintaining a stable rice supply in the country.

“Karamihan ng import dumarating (Most import arrivals happen) during (the) last quarter, so, looking historically, statistically speaking, it might breach the 3.6 million metric tons (MT) last year,” he said.

As of Sept. 26, the DA has recorded 3.195 million MT of rice import arrivals.

“We have enough supply coming from strong harvest kahit may El Niño, kaunti lang naman iyong naging (despite the El Niño, there was minimal) reported damage,” De Mesa said.

Earlier, the DA said the country may also breach its 500,000 MT to 600,000 MT projected rice production loss due to the combined effects of the El Niño phenomenon, weather disturbances, and La Niña.

For El Niño, the DA reported PHP15.3 billion in agricultural damage affecting 333,195 farmers and fishers in 15 regions nationwide.

The DA, however, maintained its hope to hit 20.4 million metric tons of rice production or at least match last year’s 20 million MT output despite the possible effects of La Niña.

<https://business.inquirer.net/483261/da-higher-rice-imports-in-2024-possible>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Dairy agency bats for cattle importation to boost milk production

By: [Jason Sigales](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

INQUIRER.net / 06:35 PM October 02, 2024



MANILA, Philippines — [National Dairy Authority \(NDA\)](#) Administrator Marcus Antonius T. Andaya recently pushed for the importation of cattle for stock farms to increase milk production.

Data from the NDA shows that the country's milk supply is 99 percent imported, while a study presented at the conference found that the [Philippine dairy market](#) grew by 10.2% in 2022 with growth projected to remain in double digits.

“We cannot grip the faucet and hope it will produce more water. We need more faucets,” Andaya said.

Andaya added that they will “aggressively” import cattle for stock farms to multiply the herd under the NDA’s care and distribute the offspring to dairy farmers.

The NDA is eyeing to have five new stock farms operational by early 2025 to help increase its herd of nearly 80,000 heads.

“Progress doesn’t happen in isolation. It is through the collective efforts of farmers, experts, business leaders, commercial sector and the government that we can drive growth,” Andaya said.

<https://business.inquirer.net/483237/dairy-agency-urges-cattle-import-to-boost-milk-production>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

West PH Sea: Gov't exhausting all efforts amid fish catch drop – BFAR

By: [Stephanie Sevellano](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

Philippine News Agency / 01:08 PM October 02, 2024



This photo taken on July 5, 2022 shows workers filling containers with a fishing boat's catch at a port in Masinloc town, Zambales province, after an expedition in the West Philippine Sea. FILE PHOTO/Agence France-Presse

MANILA, Philippines – The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) on Tuesday said it is exhausting all efforts following a decline in fish catch in the West Philippine Sea (WPS) from January to June.

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported that for the first half of 2024, fish catch in the WPS was down to 101,039.54 metric tons (MT) from 108,392.48 MT for the same period in 2023.

“The government has exhausted all necessary efforts to address the issues and particularly sa BFAR may ganito man tayong situation, hindi kami titigil para magpatupad ng mga programa na makatutulong po sa ating mga mangingisda (in BFAR, even if we have this situation, we will not cease to implement programs that

are beneficial for fishers),” BFAR Spokesperson Nazario Briguera said in a phone interview.

Briguera said there are several factors contributing to the decline in fish catch, including geopolitical conflict in the region, rising global fuel prices, and the El Niño phenomenon and climate change which affected the migratory movement of fish, among others.

“We don’t ignore this fact na nag-decline ang contribution ng West Philippine Sea sa overall production ng ating (the declining contribution of the WPS in the overall production of our) national production, we’re taking this seriously,” he said.

The BFAR official cited the implementation of several programs including its national banner program Livelihood Activities to Enhance Fisheries Yields and Economic Gains from the West Philippine Sea (LAYAG WPS), fuel subsidy distribution, and other “comprehensive” strategies in capacitating Filipino fisherfolk and their families.

The BFAR also allocated around PHP1.5 billion worth of funds for the procurement of more floating vessels for multi-mission purposes.

“Bahagi naman talaga ito ng direksyon na tinatahak ng (This is really part of the direction of the) Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources as far as improving our capacity in terms of monitoring, control, and surveillance,” Briguera said.

At least 315,000 fishers in regions adjacent to the WPS, including the Ilocos Region, Central Luzon, and Mimaropa, are benefiting from the WPS.

Meanwhile, Briguera said the decline in the WPS catch has not affected the overall fish supply and prices in local markets, considering other sources like aquaculture.

“Naging sufficient naman ang supply dito sa Metro Manila at hindi naman ito nakaapekto sa presyo taking into account na ang ating bansa ay maraming pangisdaan (The supply in Metro Manila has been sufficient and it did not affect the

pricing, taking into account that there are many fishing grounds in the country),” he said.

Briguera also assured that the closed fishing season from Nov. 1 to Jan. 1 will not affect the holiday stocks and the BFAR will continue to conduct stringent price monitoring in local markets.

For comprehensive coverage, in-depth analysis, visit our special page for [West Philippine Sea updates](#). Stay informed with articles, videos, and expert opinions.

<https://www.inquirer.net/414873/west-ph-sea-govt-exhausting-all-efforts-amid-fish-catch-drop-bfar/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Philippines hoping to ship more coconut products to Europe

October 2, 2024 | 8:04 pm



A Filipino worker inspects coconuts at a plantation in Quezon province in this picture taken on Aug. 11, 2004. — REUTERS

GOVERNMENT agencies are hoping to increase exports of coconut-based products to the European Union (EU), while attracting investment in processing operations.

In a statement on Wednesday, the Board of Investments (BoI) said it conducted a trade mission to the Netherlands and Belgium last month alongside agencies of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Department of Agriculture (DA).

The delegation also held roundtable discussions to brief European participants on trade and investment opportunities involving the Philippine coconut industry.

In the Netherlands, the BoI presented to the members of the MVO (the Netherlands Oils and Fats Industry) and the Ministry of Agriculture on opportunities in integrated coconut processing and the available incentives under the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises Act.

It also met with potential investors from Germany, Switzerland, and the Netherlands in a separate roundtable in Brussels.

The delegation also met with COLEAD (Committee Linking Entrepreneurship–Agriculture–Development) and FEDIOL (the European Vegetable Oil and Proteinmeal Industry).

“Additionally, the delegation conducted market visits to key retail outlets in the Netherlands and Belgium to keep abreast of the latest product and packaging developments for coco-based products and benchmark against competitors in the EU market,” the BoI said.

DTI Export Marketing Bureau Director Bianca Pearl R. Sykimte noted an opportunity for the Philippines to improve its share of the EU market for coconut products after the EU starts to implement the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) in December.

“The EUDR’s coverage — coffee, cocoa, soy, palm oil, wood, rubber, and cattle — does not (significantly affect) Philippine exports to the EU,” Ms. Sykimte told *BusinessWorld* via Viber.

“We are also seeing an opportunity for our coconut oil exports since our palm oil competitors will be affected by the EUDR,” she added.

In 2023, coconut oil was the Philippines’ third-largest export product to the 27-country bloc, with shipments valued at \$547.15 million.

She said however that exporters are still encouraged to be compliant with the EUDR for the long-term benefits to Philippine forests.

“Beyond EUDR, there are opportunities for exporters under the EU Generalised Scheme of Preferences Plus (GSP+), which provide for duty-free market access for Philippine products covering two-thirds of EU tariff lines,” she added.

The Philippine Statistics Authority reports that exports to the EU totaled \$4.82 billion in the first seven months, representing 11.3% of all exports during the period. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/10/02/625482/philippines-hoping-to-ship-more-coconut-products-to-europe/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

NFA sees rice sales to government agencies supplementing funding for procurement

October 2, 2024 | 8:04 pm



PHILSTAR FILE PHOTO

THE National Food Authority (NFA) said higher revenue from rice sales to government agencies is expected to add to its procurement budget for palay or unmilled rice.

In a statement, NFA acting Administrator Larry R. Lacson said: “The additional revenue from our sales to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) will allow us to buy an additional 400,000 50-kilo bags of palay. That’s easily 12,600 metric tons (MT) of incremental rice supply.”

The NFA is tasked with maintaining an emergency reserve of rice from palay purchased from domestic farmers.

Last month, the NFA Council approved a new price of P38 per kilogram for rice sales to the DSWD and other government agencies, including local government units. The previous price had been P25 per kilo.

“The additional revenue from our sales to DSWD will allow us to buy an additional 400,000 50-kilo bags of palay. That’s easily 12,600 metric tons (MT) of incremental rice supply,” Mr. Lacson added.

He said that the higher selling price to government agencies will have no impact on the market price of the grain.

The NFA said the revenue boost from government sales is estimated at P557.3 million for 2024.

“The higher selling price agreed to by the DSWD will help not only reduce NFA losses but also give it additional resources to buy more palay from our farmers,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. said.

In the first half, the NFA paid P5.3 billion to purchase 175,000 MT of palay, equivalent to 3.5 million bags.

The NFA Council has also approved a wet season ceiling price of P30 per kilo for palay purchases, against P23 per kilo previously. It plans to buy between 6.4 million to 8.7 million bags of palay before the end of the year, equivalent to 435,000 MT of palay. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/10/02/625481/nfa-sees-rice-sales-to-government-agencies-supplementing-funding-for-procurement/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

BFAR five-year plan to raise aquaculture competitiveness

October 2, 2024 | 8:02 pm



BRUCE WARRINGTON-UNSPLASH

THE Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) said it will carry out a five-year plan to improve the competitiveness of the aquaculture industry.

“This five-year aquaculture plan will serve as a roadmap for developing a competitive aquaculture sector that meets global demands,” the BFAR said in a statement.

“This plan... ensures that all stakeholders, particularly the marginalized, have equitable access to resources and opportunities,” BFAR officer in charge Director Isidro M. Velayo, Jr. said.

Under the plan, BFAR seeks to ensure adequate supply of fry, reducing production costs, strengthening climate resilience, and diversifying the industry’s product offerings.

“It promotes responsible stewardship of our environment, enabling the industry to thrive without compromising the ecological balance,” he added.

Mr. Velayo called for more private and public collaboration in the programs being developed under the plan.

Aquaculture production during the third quarter fell 17.7% to 471,400 metric tons, accounting for 46.3% of total fisheries output, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/10/02/625476/bfar-five-year-plan-to-raise-aquaculture-competitiveness/>

THE MANILA TIMES:

NFA to earn P557.3M from higher rice price

By Earl John Alfaro

October 3, 2024

THE National Food Authority (NFA) is expected to earn P557.3 million following its council-approved increase in its selling price of rice to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and other government agencies.

"The higher selling price agreed to by DSWD will help not only reduce NFA losses but also give additional resources to buy more palay (unmilled rice) from farmers," Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said in a statement.

In 2023, the NFA suffered a P6.19-billion net loss after buying a nine-day buffer stock of 300,000 metric tons of rice from farmers.

"At a selling price of P38 a kilo, the additional revenue from sales from DSWD will allow us to buy an additional 400,000 (50-kilo) bags of palay," NFA Administrator Larry Lacson said, adding this means having 12,600 metric tons of incremental rice supply.

Thus, it would help boost the NFA's rice buffer and increase farmers' income, Lacson noted, while assuring the rice price increase of P38 a kilo from the previous P25 for DSWD and other relief agencies and local government units won't have an impact on its market price.

Earlier this year, the NFA council approved to increase the selling price of rice from P16 to P23 per kilo to P17 to P30 per kilo to allow the agency to compete with private traders due to El Niño and the lingering effect of India's rice export ban (it has since lifted the ban).

The adjustment in its procurement price allowed NFA to buy around 3.5 million (50-kilo) bags of palay as of end-June 2024. Prior to the price adjustment, the NFA had bought less than 200,000 bags.

This wet season, the NFA will buy between 6.4 million and 8.7 million bags of palay. It has requested the Department of Budget and Management for the immediate release of procurement funds worth P11 billion.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/10/03/business/top-business/nfa-to-earn-p5573m-from-higher-rice-price/1978242>

THE MANILA TIMES:

Agencies address banana, cacao issues

By [Leander C. Domingo](#)

October 3, 2024

A NUEVA Ecija-based state university and two Japanese institutions tackled key issues and concerns in banana and cacao production during an International Forum at the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Plant Industry (DA-BPI) in Malate, Manila, on September 27.

The forum, led by the Central Luzon State University (CLSU) and Tamagawa University (TU) of Japan, was in collaboration with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

The event brought together international and local experts, researchers, banana and cacao growers, and importer groups, as well as key representatives from government and academia, and various stakeholders from the industry to discuss challenges and solutions.

According to the CLSU Strategic Communication Office, the event was the first International Stakeholders' Forum of Banana and Cacao Diseases Management (BaCaDM), a collaborative effort between CLSU and TU focusing on sustainable disease management and improving the overall health of banana and cacao crops in the Philippines.

It said the discussions revolved around the dissemination of ongoing research results, identifying best practices and exploring innovative technologies to enhance the pest and disease management of the two high-value crops.

CLSU President Evaristo Abella recognized the crucial roles of all stakeholders involved in the JICA-funded project.

Also, as BaCaDM project director, Abella emphasized the importance of active participation and commitment from all stakeholders to achieve the project's objectives.

He said CLSU will remain fully committed to supporting the initiative that aims to "benefit not only the banana and cacao industries but also the workers and consumers who rely on them."

"CLSU will stay committed to innovative efforts in agricultural research and development, and in harnessing our international linkages for programs and projects like this that will benefit the people not only in our local communities but all over the world," Abella said.

He also thanked the team and partners for their cooperation in the initial data gathering essential in the research, expressing hope that the project would "produce new knowledge and technologies to increase productivity to uplift the lives of banana and cacao farmers."

In his keynote address during the forum, Fazil Dusunceli from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization emphasized the importance of prevention, preparedness response and management in plant pest and diseases prevention, and management of transboundary pests and diseases.

Dusunceli also stressed the importance of the system for seed production to produce quality planting material.

Also during the event, DA-BPI Director Glenn Gerard Panganiban, who represented and delivered the message of DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr., said the two economically important crops are constantly threatened by pests and diseases, affecting yields and farmers' income.

Panganiban said the collaborative efforts will pave the way for improvements in agriculture, directly impacting the economy by

increasing production, strengthening export markets and improving the farmers' welfare.

Other participants were Kyoko Watanabe, chief investigator of the BaCaDM project, who introduced the BaCaDM Project. Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (PHilMech) Director Dionisio Alvindia, who presented the situation of banana and cacao research in the Philippines including those conducted by DA and PHilMech.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/10/03/business/agribusiness/agencies-address-banana-cacao-issues/1977961>

THE MANILA TIMES:

Iloilo gives agriculture a new perspective

By Philippine News Agency
October 3, 2024

ILOILO CITY — Gov. Arthur Defensor Jr. said the provincial government would like to give a new perspective to agriculture, promoting it as a good business and a foundation for the nutrition program.

"We give agriculture a different point of view. We want to make it more interesting for our youth and our millennials," Defensor said as he led the opening of the four-day Farmers and Fisherfolk's Week at the capitol grounds on Tuesday.

He said the concept of promoting "agriculture as a good business" was presented when the provincial government got its citation as one of the Top 5 finalists for the 2024 Most Business-Friendly Local Government Unit-Province Level category of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry last week.

While the main target is to increase production, Defensor said agriculture should be handled as a business to make it a good source of livelihood.

He said he is also drafting an executive order to make agriculture the foundation of the nutrition program of the province.

He said the province will target to boost production in barangay (villages) where there are malnutrition cases to make food and nutrients more accessible to these areas.

"Food is our medicine from agriculture; it must be taken in the right amount and the right kind. Agriculture is our business, and we will reduce agriculture down to the basics as a source of carbohydrates, protein, and vitamins and minerals," Defensor said.

The opening ceremony of the Farmers and Fisherfolk's Week was marked by the opening of exhibits and trade fairs, and the turnover of farm machines.

Other activities lined up for the four-day celebrations are the orientation on the application of renewable energy to agriculture and access to financial institutions, as well as a lecture on packaging and labeling on October 2; training on coffee production technology and rice seed nursery preparation and management, cooking contest, optimizing ruminant production, management and nutrition, and quiz bee on October 3; and recognition of outstanding farmers and fishers on October 4.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/10/03/business/agribusiness/iloilo-gives-agriculture-a-new-perspective/1977960>

THE MANILA TIMES:

MMSU, farmers to commercialize brown rice products

By **Leander C. Domingo**

October 3, 2024

THROUGH a technology licensing agreement (TLA), the Ilocos Norte-based Mariano Marcos University (MMSU) has partnered with the Rayuray Farmers Cooperative (RFAC) to expand the market for brown rice products by commercializing MMSU Brown Rice Krispies and Brown Rice Coffee.

The TLA focuses on the crucial role of technology transfer in turning academic research into commercially viable products.

It was signed by MMSU Officer in Charge President Prima Fe Franco, MMSU Director of Innovation and Technology Dionisio Bucao, RFAC Chairman Guillermo Quemquem represented by RFAC manager Jorge Suguitan and RFAC secretary Infenita Puyot.



Mariano Marcos State University has inked a technology licensing agreement with the Rayuray Farmers Agriculture Cooperative to commercialize the university's Brown Rice Krispies and Brown Rice Coffee products. MMSU PHOTO

The signing ceremony on September 23 was witnessed by staff members and employees of MMSU Innovation and Technology, RFAC and the Philippine Rice Research Institute, a government corporate entity attached to the Department of Agriculture.

Franco underscored the importance of developing technologies that have real-world applications, particularly those that can benefit the local economy and promote agricultural sustainability.

She noted that the commercialization of MMSU Brown Rice Krispies and Brown Rice Coffee is "a testament to the university's dedication to producing research-driven innovations that serve the community."

Promoting the sustainable use of local crops, Franco also expressed confidence that the partnership will "yield significant benefits for local farmers and consumers alike," adding that the commercialization of Brown Rice Krispies is expected to stimulate demand for brown rice, particularly the Hiami variety.

On the other hand, the production of Brown Rice Coffee will support the local coffee farming industry, offering farmers the chance to participate in the growing market for premium, locally made rice coffee.

Kathrina Antonio of the MMSU Strategic Communication Office said the Brown Rice Krispies was created by Technology Generators Felicitas Sanculi, Eleazer Grande, Jerson Coloma and Hazel Bartolome.

On the other hand, Antonio said the Brown Rice Coffee, a unique blend of coffee that highlights the best flavors and quality of roasted brown rice, was created by Grande, Sanculi and Dionisio Bucao.

With assistance from the MMSU Technology Business Incubation and PhilRice, "RFAC will be able to use the facilities and equipment of the MMSU Food Innovation Center and participate in specialized training and coaching sessions," Antonio said.

She added that by working closely with local cooperatives, "the university ensures that its innovations directly impact the local economy while also addressing the needs of consumers."

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/10/03/business/agribusiness/mmsu-farmers-to-commercialize-brown-rice-products/1977932>

THE MANILA TIMES:

Quezon, Searca lead coconut farmers' training series

By Leander C. Domingo

October 3, 2024

COCONUT farmers and farmer associations and cooperatives in Quezon province recently participated in a series of training spearheaded by the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist of Quezon in partnership with the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (Searca).

Searca Director Glenn Gregorio said the series of trainings under the project titled "Development of Coconut Industry Growth Areas in the Province of Quezon" was participated by four municipalities in the province on September 18 to 20.

Gregorio said the training series were designed to equip individual farmers and farmer associations or cooperatives on high-value crops and livestock integration, as well as marketing strategies for coconut products.

"The training series was a comprehensive journey that equipped the farmers with various skills from production to marketing empowering them to diversify their products and increase their income potential in the coconut industry," he said.

Gregorio added that the training series also included hands-on demonstration on coconut sap-based products processing, including sugar, lambanog (coconut wine or spirit) and virgin coconut oil (VCO).

The session on Marketing Strategies for Coconut By-Products covered topics on packaging, labeling and current market trends.

From the municipalities of Catanauan and Lopez, coconut farmers learned effective packaging methods and developed branding strategies for their products.

Gregorio said the training series also provided insights on trading the commodity, along with an analysis of prevailing market trends to enable farmers to position their products effectively in the competitive marketplace.

"This comprehensive approach aimed to enhance their marketing expertise, contributing to their coconut-based enterprises' sustainability and profitability," he said.

Meanwhile, the training conducted for farmers from Pitogo, Macalelon and Catanauan was focused on high-value crops integration with livestock, such as swine, poultry, and small and large ruminants.

The topic in the training series for the three localities focused on intercropping with various crops, including cash crops, food crops and those that enhance nutritional security. The aim was also to ensure farmers generate year-round farm income.

"The session emphasized product diversification, the value addition of coconut intercrops and the recycling of waste biomass through vermicomposting," Gregorio said.

With a hands-on workshop guiding the farmers in selecting and designing intercropping strategies tailored to their 1 hectare plots, Gregorio said the interactive approach of the training series "encouraged informed decision-making on the types of crops most suitable for their land, maximizing both productivity and sustainability."

At the training Macalelon town with participating farmers from Catanauan, Pitogo and Macalelon, the farmers were engaged in hands-on training focused on producing lambanog, VCO and coco sugar.

Best practices in processing these coconut by-products were introduced to farmers to enhance their understanding of quality standards and efficient production techniques.

The farmers were also given the opportunity to taste test various coconut-based products brought by the speakers from their production lines, allowing them to assess the quality of the finished products firsthand.

They were also taken on a farm tour and witnessed a demonstration of the proper techniques for collecting coconut sap, the primary ingredient for lambanog and coco sap sugar.

This immersion among the participants reinforced the importance of accurate and sustainable sap collection practices that are critical for maintaining product quality and optimizing yields.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/10/03/business/agribusiness/quezon-searca-lead-coconut-farmers-training-series/1977931>

THE MANILA TIMES:

Agriculture workers trained in product devt

By [The Manila Times](#)

October 3, 2024

THE Department of Science and Technology (DoST), with its Mobile Modular Food Processing Facility, or the Food on the Road Innovation Processing Facility (FoodtrIP), trained 17 personnel from the Provincial Agriculture Office of Misamis Oriental on product development on September 13.

The session, titled "Innovation on Wheels: Product Development using FoodtrIP," was held at the Misamis Oriental Center for Sustainable Development in Claveria.

The training was in line with the DoST's program to ensure regional food security by empowering human resources to produce products from the mobile processing facility.

The training was in conformity with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12, which ensures sustainable consumption and production patterns. Specifically, the training targeted SDG 12.3, which seeks to halve global food waste by 2030 by reducing food losses throughout the supply chain, including postharvest stages.

FoodtrIP is designed to convert surplus agricultural products into value-added goods, minimizing waste and promoting the sustainable use of resources.

By developing commercial-ready products such as dried fruits, vegetables and snacks from local crops, the project not only reduces food waste but also drives economic activity and supports agricultural productivity.

Former Technical Education and Skills Development Authority provincial director Leo Velez highlighted the importance of integrating innovation into agriculture and food production. In his message, he mentioned that the training would spark community economic activity and entrepreneurial growth, ultimately leading to more jobs.

FoodtrIP is a unique initiative designed by the DoST Industrial Technology Development Institute to provide mobile, modular food processing and development solutions.

The facility offers a flexible and accessible solution for farmers and food processors to develop viable commercial products from local produce, especially during surplus periods.

Erlyn Grace Aguilar of the Northern Mindanao Food Innovation Center led the training and delivered a comprehensive lecture on product development and its role in creating market-ready, innovative food products.

Evy Elago, division chief of the Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering Division, concluded the event by commending the participants for their dedication and active engagement throughout the training.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/10/03/regions/agriculture-workers-trained-in-product-devt/1978254>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

NFA to earn P557 million from sale of rice to government agencies

Ada Pelonia

October 2, 2024

The National Food Authority (NFA) is set to rake in P557.3 million in additional revenues from the hike in the price of rice sold to other agencies.

The NFA Council chaired by Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. earlier approved an increase in the selling price of rice to P38 a kilo from P25 per kilo to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and other government agencies.

“The higher selling price agreed to by the DSWD will help not only reduce NFA losses but also give it additional resources to buy more palay from our farmers,” Laurel said in a statement.

In 2023, NFA said it posted a net loss of P6.19 billion as it pursued its mandate to buy palay from local farmers to build a 9-day buffer stock of about 300,000 metric tons (MT) of rice.

NFA administrator Larry Lacson said the additional revenue would allow the grains agency to buy more palay from farmers that would boost the government corporation’s rice buffer and increase farmers’ income.

“At a buying price of P28 a kilo of palay the additional revenue from our sales to DSWD will allow us to buy an additional 400,000 50-kilo bags of palay. That’s easily 12,600 metric tons of incremental rice supply,” Lacson said. “We thank the DSWD for their understanding and support to this price adjustment.”

Lacson assured that the higher rice prices quoted to the DSWD, other relief agencies, and local government units (LGUs) would not have an impact on the market price of the national food staple.

Earlier this year, the NFA Council approved a higher buying price range of P17 to P30 a kilo from last year's P16 to P23 a kilo to allow the grains agency to compete with private traders who have driven prices higher due to El Niño and the lingering effect of India's rice export ban.

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

According to NFA, the adjustment in its palay procurement price has allowed the grains agency to purchase around 3.5 million 50-kilo bags of palay at the end of the first half, after only procuring less than 200,000 bags prior to the NFA Council decision to increase the buying price.

For this wet season, the NFA said it plans to buy between 6.4 million to 8.7 million bags of palay. It has sought from the Department of Budget and Management the immediate release of P9 billion of rice procurement funds, increasing its war chest to around P11 billion.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/02/nfa-to-earn-p557m-from-sale-of-rice-to-government-agencies/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Imported rice arrivals as of September hits 3.19MMT

Ada Pelonia
October 2, 2024

IMPORTED rice that arrived in the Philippines hit nearly 3.2 million metric tons (MMT) as of late September, higher than last year's import volume in the same period, according to data from the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI).

Figures from the BPI showed that 3.19 MMT of imported rice reached Philippine ports by September 26, which was higher than the 2.68 MMT recorded during the reference period.

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

Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said that following the trajectory of rice import arrivals, it would be possible to surpass the total imports recorded in the previous year.

"Most of the imports arrive during the last quarter so historically [and] statistically speaking, it might breach the 3.6 MMT last year," de Mesa told reporters in a briefing on Wednesday.

Earlier, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) adjusted downward its estimate of the Philippines's rice imports this year to 4.6 MMT from its previous forecast of 4.7 MMT on the back of slowing purchases of Vietnam rice.

However, the volume of rice shipments as of September 26 is less than half of what was covered by the sanitary and phytosanitary import clearances (SPSICs) issued by the attached agency of the Department of Agriculture (DA).

The BPI approved and issued 7,540 SPSICs for the purchase of 7.55 MMT of imported rice.

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

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

Meanwhile, of the volume that arrived in the Philippines, over 2.52 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 407,996.74 metric tons (MT).

BPI data also showed that the Philippines imported rice from other countries like Pakistan (157,564.48 MT), Myanmar (73,727 MT), and India (22,039.04 MT).

Bloomberg recently reported that India lifted its ban on non-basmati white rice shipments and set a minimum export price (MEP) of \$490 per metric ton (MT).

Roehlano Briones, a senior research fellow at the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) said this would “significantly” push down world and domestic rice prices. (See: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/01/india-easing-of-rice-exports-to-cool-down-global-prices/>)

“[This] will significantly lower world and domestic prices. However, the MEP will put a floor on the decline of export price,” Briones told the BusinessMirror.

University of Asia and the Pacific's Center for Food and Agribusiness (CFA) Executive Director Marie Annette Galvez-Dacul said that for the Philippines, India is a minor source of imports, which accounts for less than one percent of total imports.

“Considering that it is cheaper compared to Vietnam and Thailand, it can be an option for additional rice supply and import diversification,” she said.

Meanwhile, BPI data showed that BLY Agri Venture Trading led the 154 rice importers with a total volume of 220,146.99 MT.

Orison Free Enterprise Inc. trailed behind with 177,395.45 MT followed by Macman Rice and Corn Trading with 143,998.30 MT.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/02/imported-rice-arrivals-as-of-september-hits-3-19mmt/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Banana exporters pin hopes on FTA with UAE

Andrea E. San Juan

October 2, 2024

Local banana exporters are hoping that the Philippines's trade deal with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) will allow them to regain their market share in the Middle Eastern country.

Yvette Asunto of the Philippine Banana Growers and Exporters Association (PBGEA) raised the market access concern of banana exporters during the stakeholder consultation for the Philippines-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) on Wednesday.

“In 2021, our market share in UAE is 83 percent. Last year, it's down to 8.2 percent,” Asunto said, adding that Ecuador is now dominating the UAE market for bananas.

“I don't know if Ecuador is now enjoying zero [tariffs] but since they have secured our market, most likely bananas from Ecuador are imported at zero tariffs.”

She said, however, that bananas from the Philippines enter the UAE at zero tariffs.

“Actually, we're now the third top exporter in UAE. Ecuador is number 1 while India is number 2.”

For his part, Trade Undersecretary Allan B. Gepty said the Philippine trade negotiating team will look into the competitiveness of bananas in UAE.

“So basically, I think we checked (and) the MFN [most favored nation rate] for bananas is already at zero. If that is the case, the issue of competitiveness may be based on other factors, such as transportation cost or production cost,” he said.

“But definitely, we’ll look into this, how this FTA can address some of the concerns.

Let us know if you’re having difficulties in complying so we can factor that into our negotiations.”

According to Department of Trade and Industry-Export Marketing Bureau (EMB) Director Bianca Pearl R. Sykimte, the Philippines and UAE aim to exchange second requests and offers before the next negotiating round in the second half of October.

She said the two countries aim to conclude market access negotiations within the year. The Philippines and UAE exchanged initial request and offer lists in August.

The Philippines’s initial request covers 5,422 tariff lines for tariff elimination valued at \$548.7 million, of which 1,143 are agricultural and 4,279 are industrial.

For agricultural lines, Sykimte said products with substantial trade requested by the Philippines and offered by UAE for tariff elimination include fisheries, fresh fruit and nuts, pastry products and ingredients, processed fruit and vegetables, food and preparations.

Industrial lines include essential oils and cosmetic products, plastics and articles thereof, leather goods, garments/clothing articles, footwear, articles of stone and cement and similar materials, pearls and precious metals and stones, machinery and mechanical appliances, and electrical machinery and equipment and its parts.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/02/banana-exporters-pin-hopes-on-fta-with-uae/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

‘Prioritize hogs in backyard farms for free anti-ASF shots’

Jovee Marie N. de la Cruz

October 2, 2024

A senior lawmaker on Wednesday expressed support for the government’s plan to provide free African swine fever (ASF) vaccine to hogs from backyard farms, as this initiative is key to eradicating the deadly ASF, boosting local pork production, and eventually lowering prices.

Camarines Sur Rep. LRay Villafuerte, National Unity Party (NUP) president, noted that backyard hog raisers account for 70 percent to 80 percent of the country’s pork supply.

Villafuerte backed the Department of Agriculture’s (DA) plan to offer free vaccinations, following President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s directive to accelerate the vaccine rollout to curb the spread of ASF.

The Presidential Communications Office (PCO) recently reported that President Marcos, in a sectoral meeting, ordered the DA to fast-track the vaccine distribution to combat ASF and reduce food inflation.

“As I have proposed since last year, the government needs to shoulder the cost of the vaccines for small-scale or backyard raisers, considering that many of them are still reeling from the twin impacts of ASF, which resurfaced locally in 2019, and the three-year Covid-19 pandemic, and are thus in no position to pay for this extra medical expense amid their business losses,” Villafuerte said.

“Hence, I support this (livestock industry) proposal for the government to give priority to giving free anti-ASF shots to the hogs of backyard raisers as the DA, through its BAI (Bureau of Animal Industry), fast-tracks its vaccine rollout as ordered by the President.”

He also expressed support for involving local government units (LGUs) in speeding up the vaccine rollout by deputizing local vaccinators in ASF-affected areas.

As a former governor of Camarines Sur, one of the ASF-hit provinces, Villafuerte said there is a need to immediately implement the immunization program to restore the confidence of swine raisers in reinvesting in the industry.

Villafuerte cited the DA and the BAI for their initiatives to support the swine industry, such as the hog repopulation program under the Integrated National Swine Production Initiatives for Recovery and Expansion and the barangay-based ASF control system.

However, he noted that many backyard growers remain hesitant to reinvest fully in swine farming due to the persistent threat of ASF outbreaks and the absence of a readily available vaccine.

The DA is targeting a significant jump in the total hog population to 14 million, from the current 7.5 million head.

ASF is a viral disease infecting pigs with a fatality rate of up to 100 percent, and that has decimated swine industries worldwide since its resurgence, first in China, in 2018.

This disease was responsible for a 50-percent drop in our local swine population after ASF resurfaced in the Philippines in 2019 and devastated commercial pig farms and backyard raisers, causing an annual revenue loss of P100 billion for allied industries.

Because of the dwindling local supply, the retail prices of pork products went up to P400 a kilo and above by 2021, from the per-kilo average of P250 in 2019 and 2020.

As of October 1, DA's Bantay Presyo monitoring reported the per-kilo cost of pork liempo ranging from P310 to P395, and that of pork kasim at P270 to P370.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/02/prioritize-hogs-in-backyard-farms-for-free-anti-asf-shots/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Group: Penalize traders for unused rice import permits

Ada Pelonia
October 2, 2024

The government should penalize traders who will fail to use their rice import clearances, the Philippine Chamber of Agriculture and Food Inc. (PCAFI) said Wednesday.

PCAFI issued the statement after the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) recently released a report which indicated that the agency improved and issued 7,540 sanitary and phytosanitary import clearances (SPSICs) for the purchase of 7.55 million metric tons (MMT) of imported rice.

However, data from the attached agency of the Department of Agriculture (DA) showed that only 3.19 MMT of imported rice reached Philippine ports as of September 26.

“I think the traders that were given SPSICs who do not (use) the import permit that they were [given] should be penalized by collecting penalties for the unused permits,” PCAFI President Danilo Fausto told the BusinessMirror.

“This will discourage traders from speculating, manipulating, and taking advantage of price fluctuations (profiteering) to the disadvantage of consumers and farmer producers.”

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. earlier signed Memorandum Circular (MC) 35 which urged rice traders to “fully utilize” their applied SPSICs.

“The actual product/consignment must be shipped out within 60 days from the date the SPSIC is issued, regardless of the country of origin. This shipment is still subject to plant quarantine procedures at the port of entry upon arrival,” the circular read.

It added that traders may face sanctions and penalties for noncompliance.

“Low or no utilization of SPSICs may result in sanctions and penalties in accordance with the guidelines as this can create discrepancies in the forecasting being done in relation to the availability of rice supply.”

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

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

Reasons

Meanwhile, Laurel 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 directive of the government 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.”

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

“Basically, because (rice) is liberalized, we cannot really stop anyone from applying for an import permit,” Laurel said.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/02/group-penalize-traders-for-unused-rice-import-permits/>

ABANTE TONITE:

NFA rice taas-presyo sa P38 per kilo

October 2, 2024

Mas mahal nang ibebenta ng National Food Authority (NFA) ang bigas nito sa Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

Ayon sa Department of Agriculture (DA), P38 per kilo na ibebenta ang bigas sa DSWD mula sa P25 per kilo.

Ganoon na rin ang magiging presyo nito sa mga local government unit at relief agencies na bibili ng bigas sa NFA.

Sa kabila nito, sinabi ni NFA Administrator Larry Lacson na hindi nito dapat maapektuhan ang presyo ng bigas sa mga palengke dahil ang makakabili lamang ng P38 per kilong bigas ay ang DSWD, relief agencies, at mga lokal na pamahalaan.

Paliwanag ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr., mababawasan ang lugi ng NFA sa pagtaas ng presyo ng bigas nito.

Nabatid na noong 2023, umabot sa P6.19 bilyon ang lugi ng NFA dahil mahal nitong binibili ang palay sa mga magsasaka para magkaroon ng 300,000 toneladang bigas na sapat para sa siyam na araw na buffer stock.

Sabi ng DA, pumayag ang DSWD sa pagtaas ng presyo ng bigas mula sa NFA.

“The higher selling price agreed to by the DSWD will help not only reduce NFA losses but also give it additional resources to buy more palay from our farmers,” sabi ni Laurel. (Eileen Mencias)

<https://tonite.abante.com.ph/2024/10/02/nfa-rice-taas-presyo-sa-p38-per-kilo/>

REMATE:

Rice-for-All program patok sa publiko – sarbey

October 2, 2024 09:36



MANILA, Philippines- Tinukoy ang Rice-for-All program ng administrasyon, o ang pagbebenta ng mas murang bigas sa publiko, na “most approved” government initiative, base sa pinakabagong survey results mula sa political consultancy firm Publicus Asia.

Lumabas sa PAHAYAG survey, isinagawa mula Sept. 15 hanggang 19, 2024, na 82 porsyento ng respondents ang aprubado ang paglulunsad ng Rice-for-All program, na nakahanay sa layunin ni Pangulong Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. na tiyaking mayroong abot-kayang pagkain, partikular ang bigas, para sa bawat Pilipino.

Sa ilalim ng programa, ibinebenta ang mixed local at imported commercial well-milled rice sa halagang P45 kada kilo sa initial sites ng DA sa Food Terminal Inc. sa Taguig City; Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) sa Manila; Pantao Fisherfolks Consumer Cooperative (PFCC) sa Potrero, Malabon; at Llano Road sa Caloocan City.

Kasabay ang rollout nito ng large-scale trial ng P29 program ng DA o pagbebenta ng bigas ng National Food Authority (NFA) sa P29/kg sa vulnerable sector, kabilang ang mga miyembro ng Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), senior citizens, solo parents, at persons with disabilities (PWDs).

Lumabas din sa survey na nakakuha ang pagkahuli kay dismissed Bamban mayor Alice Guo ng 82 porsyentong approval rating.

Nakakuha naman ang panukalang pagbuwag sa Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators (POGOs) alinsunod sa utos ni Pangulong Marcos ng 79 porsyentong pag-apruba ng respondents.

Naniniwala ang 50 porsyento ng respondents na tinatahak ng bansa ang tamang direksyon, habang 29 porsyento ang nagsabing hindi sila sigurado sa kasalukuyang direksyon ng bansa, at 24 porsyento naman ang naghayag na patungo ang bansa sa maling direksyon.

Samantala, binanggit ng respondents ang korapsyon bilang pangunahing isyu na nais ng mga Pilipino na aksyunan ng pamahalaan.

“While the public’s concerns remain largely consistent, there is a notable shift in the ranking of these issues. Corruption now tops the list, reflecting a growing frustration with governance and accountability across different sectors of society,” anang pollster.

Gumamit ang nasabing survey ng purposive sampling na may 1,500 respondents na “randomly drawn” mula sa market research panel ng mahigit 200,000 registered Filipino voters. **RNT/SA**

<https://remate.ph/rice-for-all-program-patok-sa-publiko-sarbey/>

PEOPLE'S JOURNAL:

DOST trains 17 Misamis Oriental agri-personnel on product development

Wednesday, October 2, 2024 Journal Online



Group photo of the trainees of the “Innovation on Wheels: Product Development using FoodtrIP”

The **Department of Science and Technology** (DOST), with its Mobile Modular Food Processing Facility (MMFPF), or the Food on the Road Innovation Processing Facility (**FoodtrIP**), trained 17 personnel from the Provincial Agriculture Office (PAGRO) of Misamis Oriental on September 13, 2024.

The session, titled “Innovation on Wheels: Product Development using FoodtrIP,” was held at the Misamis Oriental Center for Sustainable Development (MOCSD) in Claveria.

This training aligns with DOST’s strategy to ensure regional food security by empowering human resources to produce products from the mobile processing facility. It also contributes to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12, which ensures sustainable consumption and production patterns. Specifically, the training targets SDG 12.3, which seeks to halve global food waste by 2030 by reducing food losses throughout the supply chain, including post-harvest stages.

FoodtrIP is designed to convert surplus agricultural products into value-added goods, minimizing waste and promoting the sustainable use of resources. By developing commercial-ready products such as dried fruits, vegetables, and snacks from local crops, the project not only reduces food waste but also drives economic activity and supports agricultural productivity.

Former TESDA Provincial Director Leo V. Velez highlighted the importance of integrating innovation into agriculture and food production. In his message, he mentioned that the training would spark community economic activity and entrepreneurial growth, ultimately leading to more jobs.



Trainees applying their learning on the production of dried squash inside the mobile food processing facility

FoodtrIP is a unique initiative designed by the DOST Industrial Technology Development Institute (DOST-ITDI) to provide mobile, modular food processing and development solutions. The mobile unit houses the processing facility, equipped with food processing technologies to support value-added activities for local agricultural products.

The facility offers a flexible and accessible solution for farmers and food processors to develop viable commercial products from local produce, especially during surplus periods.

Ms. Eryln Grace Aguilar of the Northern Mindanao Food Innovation Center (NMFIC) led the training. She delivered a comprehensive lecture on product development and its role in creating market-ready, innovative food products. The participants then put their learning into practice through hands-on activities, ensuring a practical experience.

Engr. Evy Elago, Division Chief of the Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering Division (ABE), concluded the event by commending the participants for their dedication and active engagement throughout the training. She emphasized the importance of continuous skills development in enhancing local food production, driving economic growth, and reducing agricultural waste.

This training is a testament to the unwavering commitment of the FoodtrIP to promoting sustainable food innovation in Misamis Oriental. By fostering product development through FoodtrIP, the project aims to enhance the skills and capacities of local stakeholders, contributing to the region's agricultural development and economic growth while supporting SDG 12 objectives. (*Jenalee S. Saydoquis/DOST 10*)

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About DOST-10

The Department of Science and Technology – Region 10 (DOST 10) envisions to be an effective and competent catalyst of inclusive development by providing world-class and innovative Science & Technology services in Region 10.

<https://journal.com.ph/dost-trains-17-misamis-oriental-agri-personnel-on-product-development/>