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MANILA BULLETIN:

Philippine inflation battle won, but risks remain—banks

BY [MANILA BULLETIN](#)

Oct 7, 2024 05:17 AM

By **DERCO ROSAL**

UK-based banking giant HSBC announced that the battle to control surging inflation in the country has been won.

“We think the BSP's [Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas] inflation battle is finally over,” the bank stated, following the sharp decline in inflation in September.

HSBC reported that inflation over the past four years has fallen below its forecast of 2.5 percent, signaling the end of the BSP's efforts to combat rising prices.

This “victory” is particularly significant given the drastic reductions from levels seen during the Covid-19 pandemic.

HSBC attributed this “victory” to a combination of “hard work and luck.” Notably, aggressive policy rate hikes by monetary authorities have played a role in curbing inflation, alongside initiatives by non-monetary authorities to reduce trade barriers on essential goods such as rice, coal, and pork.

The bank also cited the impact of fortunate circumstances, noting that lower global oil prices helped mitigate the effects of Typhoon “Enteng” in September. Additionally, a stronger peso helped alleviate supply disruptions, while stable rice prices contributed to a month-on-month decline in the headline Consumer Price Index (CPI).

While HSBC asserted that the inflation battle has been won, the Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) suggests that the fight is over—for now.

“Inflation may have reached its lowest point this year, with a potential rebound expected in the final three months of 2024 as favorable base effects fade,” the BPI said.

Forces against inflation’s further drop

Although it could remain below three percent barring supply shocks, risks like La Niña and African Swine Fever (ASF) could push prices up, the local bank said.

The country’s inflation “remains sensitive to climate conditions, and another extreme weather event could trigger a spike,” the BPI stressed.

Political landscape can also be factored in as escalating Middle East tensions could negatively impact future levels.

Alongside this, Singapore-based United Overseas Bank (UOB) noted that the new 12 percent value-added tax (VAT) on digital services in the Philippines will slightly offset the expected decline in inflation.

Its impact, however, may not be felt until the first quarter of 2025 as implementing guidelines are still underway.

Heightened risk of more rate cuts

Although HSBC was not able to give a rate cut forecast for the next months, it is now convinced that the 1.9 percent inflation rate is largely increasing “the risk of more than one policy rate cut in the remaining two Monetary Board meetings this year.”

The central bank initially signaled just one rate cut for 2024, but with easing inflation, there's now growing potential for cuts in both October and December, as hinted by Governor Remolona's recent statement.

Agreeing to HSBC, the BPI also expects the likelihood of continued policy rate cuts this year and additional reductions in 2025, lowering to 4.5 percent.

“While we expect more monetary easing, it is unlikely that the BSP will adopt an aggressive approach,” the BPI said, noting the uncertainties and inflation risks from supply constraints and geopolitical factors, preventing rates from falling to the past decade's lows.

Meanwhile, plans to cut the Reserve Requirement Ratio (RRR) are in place, aiming to infuse liquidity into the banking system.

However, HSBC expects that its immediate impact on inflation is expected to be minimal, as the central bank will likely reabsorb most of the liquidity using its monetary tools.

https://mb.com.ph/2024/10/7/philippine-inflation-battle-won-but-risks-remain-banks#google_vignette

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

PPA tells importers: Stop using ports for storage

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

October 8, 2024 | 12:00am



In a recent radio interview, PPA general manager Jay Santiago said several importers deliberately delay the withdrawal of their containers to save up on costs.

BusinessWorld / File

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) has warned importers against using ports as warehouses to avoid paying more for storage fees, asking them to pull their shipments out as soon as possible to prevent yard congestion.

In a recent radio interview, PPA general manager Jay Santiago said several importers deliberately delay the withdrawal of their containers to save up on costs.

At present, the PPA collects a storage handling fee of only P700 per day, a rate Santiago said is lower as opposed to stowage in a private warehouse.

An importer who parked a container in a port for 30 days would pay just P30,000. Santiago said such an amount pales in comparison to the value of goods inside the container, which runs up to millions of pesos at times.

Given this, Santiago said the PPA is working with the Bureau of Customs to assess how they can discourage the exploitation of ports as warehouses. He underscored the urgency to eliminate the practice, as ports are designed to move, not store, cargo.

“We are coordinating with Customs [on how to compel] importers not to delay the filing of their importation entry, and we are slowly reviewing our processes in the PPA,” Santiago said.

Lately, the PPA has observed that a number of traders are waiting for a month before they apply for import entries for containers that are already unloaded in the ports.

Once an import entry is filed with the Customs, only then can the agency facilitate the clearance for a shipment, after which the importer has 30 days to get the cargo, or else it would be deemed condemned.

The PPA wants importers, particularly of agricultural products, to pull out their containers from the ports as fast as possible during the holiday leadup. In line with this, the agency has written a letter to the Department of Agriculture naming importers who failed to withdraw their farm shipments from the Port of Manila as of September.

Broken down, the port has an inventory of 135 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) of pork, 101 TEUs of chicken and 24 TEUs of onions. Further, the PPA has found 21 containers of pork waiting at the port for more than 30 days, with five exceeding 1,000 days in the facility.

Likewise, the PPA has uncovered 22 containers of chicken that were already cleared by Customs but are still parked in the port for over 30 days, with 12 of them now going over 600 days.

Santiago hopes that these overstaying cargoes would be minimized during the Christmas stretch to avert artificial increases in market prices at a time when consumer demand usually peaks.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/10/08/2390823/ppa-tells-importers-stop-using-ports-storage>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Tap dairy agency in milk feeding program, DepEd urged

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

October 8, 2024 | 12:00am



In a letter to Education Secretary Sonny Angara, National Federation of Dairy Farmers and Stakeholders' Association (Dairy NatFed) president Danilo Fausto said tapping the NDA would make the DepEd's program more efficient. He said the implementation of the program should be returned to the NDA.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — A group of dairy producers has asked the Department of Education to include the National Dairy Authority (NDA) in the implementation of DepEd's P2-billion milk feeding program.

In a letter to Education Secretary Sonny Angara, National Federation of Dairy Farmers and Stakeholders' Association (Dairy NatFed) president Danilo Fausto said tapping the NDA would make the DepEd's program more efficient. He said the implementation of the program should be returned to the NDA.

“Delegating the program to the NDA will relieve DepEd staff and public school teachers of administrative duties and allow them to concentrate on their teaching mandate,” Fausto said.

He said members of the Dairy NatFed met with Angara on Sept. 4 and discussed the group’s proposal of allowing the NDA and the Philippine Carabao Center (PCC) to undertake the milk feeding program.

Fausto said Angara did not object to the proposal as long as the arrangement complies with existing laws.

“We were delighted to know that you interpose no objection to our request as long as it will be allowed under existing laws since this will relieve DepEd of administrative duties and allow it to concentrate on its mandate of educating and teaching our children,” Fausto said in the letter.

Republic Act 11037, or the Masustansyang Pagkain Para sa Batang Pilipino Act, mandates concerned government agencies to cooperate with the Department of Agriculture, NDA, PCC and Cooperative Development Authority for the incorporation of fresh milk and fresh milk-based products in fortified meals and cycle menu, pursuant to RA 8172 or the Philippine Fortification Act of 2000.

“It is very clear under the law that the NDA has the mandate to implement the milk feeding program of the government. The old modality of having the NDA and the PCC implementing the feeding program created an unwanted competition between cooperative farmers being managed by these agencies,” Fausto said.

He said the DepEd has P2 billion in funding this year for the milk feeding component of its school-based program.

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2024/10/08/2390854/tap-dairy-agency-milk-feeding-program-deped-urged>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Super Typhoon Julian damage to agriculture at P607.38 million

[Pia Lee-Brago](#), [Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

October 8, 2024 | 12:00am



According to the DA's operations' center, as of 8 a.m. yesterday, the losses reported were for rice, corn, high-value crops, livestock and poultry, irrigation and agricultural facilities in the Cordillera Administrative Region, Ilocos Region (Region 1), Cagayan Valley (Region 2) and Central Luzon (Region 3).

PNA photo by Hilda Austria

MANILA, Philippines — The damage of Super Typhoon Julian to the agriculture sector in four regions has ballooned to P607.38 million, according to the Department of Agriculture.

According to the DA's operations' center, as of 8 a.m. yesterday, the losses reported were for rice, corn, high-value crops, livestock and poultry, irrigation and agricultural facilities in the Cordillera Administrative Region, Ilocos Region (Region 1), Cagayan Valley (Region 2) and Central Luzon (Region 3).

The DA said production loss reached 25,407 metric tons covering 17,344 hectares of agricultural areas and affecting 33,110 farmers.

“The volume of production losses from the affected agricultural areas is estimated at 21,875 MT for palay, 2,778 MT for corn and 755 MT for high-value crops,” the DA said.

Based on the report of the DA, the bulk of the damage or about 70 percent was recorded with rice totaling P427.65 million covering 14,950 hectares, followed by irrigation facilities at P92.68 million.

Meanwhile, the damage to corn plantations reached P38.95 million affecting 2,036 hectares; high-value crops, P31.13 million affecting 358 hectares; agricultural infrastructure, P13.22 million and livestock and poultry, P3.76 million.

According to the DA, at least P166.67 million worth of agricultural inputs, like rice, corn and vegetable seeds were distributed to the affected farmers.

The DA said affected farmers can avail themselves of the P25,000 loanable amount from the Survival and Recovery Loan Program of the Agricultural Credit Policy Council payable in three years at zero interest.

The DA said the Philippine Crop Insurance Corp. is ready to indemnify the affected farmers.

“As field assessments and validations continue, further damage and losses are expected in the affected regions, particularly on palay and high value crops in Cagayan Valley,” the DA said.

Batanes relief

Government agencies and uniformed services are actively working on relief efforts in typhoon-hit Batanes, the Office of Civil Defense said yesterday.

OCD administrator Ariel Nepomuceno said it is working with various government bodies and uniformed services to support the victims of Super Typhoon Julian in Batanes, which is currently under a state of calamity due to the storm’s devastating impact.

“We remain committed to assisting the affected communities in Batanes as they recover from Super Typhoon Julian. President Marcos and our NDRRMC (National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council) chair, Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro, are closely monitoring the situation and guiding response efforts to address the aftermath of this disaster,” Nepomuceno said.

Along with officials of the Department of Social Welfare and Development and Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development, Nepomuceno conducted an aerial inspection of Batanes and met with Gov. Marilou Cayco to assess the situation on Oct. 3.

President Marcos arrived the following day for a meeting with local government officials to further evaluate the province's needs.

National government officials were directed to collaborate on enhancing rehabilitation efforts.

During the briefing, Teodoro gave assurance that construction materials would be provided to families whose homes were damaged.

The Office of the President has extended over P42.78 million in financial assistance to the Batanes local government unit.

Two KC-130J Hercules aircraft from the United States III Marine Expeditionary Force arrived at the Villamor Air Base on Saturday to transport essential relief supplies to Laoag Airport for the typhoon victims in Batanes.

Due to the aircraft's weight, which poses a risk of damaging the runway in Batanes, a direct flight to the province was not feasible.

The relief goods will be transferred from Laoag to Batanes using US MV-22 Ospreys and CH-53 helicopters.

As of Sunday, three batches of relief supplies have been delivered to Laoag on US aircraft, with the final batch scheduled for departure yesterday.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/10/08/2390885/super-typhoon-julian-damage-agriculture-p60738-million>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Poultry raisers suffering losses as chicken farmgate price drops

[Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

October 8, 2024 | 12:00am



In this undated photo shows a poultry owner harvest chicken eggs to be sold in local market in San Jose del Monte Bulacan.

Philstar.com / Jovannie Lambayan

MANILA, Philippines — Poultry raisers continue to suffer losses as the farmgate price of chicken has dropped to P98 per kilo, but the retail cost remains high at P230 per kilo.

In a radio interview yesterday, United Broiler Raisers Association (UBRA) chairman emeritus Gregorio San Diego said the production cost of farmers ranged between P110 and P115 per kilo.

“The farmgate price (of chicken) keeps on dropping. Last Saturday, in Bulacan, the farmgate price reached P98 (per kilo). The poultry raisers are suffering,” San Diego said.

He added that despite the continued decrease in the farmgate price of chicken, poultry raisers have no control over the retail price in the markets.

“It (retail price) is market-dictated. The demand (for chicken) remains low as people don’t have money. The demand did not increase. There should be a shift to chicken because of the disease on pigs,” San Diego said, referring to the outbreaks of African swine fever.

He noted that the price of chicken is pegged at P58 per head.

“It was only P22 (per head) before. It represents 26 percent of our production cost. Our production cost ranged from P110 to P115 per kilo,” San Diego added.

He said the Department of Agriculture (DA) should act on the overpriced retail cost of chicken.

“The increase should only be 69 percent of the farmgate price. The DA should call the attention of those (who are involved in overpricing),” San Diego said.

Based on monitoring of the DA in Metro Manila markets, the retail price of whole chicken ranged between P170 and P230 per kilo.

San Diego said that local poultry raisers are also affected by the flooding of imported frozen chicken in the country.

He said that at least 480 million kilos of frozen chicken are expected to be imported in 2025.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/10/08/2390894/poultry-raisers-suffering-losses-chicken-farmgate-price-drops>

DA urged to halt fish import this October

Philstar.com

October 7, 2024 | 6:37pm



A worker checks vats of galunggong at the Navotas Fishport yesterday.

Michael Varcas

MANILA, Philippines — A fishers group called on the Department of Agriculture (DA) to suspend the importation of 35,000 metric tons of galunggong and other fish this October and provide financial assistance to the traders.

Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (PAMALAKAYA) said that local fisherfolk would suffer more financially as they had already depressed the farmgate rates to compete with the market prices of the imported fish.

“Giit namin sa DA na huwag ituloy ang planong importasyon, at maglaan na lamang ng signipikanteng pondo para sa pagpapalakas ng lokal na produksyon, tulad ng subsidyo sa mga mangingisda,” PAMALAKAYA vice chairperson Ronnel Arambulo said in a statement.

(We call on the DA to suspend the planned importation and instead allot significant fund to boost the local production, such as the subsidy for fishermen)

The fisherfolk group previously reported that some traders lowered the prices to P100 per kilogram for galunggong (mackerel scad) and P80 per kilogram for bonito.

It also pointed out that imported fish may have come from the Philippine waters, as the DA planned to source it from Vietnam and China.

According to Arambulo, both nations fish in the country's major open seas, such as in Mindoro and Palawan provinces, and the West Philippine Sea.

“Malaki ang posibilidad na ang aangat nating isda mula sa China at Vietnam ay nanggaling [din] sa sarili nating pangisdaan... Malaking insulto ito sa atin bilang isang bansang arkipelago,” Arambulo, also a Makabayan senatorial candidate, stated.

(There's a huge possibility that the imported fish will come from China and Vietnam will also come from our own country... This is a huge insult to us as an archipelago)

He also called for the consumers to harbor local fish and reject the imported ones.

The thousand metric tons of galunggong and other fish are expected to arrive in the third week of this month. — **Intern, Bianca Ysabelle Abrencillo**

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/10/07/2390829/da-urged-halt-fish-import-october>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

DA: Hog vaccination so far yielding positive results

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

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 02:09 AM October 08, 2024



Agriculture Assistant Secretary Constante Palabrica —Jordeene B. Lagare

The Department of Agriculture (DA) is targeting to accelerate the inoculation of hogs against the deadly African swine fever (ASF) following a positive response from those so far tested.

In an interview on Monday, Agriculture Assistant Secretary Constante Palabrica said the department was studying strategies on how to expand the vaccination to cover as many pigs as possible.

The government is ready to purchase 500,000 doses from Vietnam this month, and 100,000 more before the end of the year.

He said protocols in administering the vaccines, including selecting the pigs for study and getting their blood samples, have so far slowed down the program.

“It will take, on average, three weeks,” the agriculture official said, referring to the timeline from choosing the hogs to the actual vaccination.

Nearly 400 hogs in two towns in Batangas have been inoculated by the agency so far.

The DA initially vaccinated 41 hogs in Lobo town—the ground zero for the ASF resurgence—on Aug. 30. Over the weekend, the vaccination program was extended to grower pigs at the International Training Center on Pig Husbandry, a government training center in Lipa City.

The Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) reported the pigs in Lobo exhibited an average enzyme-linked immunoassay (Elisa) percentage blocking of 90 percent after receiving the vaccines.

The BAI explained the pigs were now building a strong immune defense against the ASF based on the Elisa test, which measures their antibody levels in response to vaccination.

“In veterinary, we call it zero conversion. It means the pig’s body is converting the vaccine into antibody,” Palabrica said.

He said they expected herd immunity of Batangas hogs to reach at least 95 percent in the next 30 days.

“We want to show to the public that the government is confident about the effectivity of the vaccines. This is also optics ... we want the antivaxxers to see that it’s effective,” he told reporters.

ASF, a highly contagious viral disease afflicting domestic and wild pigs, has affected the local hog industry since 2019, sustaining billions of pesos in losses.

According to the World Organization for Animal Health, while the animal disease is not considered a danger to human health, it can have devastating effects on pig populations and the livelihood of farmers and food security, in general.

In the Philippines, there are active cases in 14 regions and 30 provinces, based on the BAI's tally as of Oct. 2.

Infected provinces were parts of Abra, Ifugao, Kalinga, Ilocos Sur, La Union, Cagayan, Isabela, Tarlac, Batangas, Cavite, Laguna, Quezon, Rizal, Occidental Mindoro, Oriental Mindoro, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur and Catanduanes.

Other affected provinces were Masbate, Sorsogon, Negros Occidental, Biliran, Samar, Zamboanga del Norte, North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Sur and Maguindanao del Norte.

<https://business.inquirer.net/483919/da-hog-vaccination-so-far-yielding-positive-results>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Julian damage to agriculture now at P607M

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 04:55 AM October 08, 2024



WASHED OUT A temporary bridge connecting Barangay Nalasin to the town center of Solsona in Ilocos Norte is destroyed by floodwaters caused by heavy rains dumped by Supertyphoon Julian on Monday. —Photo from Alfonso Jeziel de los Reyes/contributor

MANILA, Philippines — The damage to the country's farm sector due to Supertyphoon Julian (international name: Krathon) has reached P607.38 million based on the bulletin issued by the Department of Agriculture (DA) on Monday.

The figure was 10.1 percent

The number of affected farmers in the regions of Cordillera, Cagayan Valley and Ilocos numbered 33,110 while 25,407 metric tons of agricultural commodities were damaged, spanning 17,344 hectares of land.

Rice accounted for the majority of the damage at 70 percent or P427.65 million of the total. Infrastructure was next at P100 million, of which P92.68 million were irrigation facilities. —*Jordeene B. Lagare*

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1990687/julian-damage-to-agriculture-now-at-p607m>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Ampalaya now a real bitter pill to treat diabetes

By: [Dexter Cabalza](#) - Reporter / [@dexcabalzaINQ](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:05 AM October 08, 2024



INQUIRER.net stock images

MANILA, Philippines — After decades of studies, researchers of the University of the Philippines Manila (UPM) have developed a medicinal tablet made from ampalaya or bitter melon, to be used as treatment for Type 2 diabetes.

The research teams of the Institute of Herbal Medicine (IHM) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) at UPM focused on powdered ampalaya leaves, which demonstrated significant potential in lowering blood sugar levels.

Ampalaya (*Momordica charantia*) is rich in bioactive compounds, including polypeptide-p, a protein similar to the insulin produced by the pancreas that reduces glucose level in the body.

“Our studies have shown that the ampalaya tablet can produce a significant reduction in blood sugar levels, comparable to the drug glibenclamide,” said professor Daisy-Mae Bagaoisan, a pharmacist and research assistant professor at NIH-IHM.

“The tablet has undergone rigorous clinical trials (Phases 1 to 3) and has been found to effectively reduce fasting plasma glucose by the third week of treatment and decrease glycosylated hemoglobin after 12 weeks,” she added.

The ampalaya tablet they had developed is also “very safe, with no known side effects.”

“It has been formulated according to WHO (World Health Organization) guidelines and is stable at room temperature for at least one and a half years, Moreover, it is very safe, making it a viable option for those seeking a herbal remedy with no known side effects,” Bagaoisan said.

‘Scientifically validated’

What sets the researchers’ ampalaya tablet apart from other such products in the market is that it is classified as a “herbal medicine,” not just a “herbal supplement.”

Unlike those supplements, which are marketed “without therapeutic claims,” according to their labels, herbal medicines are rigorously tested for safety and efficacy and are regulated by health authorities like the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

“This tablet has undergone extensive clinical trials and is proven to have a therapeutic effect on blood sugar levels. This distinction ensures that the ampalaya tablet offers a superior, scientifically validated option for managing type 2 diabetes,” Bagaoisan said.

Diabetes, particularly non-insulin dependent diabetes mellitus, is a growing health concern worldwide, especially in low and middle-income countries like the Philippines.

In 2021, an estimated 4.3 million Filipinos were diagnosed with diabetes while 2.8 million remained undiagnosed. Diabetes is also the top cause of preventable blindness and kidney diseases.

“Our research on the ampalaya tablet offers a natural alternative that could complement current treatments for managing this condition,” Bagaoisan said.

“The rising prevalence of diabetes, exacerbated by factors such as obesity and lifestyle changes, underscores the need for effective and accessible treatments. Bitter may indeed be better when it comes to managing diabetes,” she added.

Medicinal plants

Ampalaya is among the 10 Filipino medicinal plants studied under the National Integrated Research Program on Medicinal Plants in 1974.

Under the program, inexpensive medicines are required to be distributed to the poor.

In 1992, the Department of Health circulated a list of “10 scientifically validated” medicinal plants, which are akapulco, ampalaya, bawang, bayabas, lagundi, niyug-niyogan, sambong, tsaang gubat, ulasimang bato and yerba buena.

Pharmaceutical companies and technology adopters who are interested about the ampalaya tablet may email Dr. Cecilia Maramba-Lazarte, director of NIH-IHM, through nih.ihm@gmail.com.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1990686/ampalaya-now-a-real-bitter-pill-to-treat-diabetes>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Lipa City to be next focus of ASF vaccination campaign in Batangas

October 7, 2024 | 9:33 pm



PEXELS-BARBARA BARBOSA

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) on Monday said that it has expanded its controlled African Swine Fever (ASF) vaccine rollout in Batangas to Lipa City.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary for Poultry and Swine Constante J. Palabrica said that the DA started vaccinating about 300 to 350 hogs at the government-controlled International Training Center on Pig Husbandry in Lipa last week.

“We just vaccinated the grower hogs last Saturday; after 14 days we will check their blood if antibodies have developed,” Mr. Palabrica told reporters.

He said that about 500,000 ASF vaccine doses will be procured this month, while about 150,000 more are awaiting purchase orders.

They started the emergency inoculation of hogs in August in Lobo, Batangas, following a resurgence of ASF in the province. About 10,000 vials were allocated for the exercise, which is expected to be completed by the end of October.

The Food and Drug Administration granted the AVAC ASF Live Vaccine from Vietnam a Certificate of Product Registration for controlled government use, with commercial availability expected to follow.

“Our challenge now is how to conduct the mass vaccination. That’s what we are trying to study,” Mr. Palabrica said.

He added that it takes an average of three weeks to conduct blood testing on hogs before they can be given the ASF vaccine. The development of antibodies against the virus is expected to take a few weeks.

As of Oct. 2, 122 municipalities across 30 provinces had active ASF cases, according to the Bureau of Animal Industry. The first ASF case was detected in 2019.

The provinces with the highest number of active cases were North Cotabato with 131, Quezon 98, Batangas 72, Camarines Sur 43, and La Union 35.

Mr. Palabrica said the DA is also targeting 80% herd immunity against the ASF by inoculating about 5 million hogs in Batangas. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/10/07/626341/lipa-city-to-be-next-focus-of-asf-vaccination-campaign-in-batangas/>

REMATE:

2024 national livestock and poultry month, inilunsad ng DA

October 7, 2024 18:25



MANILA, Philippines – Inilunsad ng Department of Agriculture (DA) nitong Lunes, Oktubre 7, ang National Livestock and Poultry Month sa punong tanggapan nito sa Quezon City.

Bunsod nito, binibigyang-diin ng inisyatiba na ito ang pangako ng DA sa pagpapahusay ng seguridad sa pagkain, pagbibigay-kapangyarihan sa mga magsasaka, at pagtataguyod ng pagpapanatili sa loob ng sektor ng mga hayop at manok.

Sa temang “Masaganang Paghahayupan Tungo sa Bagong Pilipinas,” sinabi ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, Jr. na ang inisyatiba ay nakaayon sa layunin ng administrasyon na gawing globally competitive ang sektor ng agrikultura. Tinugunan niya ang matitinding hamon tulad ng mga transboundary na sakit sa hayop, pagbabago ng klima, natural na sakuna, at pabagubagong presyo sa merkado na nagdudulot ng malaking banta sa industriya.

Sa mga pahayag na ibinigay ni Undersecretary for Livestock Deogracias Savellano, binalangkas ni Sec. Tiu Laurel ang mga pangunahing hakbang na ipinapatupad ng DA upang harapin ang mga kagyat na isyu, kabilang ang African Swine Fever (ASF) at Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI).

Kaugnay nito nanawagan ang DA chief para sa pagkakaisa sa loob ng sektor ng agrikultura upang iangkop ang mga bagong teknolohiya at pinakamahusay na kasanayan sa agham ng hayop at magsikap para sa isang self-sustaining industriya ng agrikultura. “Dapat tayong patuloy na magtulungan upang makasabay sa mabilis na pag-unlad,” sabi niya.

Samantala nagpahayag din siya ng pasasalamat sa mga empleyado ng DA, mga magsasaka, at mga pinuno ng industriya para sa kanilang hindi natitinag na dedikasyon, na kinikilala ang kanilang mahalagang papel sa pagkamit ng mga layunin ng agrikultura ng administrasyon. “Sa pamamagitan lamang ng sama-samang pangako natin masisiguro ang paglago at tagumpay ng ating sektor ng agrikultura,” pagtatapos ni Kalihim Tiu Laurel.

Ang 2024 National Livestock and Poultry Month ay magaganap mula Oktubre 7 hanggang 11, na nagtatampok ng iba’t ibang programa at seminar na nakatuon sa industriya ng hayop at manok sa Pilipinas. *Santi Celario*

<https://remate.ph/2024-national-livestock-and-poultry-month-inilunsad-ng-da/>

REMATE:

P2M sariwang sibuyas galing China, kinumpiska ng BOC

October 7, 2024 08:31



MANILA, Philippines – KINUMPISKA ng mga tauhan ng Bureau of Customs (BOC) Port of Manila ang nasa P2 milyon halaga ng tinatayang nasa 25,000 kilo ng sariwang sibuyas na inangkat mula sa bansang Tsina.

Ayon sa BOC, sa isinagawang beripikasyon ay nakumpirma nila na ang kargamento ay kulang sa kinakailangang Sanitary and Phytosanitary Import Clearance (SPSIC) mula sa Department of Agriculture – Bureau of Plant Industry (DA-BPI), na humantong sa pagpapalabas ng Warrant of Seizure and Detention laban dito.

Nabatid na ang isinagawang inspeksyon ay pinangunahan ng BOC-POM kasama ang mga opisyal mula sa Department of Agriculture – Bureau of Plant Industry (DA-BPI), kabilang ang Plant Quarantine.

Pinuri naman ni Commissioner Bienvenido Y. Rubio ang pagsisikap ng BOC-POM na labanan ang agricultural smuggling.

“By rigorously enforcing import regulations, we not only shield our citizens from unsafe agricultural products but also enhance public trust and ensure the integrity of our nation’s food supply,” ani Rubio. *JAY Reyes*

<https://remate.ph/p2m-sariwang-sibuyas-galing-china-kinumpiska-ng-boc/>

MANILA STANDARD:

Coconut promotion.



By Manila Standard

October 7, 2024, 11:02 pm

Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Secretary Cris Aldeguer-Roque meets with the Market Development Bureau on leveraging digital campaigns and collaborating with content creators to promote coconut products, aiming for a wider reach among Filipinos. The DTI highlighted the significance of coconut, which accounts for 35 percent of the Philippines' agricultural exports, positioning the country as the second-largest coconut producer in the world.

<https://www.manilastandard.net/gallery/314507500/coconut-promotion.html>

THE MANILA TIMES:

Refined sugar imports plunge to 66,325 MT

By Janine Alexis Miguel

October 8, 2024

IMPORTED refined sugar dramatically dropped to 66,325 metric tons (MT) from the 730,430 MT a year earlier, as raw sugar stocks from 2023 remain at a comfortable level, according to data from the Foreign Agricultural Service of the United States Department of Agriculture (FAS-USDA) in Manila.

For 2025, the agency said it sees no importation of raw sugar as the Philippine government moves to protect local producers.

Exports, meanwhile, are projected to reach 25,000 MT in line with the US tariff quota. "There are likely no additional exports after the September shipment as Sugar Order No. 1 allocates all production to domestic consumption," the USDA said.

There is likewise no anticipated shortage of raw sugar at the start of marketing year 2024 due to stable carryover stocks from the previous year and because stocks continue to be high at the start of the milling season. November is usually the period in which production can meet the monthly demand. Raw physical stocks in 2024 doubled to 394,786 MT, while withdrawals have been slow, an indication of lower sugar demand.

The USDA also projected local sugar output to hit 1.85 million MT for marketing year 2025, higher than the Sugar Regulatory Administration's (SRA) forecast of 1.78 million MT. The agency

attributed the high estimates to the expansion in plantation areas and improvements in weather conditions from the previous El Niño.

"SRA's initial announcements of production decrease of at least 10 to 15 percent, depending on the severity of El Niño, did not happen but rather helped to have higher sugar recovery from harvested cane," the USDA said. Latest reports showed sugarcane-growing areas covering 26 mill districts in 20 provinces in the Philippines. Negros, Panay, Cebu and Leyte in the Visayas remain the top sugar producers, with Negros accounting for 61 percent of total production areas nationwide. Of the total area, 97 percent are allotted to refined sugar and 3 percent to bioethanol production.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/10/08/business/top-business/refined-sugar-imports-plunge-to-66325-mt/1980474>

THE MANILA TIMES:

SRA rues bad start for sugar industry

By Eugene Y. Adiong

October 7, 2024

BACOLOD CITY — The Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) said there is not much to expect from the new sugar crop year.

SRA administrator Pablo Luis Azcona said on Friday that the sugar production in the first three weeks of milling (which began on September 15) was 96 percent lower compared to the same period last year.

"It's really not a good start and the sugar yield is 15 percent low," laments Azcona.

Data showed only 5,645 tons of sugar were produced since the sugar milling year started on September 15, a far cry from the 134,780 tons produced in the first three weeks of the milling season last year.

"There's a big difference. In the beginning, a lot of mills and sugar associations were claiming that they were ready to mill, but very little sugarcane went into the mills," noted Azcona.

As of crop year 2023-2024, 13 out of the 25 sugar mills in the country are in Negros Island, including nine in Negros Occidental, the country's top sugar-producing province.

"Prices have been stable. Retail prices, which are important for consumers, are also stable," said Azcona.

He noted that the farmers may have not yet been ready to mill as they feel that their sugarcane is still growing, and they could expect more yield if they delay milling a little bit more.

"We really anticipated a low start because of El Niño," admitted Azcona.

The peak of the sugar milling season is expected to take off between the last week of October and the first week of November, he added.

Nevertheless, the sugar supply, he said, is stable, with farmers producing raw sugar and imported refined sugar coming in. The milling last year started September 15.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/10/07/regions/sra-rues-bad-start-for-sugar-industry/1979871>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Regional ports unload 16.73% less fish in August

[Ada Pelonia](#)
[October 8, 2024](#)

REGIONAL ports registered lower fish unloading volume in August due to unpredictable rainfall conditions and closed fishing season, according to the Philippine Fisheries Development Authority (PFDA).

Data from the PFDA showed the fish unloading volume in August slid by 16.73 percent to 42,354.45 metric tons (MT) from the previous month's 50,862.42 MT.

“Amid inclement weather and closed fishing season, the PFDA RFPs remain committed to providing clients and stakeholders with a steady supply of fishery products,” the agency said in a statement.

PFDA said the General Santos Fish Port Complex delivered the highest unloading volume amounting to 19,718.79 MT of fish. However, this was lower than the 25,205.76 MT recorded in July.

The Navotas Fish Port Complex trailed at 15,809.70 MT of fish “despite weather disturbances and the onset of the lean season.” The largest RFP in the country unloaded 17,765.673 MT of fish last month.

The country's sole Visayas port, Iloilo Fish Port Complex, had a “minor setback” owing to prolonged weather disturbance in the Western Visayas area, but it delivered 2,724.86 MT of fish. The port delivered 3,053.05 MT of fish products to consumers in July.

The agency said Lucena Fish Port Complex also faced a “minor slump” at 1,669.05 MT of fish as typhoon activities and the Habagat season affected fishing operations. It registered 1,793.07 MT of unloaded fish in the previous month.

July to September is the lean fishing season in Tayabas Bay, according to the PFDA.

Meanwhile, the agency noted that Bulan Fish Port Complex also experienced inclement weather conditions brought by local thunderstorms and low-pressure areas as it distributed 1,328.10 MT of fish. It recorded 1,785.20 MT in July.

Zamboanga Fish Port Complex, which unloaded 944.27 MT of fish, experienced a “slight slowdown” brought by the inclement weather conditions and the decrease in the arrival of commercial fishing vessels and municipal fishing boats.

Even with the closed fishing season in the Davao Gulf, the PFDA said the Davao Fish Port Complex delivered 123.783 MT of fish. It noted that the closed fishing season ended last August 31.

Due to bad weather in their fishing ground in the West Philippine Sea, Sual Fish Port experienced a slight setback as it collected 35.7 MT of fish.

Camaligan Fish Port delivered 0.21 MT of fish due to weather disturbances throughout August. It delivered 0.271 MT of fish products to consumers in July.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/08/regional-ports-unload-16-73-less-fish-in-august/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Dairy agency asks Angara: Revert milk feeding to NDA

Ada Pelonia
October 8, 2024

THE National Dairy Authority (NDA) urged Education Secretary Juan Edgardo “Sonny” Angara to revert the implementation of the milk feeding program to the agency.

According to NDA Administrator Marcus Antonius Andaya, they already met with the Department of Education (DepEd) chief.

“They’re already studying reverting the procurement of milk used in the milk feeding program back to NDA,” Andaya told reporters, speaking in Filipino, on the sidelines of the opening ceremony of the national livestock and poultry month on Monday.

“We know where the best and most abundant sources of milk are. This will also ease the work of DepEd,” he said in Filipino.

The National Federation of Dairy Farmers and Stakeholders’ Association (Dairy NatFed) also said that delegating the program back to NDA would relieve the DepEd of administrative duties and allow them to concentrate on their teaching mandate.

The group said it recently met with Angara who “expressed no objection to the proposal, as long as the arrangement complies with existing laws.”

During the discussion, the group noted that Government Procurement Policy Board (GPPB) Executive Director Rowena Candice Ruiz clarified that Republic Act 11037 allows for such delegation if it aligns with the mandate of the government agency.

“It is very clear in the law that the NDA has the mandate to implement the milk feeding program of the government,” Dairy NatFed President Danilo Fausto said in a statement.

Fausto noted that to have an “effective and smooth implementation,” he requested to delegate to the NDA the implementation of the milk feeding program which is currently being done through the DepEd.

“[This is] provided, however, that the PCC [Philippine Carabao Center] managed dairy cooperatives will be allowed equal treatment to participate in the program under NDA in accordance with their production capacities.”

Import dairy cattle

Meanwhile, the NDA chief said the agency would begin to import dairy cattle as soon as their 2025 budget gets approved.

Andaya said they sought for an additional P250 million, which would be used to increase the number of dairy cattle herds.

However, he noted that the imported dairy cattle would be placed in their stock farms. Their offspring would then be distributed to the farmers.

“By 2025, our five stock farms that would hold the imported [dairy cattle] would have been operationalized,” Andaya said.

According to NDA, the stock farms set to be completed this year were in Tinio, Nueva Ecija; Ubay Bohol; Malaybalay, Bukidnon; Carmen, Cotabato; and Agusan Del Sur.

One stock farm, Andaya said, can hold 150 heads.

He said they will keep breeding them so that more of them can be distributed and the volume of milk production can be increased, especially that to be used for the milk feeding program.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/08/dairy-agency-asks-angara-revert-milk-feeding-to-nda/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Inflation relief: PHL sees lowest rate in 4 years, thanks to easing food prices

Business Mirror Editorial
October 8, 2024

In a surprising twist that brings a glimmer of hope to Filipino households, the country's inflation rate has dipped to an impressive 1.9 percent in September, the lowest it has been in four years. This drop, primarily attributed to the easing of food prices, particularly rice, offers a much-needed respite for consumers who have been grappling with the rising cost of living. (Read the [BusinessMirror](#) story: "Surprise: inflation in September at 1.9%, a 4-year low," October 5, 2024).

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) said the inflation rate for food and non-alcoholic beverages slowed to a mere 1.4 percent, a significant drop from 3.9 percent in August. This is not just a statistical anomaly; it reflects real changes in the market that could uplift the financial strain on many families. Economists agree that this trend is likely to continue, thanks in large part to favorable global rice prices and the easing of export restrictions from major rice-producing countries like India.

The agricultural sector, often a double-edged sword in economic discussions, is showing signs of resilience. The recent reductions in rice tariffs are crucial in keeping prices in check. This policy, aimed at sustaining rice supply and affordability, underscores a proactive approach by the government to navigate a volatile global market while supporting local producers.

Yet, as we celebrate these positive shifts, caution is warranted. The looming threats of natural disasters, such as the recent typhoons, could disrupt this fragile stability. Economists remind us that while the outlook appears optimistic, potential spikes in commodity prices could arise from unforeseen circumstances, including geopolitical tensions that impact oil and food prices globally.

Moreover, while the current inflation rate is within the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas target of 2-4 percent, the economic landscape remains dynamic. The BSP's

acknowledgment of downside risks, particularly regarding lower import tariffs, signals a need for vigilance. The central bank's strategies, including potential further rate cuts, should be carefully calibrated to ensure that we don't inadvertently stoke inflationary pressures in the future.

The broader implications of these developments are significant. Lower food prices can enhance consumer confidence, driving spending and stimulating economic growth. As Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Arsenio Balisacan pointed out, easing food prices will allow low-income households to allocate more resources to essential needs like education and health. This not only promises immediate relief but also lays the groundwork for long-term societal benefits.

Ultimately, the current economic climate presents a unique opportunity for the country to reinforce its agricultural sector, ensuring that local producers are supported while also keeping prices manageable for consumers. The partnership between the Department of Agriculture and the Development Bank of the Philippines to offer low-cost credit facilities to rice farmers is a step in the right direction. Such initiatives could bolster local production, enhancing food security and sustaining the momentum towards stable prices.

While the recent drop in inflation brings much-needed optimism, the path ahead remains fraught with challenges. A balanced approach that prioritizes both consumer welfare and agricultural sustainability will be essential for maintaining this positive trajectory. It's a delicate dance between supporting our farmers and protecting our consumers, and getting it right could lead to a more resilient economy for all Filipinos.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/10/08/inflation-relief-phl-sees-lowest-rate-in-4-years-thanks-to-easing-food-prices/>

ABANTE TONITE:

ASF vaccine ng Vietnam epektib sa mga baboy

October 7, 2024

Maganda diumano ang naging resulta ng African Swine Fever (ASF) vaccine mula sa Vietnam 28 araw matapos itong gamitin sa mga alagang baboy sa Lobo, Batangas.

Lumabas sa resulta ng enzyme-linked immunoassay o ELISA test ang percentage blocking na 90% na ipinapahiwatig na lumakas ang immune defense ng mga baboy laban sa ASF.

Malaki ang naging pinsala ng ASF sa lokal na industriya ng baboy simula pa noong 2019 kaya't patuloy na sinisikap ng Bureau of Animal Industry na proteksyunan at muling palakasin ito.

Patuloy namang binabantayan ng BAI ang vaccine administration sa gitna ng post-vaccination period. (Migo Fajatin)

<https://tonite.abante.com.ph/2024/10/07/asf-vaccine-ng-vietnam-epektib-sa-mga-baboy/>