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THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Review, improvement of agriculture commodity roadmaps pushed

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

November 26, 2024 | 12:00am



Photos show farmers harvesting their plot of land in Rosario, La Union on October 4, 2024.

STAR / Andy Zapata

MANILA, Philippines — The government must now review its commodity roadmaps to adapt them to current conditions of the agriculture sector to ensure proper guidance for policy-making decisions, the Philippine Chamber for Agriculture and Food Inc. said.

PCAFI president Danilo Fausto called on the Department of Agriculture (DA) to “review” and “amend” its roadmaps to be in tune with the current production conditions and needs of the sectors concerned.

Fausto noted that at present, almost all major commodities of the country already have roadmaps. He said that the existence of the commodity industry roadmaps, albeit imperfect, was better compared to previous decades wherein there were no roadmaps at all.

Fausto urged the 48 member-groups of PCAFI to help the DA in updating the roadmaps as well as monitoring the goals that were stipulated in the various industry blueprints.

“We need your help to ensure that the desired goals and objectives of the roadmaps in developing our subsectors and helping our farmers and stakeholders are achieved,” he said.

At present, the DA has 20 commodity roadmaps covering yellow corn, abaca, banana, cacao, coconut, coffee, mango, onion, vegetable, carabao, dairy, hog, broiler, layer, small ruminants, milkfish, seaweed, shellfish, shrimp and tilapia.

The DA is also crafting two new roadmaps involving white corn and salt. Industry players recently turned over to the DA the program documents related to the crafting of the country’s white corn industry roadmap that aims to promote white corn consumption and increase supply in the market simultaneously.

Meanwhile, the crafting of the salt industry development roadmap is ongoing in accordance with the Philippine Salt Industry Development Act that was enacted into law this year. The roadmap would serve as an overarching guide in the implementation of various programs that would help revitalize the country’s ailing salt industry.

Furthermore, the DA is also finalizing the long overdue Philippine Rice Industry Roadmap that was mandated under Republic Act 11203 or the rice tariffication law. The finalization of the rice industry roadmap aligns with the possible extension of the rice competitiveness enhancement fund that supports the local rice industry to improve and modernize until 2031.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/11/26/2402859/review-improvement-agriculture-commodity-roadmaps-pushed>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DA targets \$2 billion foreign funding for infrastructure projects

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

November 26, 2024 | 12:00am



Agriculture Assistant Secretary and spokesman Arnel de Mesa said the department is inching closer to securing its single largest foreign-assisted project from the World Bank valued at \$1 billion.

The STAR / Michael Varcas

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) is looking at securing at least \$2 billion (about P118 billion) in foreign financing next year, including its single largest project loan, to bankroll its various infrastructure programs and projects aimed at improving domestic productivity and enhancing farmers' welfare.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary and spokesman Arnel de Mesa said the department is inching closer to securing its single largest foreign-assisted project from the World Bank valued at \$1 billion.

De Mesa said the multilateral lender would conduct a pre-appraisal mission for the loan that would bankroll the DA's Philippine Sustainable Agriculture Transformation Project.

The loan agreement for the project is expected to be signed by the middle of next year.

It will be under the World Bank's program-for-results financing tool, which links the disbursement of funds to the achievement of certain goals and specific results.

"These funds would be used for the priority projects of the President and the (Agriculture) Secretary, which are mostly for agriculture infrastructure projects," De Mesa said in a press briefing yesterday.

The DA has also started a scoping mission with the World Bank for another \$300-million loan facility that will help micro, small and medium enterprises access finance and implement climate resiliency projects, De Mesa said. The loan facility is also expected to be signed next year.

"This project will help MSMEs that were affected by calamities in the next five years," De Mesa said.

The loan facility will be jointly implemented by the DA with other government agencies including the Department of Finance, Department of Trade and Industry and Agricultural Credit Policy Council.

Furthermore, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$250-million loan for the DA's flagship solar power irrigation project that would build small-scale irrigation facilities across the country over the next three years, De Mesa said.

The loan facility has been approved by the National Economic and Development Authority Investment Coordination Committee, for review by the NEDA Board chaired by President Marcos.

The project is targeted to be implemented also next year.

The ADB would also provide a \$140-million grant for the preparation of the DA's various infrastructure projects that involve ports, wide-scale irrigation projects and aquaculture projects, De Mesa said.

The agriculture official said the DA would submit this week to the concerned NEDA committee a €350-million (about \$367 million) bilateral loan from the French government to finance the department's farm-to-market bridges project.

De Mesa explained that the string of forthcoming foreign funding would augment the DA's budget, allowing it to implement programs that would modernize the country's agriculture sector.

"Every year we are proposing a bigger budget for the DA, but unfortunately the increase is not that much," De Mesa said.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/11/26/2402877/da-targets-2-billion-foreign-funding-infrastructure-projects>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Kadiwa Centers to reach 179 nationwide by year-end

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

November 26, 2024 | 12:00am



Agriculture assistant secretary Genevieve Velicaria-Guevarra said the DA is on track to opening a total of 179 Kadiwa Centers by the end of the year.

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) said the number of Kadiwa Centers nationwide would reach at least 179 by year-end, slowly expanding the availability of affordable commodities to more Filipino consumers nationwide.

Agriculture assistant secretary Genevieve Velicaria-Guevarra said the DA is on track to opening a total of 179 Kadiwa Centers by the end of the year.

At present, there are about 41 Kadiwa Centers overseen by the DA and another 67 centers under the National Irrigation Administration (NIA), Velicaria-Guevarra said.

The additional Kadiwa Centers would come from the Kadiwa Stores that can be converted into Kadiwa Centers, she added.

“By April or middle of next year, our target is to have 300 [Kadiwa Centers],” she said in a press briefing yesterday.

The total number of Kadiwa Centers by the end of the year could surpass the target set by the DA as the government holds its three-day Kadiwa ng Pangulo expo beginning today.

Possible Kadiwa partners, including private sector players like San Miguel Corp., are expected to attend the event wherein the DA would showcase the potential and achievements of the Kadiwa marketing system.

The DA is also eyeing to partner with other government agencies like the Philippine Carabao Center, National Housing Authority and even the Philippine Postal Corp. to host new Kadiwa Centers in key regions and areas nationwide.

It is one of the ways that the DA is considering to achieve its target of establishing 1,500 Kadiwa centers by the end of the Marcos administration, Velicaria-Guevarra said.

Kadiwa Centers are bigger in scale as it serves as the main supplier of Kadiwa Stores while Kadiwa Stores mirror Kadiwa Centers but on a smaller scale. Both modalities sell basic commodities like rice at more affordable pricing compared to prevailing market prices.

All Kadiwa Centers sell P29 per kilo rice for select sectors of the society as well as the P42-per-kilo rice under the DA’s rice-for-all program.

Agriculture assistant secretary Arnel De Mesa said the commodities sold at Kadiwa Centers are normally lower by 20 to 30 percent than those sold at retail channels like wet markets and supermarkets.

The DA is also beefing up its Kadiwa on Wheels program, or the mobile Kadiwa Stores as it plans to add 45 more to its existing 39 Kadiwa on Wheels fleet.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/11/26/2402880/kadiwa-centers-reach-179-nationwide-year-end>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DA: Typhoons left P786 million damage to agriculture

[Rhodina Villanueva](#) - The Philippine Star

November 26, 2024 | 12:00am



President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. conducts an aerial inspection of Catanduanes on Tuesday November 19, 2024 to assess the damage caused by Super Typhoon #PepitoPH.

(Photo courtesy of PCO)

MANILA, Philippines — The combined damage of Tropical Cyclones Pepito, Nika and Ofel to the agriculture sector in at least six regions has reached P786 million, the Department of Agriculture (DA) reported.

According to the DA, the typhoons left 41,076 hectares of agricultural areas damaged and production losses of 30,366 metric tons (MT).

It said the typhoons affected 34,111 farmers and fisherfolk in the Cordillera Administrative Region, Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Bicol Region and Eastern Visayas.

The DA said 53 percent of the damage was recorded in rice production, totaling P414.14 million and affecting 32,289 hectares of land, with a total production loss of 19,130 MT.

Based on the data provided by the DA Operations Center, the damage from tropical cyclones Kristine and Leon to the agriculture sector totaled P9.81 billion, covering 183,877 hectares of land and production loss of 380,704 MT.

The DA said at least P1 billion in Quick Response Fund has been made available for the rehabilitation and recovery of affected areas.

Meanwhile, Sen. Loren Legarda yesterday said the impact of climate change has worsened, despite the implementations of laws.

“Our journey toward resilience is far from over. As Kristine would show, as Pepito would show, I am not certain if things have improved or have gotten worse. We see that legislation is there and funding is there, but action on the ground, impact on the ground had gotten worse because the climate has gotten worse... there is much more work to do,” Legarda said during the Philippine Resilience Awards 2024 in Pasay City.

Legarda cited Republic Act 9729, the Climate Change Act of 2009, and RA 10174, which created the People’s Survival Fund.

“We know climate change will continue to test us, but I firmly believe that the Filipino people have the strength and the ingenuity to overcome these challenges. We have seen this in the way the local communities have come together to rebuild after disasters,” Legarda said.

Robert Borje, Climate Change Commission vice chairperson, said the hazards brought by climate change are different from those seen two decades ago.

“Twenty years ago, the rainfall was only 200 millimeters. Now it’s 400 mm. So what she (Legarda) is trying to say is that in the face of climate change and worsening impacts, we have to quickly adjust to these new and intensified hazards that we have,” Borje said.

“Times have changed and the hazard of change is not just in nature but in the intensity. Developing countries like the Philippines have a lot more to work on. The capacity needs to be strengthened,” he added.

Borje said the Philippine Resilience Awards 2024 forms part of the country’s observance of the National Global Warming and Climate Change Consciousness Week 2024, in an effort to raise public awareness of the urgent need for climate action and to promote community-based resilience efforts.

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2024/11/26/2402904/da-typhoons-left-p786-million-damage-agriculture>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Farmers want 25,000 agricultural extension workers returned to DA

[Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

November 26, 2024 | 12:00am



The Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) and the Magsasaka party-list said the devolution of farm workers under the Local Government Code of 1991 has resulted in a structural disconnect in the implementation of programs of the DA.

Edd Gumban, file

MANILA, Philippines — Farmers' groups on Monday pushed for the return of at least 25,000 agricultural extension workers to the Department of Agriculture (DA) from local governments units (LGUs).

The Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) and the Magsasaka party-list said the devolution of farm workers under the Local Government Code of 1991 has resulted in a structural disconnect in the implementation of programs of the DA.

“The removal of DA’s direct line supervision over the field extension force has caused the delayed delivery of seeds, fertilizer, technical and other support services to the country’s ten million farmers. It has badly hampered the effective execution and monitoring of national programs for the rural sector. All this has

led to food production shortfalls and higher prices,” FFF board chairman Leonardo Montemayor said.

For his part, Magsasaka party-list president Argel Joseph Cabatbat said farm programs in provinces, cities and municipalities are neglected as governors and mayors give low priority to agriculture.

Cabatbat added that many agricultural workers are assigned as drivers, security guards and similar duties instead of visiting farmers in their fields and preventing the spread of plant and animal diseases like the African swine fever (ASF).

“Even the registration and selection of recipients of cash, farm inputs and equipment subsidies from the national government have been politicized,” he added.

Montemayor pointed out that devolution has curtailed the pay, career advancement and other incentives being enjoyed by rural extensionists when they were DA employees.

“Once renationalized, farm technicians will receive substantially bigger compensation and benefits from a ladderized promotion system,” Montemayor said.

Senate President Francis Escudero and Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. have agreed to work together for the renationalization of the agriculture sector after many of its services were devolved to the LGUs.

Escudero recalled that the programs related to the agriculture sector were devolved after the passage of the Local Government Code of 1991.

Tiu Laurel said the reversion of the functions would allow the DA to immediately implement its programs down to the barangay level and make the process “simpler” to achieve the government’s goals.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/11/26/2402970/farmers-want-25000-agricultural-extension-workers-returned-da>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

DA target: More Kadiwa stores outside NCR

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

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:20 AM November 26, 2024



A ‘KADIWA’ IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD A customer chooses among the cheaper vegetables sold last week at the Kadiwa Store inside the Bureau of Plant Industry compound in Malate, Manila. —Niño Jesus Orbeta

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) is targeting to increase the number of Kadiwa ng Pangulo (KNP) stores nationwide from the current 108 to 179 by the end of this year, as it seeks to bring discounted agriculture products to more Filipino consumers.

Meanwhile the three-day Kadiwa ng Pangulo Expo 2024 began at the Philippine International Convention Center on Tuesday as one way of boosting the income of farmers and fishers while giving consumers access to quality and affordably-priced food.

An additional 71 KNP sites will be operationalized by yearend, with the expansion geared toward major cities outside the National Capital Region (NCR), Agriculture Assistant Secretary Genevieve Guevarra said on Monday.

She said the DA aims to expand further the number of KNP sites to 300 by April or the middle of next year.

“Our expansion is geared toward major cities outside Metro Manila,” Guevarra said in a press briefing, adding that Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. wants to operate KNP sites regularly.

This is part of a wider plan to open 1,500 KNP sites across the country by the end of the Marcos administration in 2028, she said.

Logistics challenge

There are currently 41 existing Kadiwa centers in different parts of the country while the National Irrigation Administration is operating another 67 centers, bringing the overall number to 108.

The majority of these are located in the NCR. There are also Kadiwa sites in portions of Rizal, Laguna, Cavite and San Jose del Monte in Bulacan, and Cebu in the Visayas.

Guevarra said the DA and its partners are facing challenges in maintaining stocks of agricultural commodities, particularly rice and transporting them to KNP sites.

“The challenge, of course, is maintaining stocks, especially with rice and transporting the food items and where to source them ... That is what we are working on now,” she said.

“But it’s definitely doable. We are encountering some logistics challenges in terms of shipping agricultural products. But our logistics plan is already laid out and we’re in the process of procuring additional products,” she added.

The establishment of many KNP sites in various parts of the archipelago is in line with President Marcos’ goal to make these stores more accessible, especially in typhoon-hit areas, so that consumers can buy these products at discounted prices.

“As the President has directed, especially after Severe Tropical Storm Kristine, the Kadiwa stores should really be open and accessible to those affected by the storm because ... we all know that prices of goods go up after a storm due to the [limited] supply,” Guevarra said.

‘Check and balance’

Although agricultural products sold in Kadiwa sites are 20 to 30 percent cheaper than prevailing market prices, they are not intended to directly compete with public markets.

“This is one way of comparing reference prices in markets because sometimes market prices are too high,” Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said.

“This is also a good way to [provide a] check and balance on retail prices in public markets,” he added.

At the KNP Expo, more than 100 farmer-exhibitors will be showcased and more Kadiwa “models” will be unveiled such as Kadiwa food hubs, model trucks, carts and the Kadiwa app.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2009152/da-target-more-kadiwa-stores-outside-ncr>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

DA eyes seized contraband fish for typhoon relief work

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

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:24 AM November 25, 2024



Inquirer files

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) has asked the Bureau of Customs to release P178.5 million worth of confiscated frozen mackerel to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to aid in relief efforts.

Laboratory tests conducted by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources' (BFAR) National Fisheries Laboratory Division showed that the frozen fish is fit for human consumption since it has no signs of spoilage or contamination, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said in his Nov. 18 letter to Customs Commissioner Bienvenido Rubio.

“Consequently, the fish products are deemed fit for immediate release and can be utilized to address food security needs, especially in relief operations,” Tiu Laurel said in a statement over the weekend.

The DA said the frozen mackerel amounted to 580 metric tons (MT) that were loaded in 21 container vans that arrived in early October from China.

But the importer, Pacific Sealand Foods Corp., did not have the required sanitary and phytosanitary import clearances.

Import clearances ensure that imported food items comply with standards, protecting the health of Filipino consumers, plants, and animals while preventing the spread of diseases or pests.

The DA subsequently directed the BFAR to conduct laboratory tests to determine whether or not the seized frozen mackerel can be distributed to typhoon-hit areas.

“This initiative would support the DSWD and the Department of Agriculture’s ongoing efforts to provide essential aid to victims of the recent typhoon,” Tiu Laurel said.

The DA had said it was considering importing an additional 8,000 MT of small pelagic fish, including round scad, mackerel, moonfish, and bonito, that could arrive in the first two weeks of December.

This was on top of the importation of 30,000 MT of fish authorized by Tiu Laurel in April to plug the supply gap during the temporary fishing ban implemented annually for three months to protect target fish species during their peak spawning period and address other concerns, such as overfishing and climate change.

Although the DA did not say there is a supply shortage, the planned importation is meant to address any potential problems caused by the onslaught of successive typhoons and prevent any possible price spikes.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2008727/da-eyes-seized-contraband-fish-for-typhoon-relief-work>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Escudero pushes reversion of farm services to national gov't

By: [Tina G. Santos](#) - Reporter / [@santostinaINQ](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:35 AM November 25, 2024

MANILA, Philippines — Senate President Francis Escudero has renewed his proposal to revert to the national government some agricultural services that were devolved to local governments in 1991.

Escudero, in a recent meeting with stakeholders of the agriculture sector, noted the gaping disconnect between vital national programs and the resources of local governments.

The Senate President noted that agricultural policies and priorities also change more frequently at the local government level, assuming that local officials do have the skills and resources to implement complicated programs.

“There are inconsistencies in the implementation of programs and policies that affect the agriculture sector in each locality,” the senator said.

Since 1998, when he first served as representative of the first district of Sorsogon, Escudero has filed bills to revert agricultural services to the national government.

Republic Act No. 7160, or the Local Government Code (LGC) of 1991, devolved agricultural and health services to local governments as part of a move to provide them with greater autonomy.

Through the years, however, there have been growing gaps in the implementation of agricultural services, particularly in local governments with limited resources.

Escudero said feedback from the stakeholders of the agriculture sector during consultations conducted in the course of the review of the implementation of the LGC over the years showed a strong desire to renationalize agricultural services.

He said this prompted him to file bills to make this happen.

The passage of several laws related to the development of the agriculture sector over the years, including Republic Act No. 8435, or the Agriculture and Fisheries

Modernization Act of 1997, necessitates the DA's full administrative control and supervision over all personnel in the field who are involved in agriculture and fishery. "Agricultural extension workers or the people in the field could be better utilized to support the renewed push to revitalize the agriculture sector," he said.

"I hope the administration would consider the renationalization of the agriculture sector again as a solution so that all agricultural programs would be under the supervision of the secretary," he added.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2008718/escudero-pushes-reversion-of-farm-services-to-national-govt>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Cashew nutshell marine biofuel causing problems for some ships — testing agency

November 25, 2024 | 12:02 am

SINGAPORE — Several ships in Singapore and Rotterdam reported operational problems in recent months after using marine fuel blended with cashew nutshell liquid biofuel, fuel testing agency CTI-Maritec said in an advisory.

Singapore-based CTI-Maritec said it tested samples from the affected ships and found the marine fuel was blended with cashew nutshell liquid that came from undeclared source materials or production processes.

The ships had reported operational problems including fuel sludging, injector failure, filter clogging, system deposits and corrosion of turbocharger nozzle rings, the agency said.

CTI-Maritec did not name the vessels or shipping lines involved, and it was not immediately clear how many ships were affected.

The Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore and the Port of Rotterdam did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

CTI-Maritec advised ship-owners not to use 100% cashew nut liquid as a marine fuel or as a blending component, or unestablished bio-products in marine diesel engines.

It said their use would contravene guidance from the International Maritime Organization on the supply of fuel oil to ships.

Cashew nut liquid is a non-FAME (fatty acid methyl ester) biofuel, which is a byproduct of the cashew nut industry. While it has been touted as an alternative renewable fuel, it also has high acid values and is corrosive.

Ship-owners have been exploring various marine biofuel blends as an alternative to dirtier bunker fuels in order to cut emissions.

The latest version of the ISO 8217 marine fuel specification specifies the use of accepted biofuels including FAME-based biofuels and hydrotreated vegetable oil.

There is no marine fuel specification available for cashew nut liquid from any authorized body, CTI-Maritec said. — **Reuters**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/agribusiness/2024/11/25/636772/cashew-nutshell-marine-biofuel-causing-problems-for-some-ships-testing-agency/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

India turns to satellite images of scorched earth in bid to better measure farm fires

November 25, 2024 | 12:01 am

NEW DELHI — India's government plans to clamp down on polluting farm fires by measuring the areas burnt instead of live blazes, after reports that farmers were burning paddy waste or stubble at times when satellites were not passing overhead.

India currently uses data from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) satellites that pass twice a day over the northern states of Punjab and Haryana to monitor farm fires, which are a major contributor to the smog that envelops the national capital region (NCR) each winter.

The Commission for Air Quality Management, a government body responsible for air quality in the NCR, said on Friday that India's space agency had been asked in January to develop a system to study burnt areas to count farm fires.

"That protocol has actually been developed and is currently being tested," Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati told the Supreme Court after an adviser to the court said on Monday that the current system counted fires over a limited time.

Some experts suspect that farmers have, over time, become aware of the surveillance period and shifted the time of burning their crop waste to evade the NASA satellites, because of which while counts were lower this year, pollution levels were not.

The government said on Friday that data from stationary satellites was "sub optimal" and not "actionable," dismissing an earlier direction from the court to use them instead.

Delhi has been battling hazardous air this month, with the air quality index (AQI) touching a peak of 494 on a scale of 500 on Monday, when farm fires also recorded a high of 2,893, prompting the government to restrict vehicle movement and construction and shift schools to online teaching.

India considers an AQI of 0-50 'good', and above 400 'severe', which poses a risk to healthy people and "seriously impacts" those with existing diseases.

Delhi recorded a “very poor” AQI of 374 on Friday, authorities said, and the Ministry of Earth Sciences forecast it would remain in the same category (300-400) through this week.

Other countries in South Asia also battle toxic air every year as cold air traps dust, smoke, and emissions, and some studies say rising air pollution can cut a person’s life expectancy in the region by more than five years. — **Reuters**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/agribusiness/2024/11/25/636771/india-turns-to-satellite-images-of-scorched-earth-in-bid-to-better-measure-farm-fires/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Review of agri production system pushed to reduce import dependence

November 25, 2024 | 8:30 pm



PHILIPPINE STAR/ MICHAEL VARCAS

THE National Government should look at reviewing the agricultural production system amid the country's growing dependence on imports, a congressional think tank said.

The Congressional Policy and Budget Research Department (CPBRD) said in its November report the country's reliance on food imports risks food security amid climate change and geopolitical tensions.

"Given the increasing dependence on imports to meet local food requirements, it is important to review and revisit the agricultural production system particularly in light of increasing risks beyond our control, such as the impact of climate change and ongoing geopolitical tensions," it said.

"The country is highly vulnerable to the impact of geopolitical tensions," it added.

The Philippines heavily relies on imported rice to meet domestic consumer demand, the CPBRD said, adding that local production of pork, chicken, and round scad (*galunggong*) remain insufficient in covering the food requirement of Filipinos.

As of Nov. 14, Philippine rice imports have amounted to 4.06 million metric tons (MMT), surpassing the 3.61 MMT reported for the full year of 2023, according to the Bureau of Plant Industry.

The US Department of Agriculture, in November, said the Philippines is projected to import about 5.1 MMT in 2025.

The state should look at regulating food importation by improving the reliability of its agricultural databases, helping push for “evidence-based policy making” for importation decisions.

“There is a need to foster dialogue among users and generators of statistics on the supply and demand for commodities which are vital for determining the volume of imports,” the think tank said.

Moreover, the think tank raised the need for a “strong institution” to facilitate more investments into the agriculture sector, which could help spur agricultural development and improve domestic food production.

The CPBRD recommended a genuine organizational review of the Department of Agriculture, including related functions in other agencies, to identify areas for improvement and facilitate the crafting of appropriate strategies.

Addressing institutional “bottlenecks” could also help address food smuggling, which undermines agricultural production. “As farmers would have difficulty competing with smuggled commodities due to their relatively lower prices, it will eventually reduce local production,” the report stated.

The state should also promote collective farming to help streamline government support services to Filipino farmers.

“Conversion of rice land to other uses, backward rice farming, deteriorating irrigation systems, and lack of farm credit and even faulty government policies have been identified as the reasons for low rice production, thus, high importation,” the CPBRD said.

— **Kenneth Christiane L. Basilio**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/the-nation/2024/11/25/637124/review-of-agri-production-system-pushed-to-reduce-import-dependence/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

ODA eyed for agri-infrastructure projects

November 25, 2024 | 8:50 pm



PHILIPPINE INFORMATION AGENCY

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said on Monday that it is seeking about \$1.69 billion from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to fund agricultural infrastructure projects.

“Our agri-infrastructure projects for the longest time have been lacking in financing, so the (loans) will be used for those projects,” Agriculture Assistant Secretary and Spokesman Arnel V. de Mesa said in a briefing.

Mr. De Mesa said among the projects is the proposed Philippine Sustainable Agriculture Transformation Project.

“This will become the single largest project within the department,” he added.

He said that the loan agreement is expected to be signed by June and will run for five years. The full implementation of the project is expected by July.

“We have disbursement-linked indicators, where the department will commit to certain policy reforms. In exchange is the disbursement of funding which would be used for priority projects like agri-infrastructure,” he said.

Mr. De Mesa added that the World Bank has sent a pre-appraisal mission to evaluate the project.

The DA is also looking at \$300-million loan from the World Bank to support micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in accessing financing for climate resiliency projects.

“This will help MSMEs that have been hit by natural calamities to recover... It will be for the next five years,” Mr. De Mesa said.

Among the DA’s partners are the Agricultural Credit Policy Council, and the Departments of Finance (DoF), and Trade and Industry (DTI).

“The DoF has endorsed the concept to the World Bank and so now the scoping mission can begin. Hopefully, by next year the loan will be signed,” he added.

Additionally, Mr. De Mesa said that the ADB approved a \$250-million loan to fund its flagship solar-powered irrigation project.

The project aims to construct irrigation facilities in rice, corn, and vegetable growing areas.

“Our priority here is to ensure first that the water will be sustainable because we don’t want it to become stagnant or unusable,” he added.

He said that the ADB will also disburse a \$140-million grant to fund the DA’s agricultural ports, pipe irrigation and aquaculture projects.

Meanwhile, Mr. De Mesa said that the DA will submit to the National Economic and Development Authority a €350-million bilateral loan agreement with the French government to fund a bridge project.

The project aims to construct about 300 farm-to-market bridges. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/11/25/637142/oda-eyed-for-agri-infrastructure-projects/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

KADIWA to tap more farm-cooperative suppliers

November 25, 2024 | 8:51 pm



DA PHOTO

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said on Monday that it is seeking to encourage more farmer cooperative and associations (FCA) to supply products to its flagship KADIWA ng Pangulo program.

Assistant Secretary for Consumer and Legislative Affairs Genevieve E. Velicaria-Guevarra said that the DA will organize an expo to encourage more FCAs to join the program.

"Through this event, we will encourage many more farmer cooperatives to join us or become suppliers or sellers in our KADIWA ng Pangulo program," she added.

She added that the DA is looking to partner with other government agencies like the Philippine Postal Corp. (PhilPost) for its Kadiwa expansion plans due to PhilPost's presence in numerous municipalities.

"Logistics-wise they are in the best position to help us transport all these goods in various areas in the country," she added.

The DA is looking to expand its KADIWA network to 1,500 locations by 2028. It is expecting to open 179 KADIWA Centers by the end of the year.

Ms. Velicaria-Guevarra said that the DA is hoping to open 300 locations by the middle of next year.

Products sold in KADIWA locations are basic and prime commodities priced at about 20% less than those charged in public markets.

KADIWA Centers also sell rice at P42 per kilogram and subsidized rice for low-income individuals at P29 per kilo.

She added that the DA is looking to expand its products to include meat.

The Kadiwa ng Pangulo Expo is scheduled for Nov. 26-28 at the Philippine International Convention Center.

The event seeks to showcase over 100 farmer exhibitors and include model hubs, centers, stores, model trucks, and carts. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/11/25/637149/kadiwa-to-tap-more-farm-cooperative-suppliers/>

THE MANILA TIMES:

Pangasinan salt farm aims to hike production

By Gabriel L. Cardinoza
November 26, 2024

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan — The Pangasinan Salt Center in Bolinao town will increase its production of salt this season, assistant provincial agriculturist Nestor Batalla said on Monday.

In a chance interview at the provincial capitol, Batalla said that the salt farm aims to produce at least 10,000 metric tons (mt) of salt starting this month until the end of the dry season in June next year.

The target salt production is 4,000 mt more than the 6,000 mt of salt produced by the farm from the time it started its operations in November 2023 to June this year.

"Last Saturday (Nov. 23) was our first harvest for this season," said Batalla.

The provincial government ventured into salt production in 2023 when it took over the operations of a 473-hectare salt farm previously operated by a private company in the coastal village of Zaragoza here.

Batalla, meanwhile, thanked Gov. Ramon Guico III for his full support to the salt farm, adding that the salt farm's budget for next year is P50 million.

Batalla said that, so far, the biggest salt buyer from the Pangasinan Salt Center is the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA). He added that the agency needed agricultural grade salt fertilizer (AGSF) for its coconut fertilization program this year.

Batalla said that the salt produced here met the PCA's requirements, such as a salinity of at least 55 percent, and a moisture level of not less than 10 percent.

"The good news is that next year, the PCA will increase its buying price. From P550 per 50-kilogram (kg) bag, it will become P800 per bag," Batalla said.

He said that for next year, the PCA will be needing more salt in its coconut fertilization program, saying its budget is about P2.4 billion.

Aside from the PCA, Batalla said that salt manufacturers from the towns of Mangaldan and Infanta in Pangasinan and those from the Cordillera Administrative Region have also ordered from them.

"Lately, a poultry consultant visited us to buy because he needed salt as a component of a mixture to repel flies," Batalla said.

He also said that the salt producers in nearby Dasol town had been also selling their produce to the PCA. Next to this town, Dasol is Pangasinan's second biggest salt producer.

In 2021, Dasol produced 24,000 mt of salt from its more than 10,000 salt beds located in 13 of its 18 villages, according to the data gathered by the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist.

Its production represents 37.4 percent of the Pangasinan's total salt production of 64,156.36 mt that year.

Batalla said that since its first harvest last year, several tourists, researchers, students and vloggers had visited the farm.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/11/26/regions/pangasinan-salt-farm-aims-to-hike-production/2010878>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

SRA pushes for sugarcane plantations in Mindanao

Ada Pelonia

November 25, 2024

THE Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) is keen on expanding sugarcane plantations in Mindanao and increasing farmers' yields.

SRA Administrator Pablo Luis Azcona vowed to increase the agency's presence and programs in Mindanao during the recent 23rd Joint Annual General Assembly of Sugarcane Growers Association of Bukidnon, Inc. (SGABI) and the Sugarcane Farmers of Bukidnon Multi-Purpose Cooperative (SFBMPC) in Bukidnon.

"We are in the process of expanding our research program in Mindanao, particularly in Bukidnon, to help our sugar farmers increase their yield as we see that the future of expanding our sugar industry is here in Mindanao," Azcona was quoted in the statement as saying.

The SRA chief urged the farmers not to rush the harvesting of their canes to ensure a better yield, noting the drop in sugar pThe agency said Bukidnon farmers started milling yesterday, almost two months since mills opened in Negros Occidental.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) earlier said the prolonged dry spells brought by El Niño resulted in the cane being physiologically immature, which resulted in a 16-percent lower sugar content per MT of cane and constrained sugar output despite an increase in planting areas.

Meanwhile, sugar farmers from Luzon and Mindanao expressed support for the SRA and DA's recent announcement of delaying the importation of sugar until May 2025.

Earlier, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said there was no immediate need for additional imports since the domestic supply of raw and refined sugar was sufficient to meet projected needs.

“We commend the DA and the SRA for their foresight and judicious decision-making. Rest assured, we stand ready to support and collaborate in any initiatives that further strengthen our agriculture industry,” former Bukidnon Rep. Manuel Antonio Zubiri said.

The Luzon Federation of Sugarcane Growers Inc. (Luzonfed) said the suspension of sugar importation until after the harvest season “offers significant relief to sugarcane farmers who have been struggling with the negative impact of excessive imports on local prices.”

“We are grateful for the SRA and DA’s acknowledgment of our concerns. By postponing imports until mid-2025, farmers can optimize their harvests and foster a more sustainable local industry,” Luzonfed President Cornelio Toreja said.

Luzonfed said it remains committed to advocating for farmers’ interests and believes that collaboration with the SRA and DA will contribute to a flourishing sugar industry for the country.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/11/25/sra-pushes-for-sugarcane-plantations-in-mindanao/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Govt jazzed over loans for farm sector in 2025

Ada Pelonia

November 26, 2024

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) is set to secure big-ticket foreign-assisted projects worth over \$2 billion by 2025.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel V. de Mesa said that of these projects, the “Philippine Sustainable Agriculture Transformation” (PSAT) project is the largest. According to De Mesa, some \$1 billion would go into the project, the loan agreement of which with the World Bank set to be signed by June next year and will run until 2030.

The official told reporters in a news conference last Monday that PSAT “will become the single largest project within the department.”

According to De Mesa, the project would have “disbursement-linked indicators” wherein the DA would commit certain policy reforms within the agency. In return, this act would trigger a disbursement of funds that could be used to bankroll the government’s priority projects.

“The priority will be our agriculture infrastructures that, for the longest time, lacked financing,” he said, partly in Filipino.

De Mesa said the World Bank began last Monday a “scoping mission” for another \$300-million project tied to climate financing. Called the “MSME Access to Finance and Climate Resiliency,” the project will help the micro-sized, small-scale and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) recover from calamities.

The DA official said the Department of Finance (DOF) has already endorsed the concept to the World Bank, with the loan “hopefully [signed] by next year.” The agreement will run for five years beginning 2025.

Among the other projects include a \$250-million solar irrigation project, which De Mesa said the Asian Development Bank (ADB) recently approved for financing next year.

“Our priority here is to ensure first that the water will be sustainable because we don’t want it to stagnate,” he said in Filipino, noting that the project targets to irrigate rice, corn, and vegetable plantations nationwide.

De Mesa said that the solar irrigation project has been approved by the Investment Coordination Committee (ICC) Technical Board, pending confirmation from the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) Board.

The DA official added that the ADB also provided a \$140-million grant for the preparation of three projects, namely the installation of 18 ports nationwide, a pipe irrigation system, and an aquaculture project for the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR).

De Mesa also noted that they will submit another project, worth 350 million euros, to the French government. The project will finance 300 farm-to-market bridges nationwide, he added.

The DA official said these foreign-assisted projects will help plug the shortfall in investments in the agriculture sector.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/11/26/govt-jazzed-over-loans-for-farm-sector-in-2025/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

DA aims to open 71 more Kadiwa stores by yearend

Ada Pelonia
November 25, 2024



People in San Andres, Manila, go to the Bureau of Plant Industry to shop for their basic needs at the Kadiwa store inside its compound. About 163,000 kilos of assorted fresh vegetables from the Cordillera have so far been sold through the Department of Agriculture's Kadiwa events and stores nationwide. A report from the DA regional office shows an average of 2 million kilos traded daily, including those from the Benguet Agripinoy Trading Center. This, however, excludes the private trading centers. (Photo by: Nonie Reyes)

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) plans to open 71 more Kadiwa ng Pangulo centers by yearend to ensure a steady supply of affordable agricultural commodities.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary for Consumer and Legislative Affairs Genevieve Velicaria-Guevarra said the additional KNP centers will be geared toward major cities outside Metro Manila.

She noted that there are 108 existing KNP centers nationwide, which they aim to increase to 179 by December and 300 by mid-2025 with the ultimate goal of reaching 1,500 KNP centers by the end of the administration in 2028.

“Ang sabi [ni President Marcos], dapat ay gawin nating mas accessible, mas palakasin natin dahil nga po dito mas makakabili ng mas mura,” Guevarra told reporters in a news conference on Monday.

She explained that prices of some agricultural commodities tend to spike after the onslaught of typhoons due to problems with supply.

“Kapag may mga ganitong calamity, at least that is what we would want the people to have access to,” she added.

Guevarra said the target to expand KNP centers can be achieved through the agency’s partnerships with other government agencies, such as the Philippine Carabao Center (PCC) and National Housing Authority (NHA) which offer venues that can be converted into KNPs.

She said they are eyeing the Philippine Postal Corp. (PhilPost) as their major partner in reaching the target 1,500 expansion of KNP centers.

“Alam naman po natin ang PhilPost has offices indirectly. Sa pinakamunisipyo may mga opisina po sila [...] tapos meron pa silang mga trucks,” she said.

“Logistics wise sila po ang in the best position to help us be able to transport all these goods in various areas in the country.”

Meanwhile, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said KNP is part of President Marcos Jr.'s vision of a food-secure Philippines under the Masaganang Bagong Pilipinas, “where ideally every Filipino family has food on their table and farmers and fishermen earn decent returns for their labor.”

The DA will begin the three-day Kadiwa ng Pangulo Expo 2024 on Tuesday at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) which is open to the public from November 26-28, 2024.

The KNP Expo, which is set to showcase over 100 farmer exhibitors, will unveil variations of Kadiwa models, including Kadiwa food hubs, centers, stores, model trucks, carts, and the Kadiwa App—each designed to streamline the delivery of fresh produce from farm to market.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/11/25/da-aims-to-open-71-more-kadiwa-stores-by-year-end/>

REMATE:

KADIWA ng Pangulo Expo 2024: Pagbubukas ng oportunidad sa merkado aarangkada na

November 25, 2024 17:20



MANILA, Philippines – AARANGKADA na ngayong Martes, Nobyembre 26 ang pintuan para sa tatlong araw na KADIWA ng Pangulo Expo 2024 sa Philippine International Convention Center at bibigyang-diin ang mga natamo sa flagship initiative ni Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos Jr. sa pagpapalakas sa kita ng mga magsasaka at mangingisda at mabigyan ang mga mamimili ng magandang kalidad subalit abot-kayang presyo ng mga pagkain.

Ayon sa Department of Agriculture (DA) itatampok sa KNP Expo ang mahigit 100 farmer exhibitors at ipapakita ang “Bigger, Better, More” Kadiwa models, kabilang na ang KADIWA food hubs, centers, tindahan, model trucks, carts, at ang KADIWA app– bawat isa ay dinisenyo para maging simple ang paghahatid ng mga sariwang ani mula sa taniman hanggang sa pamilihan. Tampok din sa aktibidad ang live na cooking demo sa pamamagitan ng KUSINA ng KADIWA, at direktang ugnayan sa merkado na may matagal ng mga buyer, at agribusiness investment forums.

“Ang KNP ay bahagi ng adhikain ni Pangulong Marcos para sa matatag na seguridad sa pagkain sa ilalim ng Masaganang Bagong Pilipinas– kung saan dapat bawat pamilyang Pilipino ay mayroong pagkain sa kanilang hapag at magkaroon ng disenteng kita ang mga magsasaka at mangingisda mula sa kanilang pagtatrabaho,” ani Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr.

Kaugnay nito, sinabi ni Agriculture Assistant Secretary Genevieve Guevarra na siyang pinuno ng KNP program, ang expo ay bukas sa publiko mula November 26-28.

“Nais naming makita ng ating mga kababayan kung ano na ang mga nagawa ng KADIWA ng Pangulo Program, partikular ang resulta ng kolaborasyon sa pagitan ng gobyerno, magsasaka, mangingisda at pribadong stakeholders upang makamit ang pangako ni PBBM na seguridad sa pagkain sa Pilipinas, at magpapatuloy ang pagtatrabaho upang makagawa ng mga makabagong paraan para matupad ang pangarap,” ani Asec. Guevarra.

Ang DA ay kumikilos na para sa KNP sa pakikipagtulungan sa Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Trade and Industry, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Presidential Communications Office art Presidential Management Staff. *Santi Celario*

<https://remate.ph/kadiwa-ng-pangulo-expo-2024-pagbubukas-ng-opportunidad-sa-merkado-aarangkada-na/>

REMATE:

DA sa BOC: Nakumpiskang mackerel shipments ibigay sa DSWD para sa relief efforts

November 25, 2024 10:15



MANILA, Philippines- Hiniling ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. sa Bureau of Customs (BOC) na ipalabas ang 580 metriko toneladang 'frozen mackerel' na dumating sa Manila Port noong unang bahagi ng nakaraang buwan para magamit ng gobyerno para sa relief efforts kasunod ng kamakailan lamang ng pagtama ng mga bagyo.

Sa isang kalatas, sinabi ni Department of Agriculture (DA) na hiniling ni Tiu Laurel na ipalabas na lamang ang mga nahuli ng mackerel —natuklasan na akma pa para sa human consumption ng National Fisheries Laboratory para sa Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

“Consequently, the fish products are deemed fit for immediate release and can be utilized to address food security needs, especially in relief operations,” ang sinabi ng Kalihim.

“This initiative would support the DSWD and the Department of Agriculture’s ongoing efforts to provide essential aid to victims of the recent typhoon,” aniya pa rin.

Tinatayang umaabot sa halagang P178.5 million ang mackerel shipments ay nakumpiska mula sa 21 container vans na dumating sa Manila International Container Port noong unang bahagi ng buwan ng Oktubre ng walang kaukulang ‘sanitary at phytosanitary import clearances.’

Kinumpirma naman ng laboratory tests ng National Fisheries Laboratory Division of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) na ang isda ay maaaring pang ikonsumo ng tao at walang senyales ng pagkasira o kontaminasyon. Kris Jose

<https://remate.ph/da-sa-boc-nakumpiskang-mackerel-shipments-ibigay-sa-dswd-para-sa-relief-efforts/>

ABANTE TONITE:

Isda, gulay price hike `di maawat

November 25, 2024

Malaki ang itinaas ng presyo ng ilang isda at gulay dahil sa mga nagdaang bagyo na nanalasa sa bansa.

Patuloy ang pagtaas ng presyo ng ilang isda at gulay sa Guadalupe Public Market.

Kabilang ang galunggong sa tumaas ang presyo na noong nakaraang linggo ay P260 pa kada kilo ngunit nasa P300 na ngayon.

Mayroon naman mabibiling mas mura sa ibang puwesto pero hindi rin nalalayo sa P300 ang kada kilo.

Nagmahal din ang kada kilo ng mga sumusunod na isda: matambaka (P320 hanggang P340), espada (P300-P350), pusit (P400-P450), bangus (P180-P200), tilapia (P160).

Sa mga gulay malaki ang itinaas sa presyo talong na dating P100 ang kada kilo pero ngayon ay P180 na.

Narito ang presyo ng iba pang gulay: repolyo (P100-P140), ampalaya (P100-P160), carrots (P150-P200), bell pepper (P300-P400), patatas (P80-P120), mais (P80-100).

Samantala, bagamat tumaas umano ang puhunan sa baboy, nananatiling P330 ang kada kilo nito Guadalupe Public Market. (Don King Zarate)

<https://tonite.abante.com.ph/2024/11/25/isda-gulay-price-hike-di-maawat/>