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MANILA BULLETIN:

DA, BFAR defend closed-fishing season amid call for suspension

BY JEL SANTOS

Dec 14, 2024 03:02 PM



(MB FILE PHOTO)

The Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) on Saturday, Dec. 14, defended the annual closed-fishing season, saying the science-based measure is essential for protecting marine resources and ensuring food security.

In a statement, the DA said that the ban, implemented from November to March in key fishing areas, ensures the sustainability of fish production by protecting spawning grounds of vital species like sardines, mackerel, and round scad.

“Importation addresses temporary supply gaps caused by the closed-fishing season or events like typhoons. It complements, not replaces, local fish production to keep prices stable,” said DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.

The government’s defense comes after Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) criticized the policy, calling it a “scourge” to fisherfolk.

The progressive fishers’ group argued that the ban creates an “artificial shortage” of fish, which justifies importation and drives down the value of local catches.

“Lumilikha ng artipisyal na shortage ang closed fishing season na nagbibigay katwiran para mag-angkat ng tone-toneladang isda. Sa huli, ang mga mangingisda ang talo (The closed fishing season creates an artificial shortage that justifies the importation of tons of fish. In the end, it is the fishermen who lose out),” Ronnel Arambulo, the vice chairperson of Pamalakaya, said in a statement.

Pamalakaya called for an end to the policy, claiming it prioritizes importation over strengthening local fish production.

“Dapat bigyang prayoridad ang pagpapalakas ng lokal na produksyon (Priority should be given to strengthening local production),” Arambulo added.

BFAR Executive Director Isidro Velayo Jr., however, stressed that the closed-fishing season is rooted in science and stakeholder consultations.

He explained that fish species like sardines in the Zamboanga Peninsula spawn heavily from November to February, and the ban allows their stocks to recover.

“Protecting spawning areas during this period ensures sustainable fish stocks for the long term,” Velayo said.

To mitigate the impact on affected fisherfolk, the DA said the government provides fuel subsidies, livelihood assistance, and aquaculture programs.

Meanwhile, the DA recently approved the importation of an additional 8,000 metric tons of frozen fish, on top of the earlier allocation of 30,000 metric tons, to address supply disruptions caused by typhoons.

The closed-fishing season covers major fishing grounds, including the Visayan Sea, Palawan, and Zamboanga Peninsula. In the Visayan Sea, the ban affects 33 coastal towns across Regions V, VI, and VII, including nine towns in Iloilo and four in Capiz.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/12/14/da-bfar-defend-closed-fishing-season>

Marcos orders intensified drive vs agricultural smuggling

BY ARGYLL CYRUS GEDUCOS

Dec 14, 2024 12:18 PM

AT A GLANCE

- According to the President, the seized mackerel, declared fit for human consumption by the BFAR, will be distributed to families in evacuation centers who have been affected by recent adversities.

President Marcos has directed the Bureau of Customs (BOC) and the Department of Agriculture (DA) to intensify the campaign against agricultural smugglers as they disrupt the supply chain and impact the prices of goods in the market.



DISTRIBUTION OF SEIZED MACKEREL — President Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr. oversees the distribution of confiscated frozen mackerel to Barangay 649 residents in Tondo, Manila, on Dec. 14, 2024. From the 21 seized vans of smuggled fish worth P178.5 million, 21,000 households each receive two kilos. (Mark Balmores)

Marcos said this as he led the inspection of P178.5 million of smuggled mackerel in Manila on Saturday, Dec. 14.

In his remarks, the President said that the seizure of the smuggled mackerel marks the first case filed under Republic Act (RA) No. 12022 or the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act of 2024.

"Kaya't ito yung buong tinatawag na chain na kailangan nating buwagin (This is the chain that we need to dismantle)," he said.

"[This] is the first case under the new law. I've spoken to our Bureau of Customs, and I've spoken to the Department of Agriculture and we have to keep going. Kailangang patibayin pa natin ito (We need to strengthen this)," he added.

As he led the inspection of 21 container vans of frozen mackerels at the Port Area in Manila, Marcos cited the importance of government agencies working together to combat agricultural smuggling.

The BOC's Intelligence and Investigation Service (CIIS) and the Manila International Container Port (MICP) intercepted the shipment.

The frozen goods, valued at approximately P178.5 million, were seized by the BOC in collaboration with the DA's Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR).

According to the President, the seized mackerel, declared fit for human consumption by the BFAR, will be distributed to families in evacuation centers who have been affected by recent adversities. This will be done through the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and other groups such as the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor).

The donation was formalized through a Deed of Donation and Acceptance, signed by BOC Commissioner Bienvenido Rubio and DA Secretary Francisco Tiu-Laurel Jr., with the support of Finance Secretary Ralph Recto.

The seized mackerel will be distributed to marginalized barangays across the 17 local government units (LGUS) in Metro Manila, as well as one LGU each in Central Luzon and Calabarzon. The beneficiaries will also include individuals in city jails, public hospitals, and various care facilities.

An estimated 150,000 families are expected to benefit from the donation, which will begin distribution on the same day, ensuring immediate support to communities in need.

Authorities reported that 58,800 cartons in 21 containers of frozen mackerel shipments from China arrived at the MICP on Sept. 28 and 29.

Officials said the shipment violated DA Memorandum Order No. 14, s. 2024, which suspends the issuance of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Import Clearances for the importation of round scads, mackerel, and bonito.

The BOC has seized P5.87 billion worth of smuggled agricultural products from July 2022 to November 2024.

It has filed 250 cases involving agricultural products worth P8.59 billion from 2018 to 2024. The BOC recorded four convictions involving the illicit importation of agricultural products.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/12/14/intensified-drive-vs-agri-smuggling>

MANILA BULLETIN:

₱40/kilo rice now available to more markets, train stations, says DA

BY JEL SANTOS

Dec 13, 2024 03:21 PM



The Department of Agriculture (DA) has expanded its Rice-for-All program, which offers rice at ₱40 per kilo, by adding more public markets and train stations to ensure affordable rice is accessible to more Filipinos.

DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. led the rollout of “Kadiwa ng Pangulo” kiosks at the Pasay City Public Market on Friday, Dec. 13.

The agency said that the kiosks sell well-milled rice at ₱40 per kilo as part of President Marcos Jr.'s initiative to provide affordable rice options.

“The [Rice-for-All] program...is a realization of President Bongbong Marcos’ vision to provide affordable rice options to more Filipinos. This program is separate from the ₱29 rice initiative, which specifically supports vulnerable sectors, including senior citizens, persons with disabilities, solo parents, and indigents,” said Laurel.

The agriculture chief emphasized that the DA aims to broaden the reach of KADIWA kiosks to additional cities and municipalities in the coming weeks, ensuring that rice prices accurately reflect prevailing market conditions.

Laurel added that the initiative complements the President's move to lower rice tariffs to 15 percent back in July.

From its initial launch at five markets and select train stations in August, the Rice-for-All program has now expanded to nine new locations.

These include public markets in Maypajo (Caloocan), Murphy and Cloverleaf Balintawak (Quezon City), La Huerta (Parañaque), and Trabajo (Sampaloc, Manila). The program also now serves key train stations such as Cubao (LRT-2), Recto (LRT-2), North Avenue (MRT-3), and Ayala Avenue (MRT-3).

The Rice-for-All program operates under the DA's Kadiwa ng Pangulo initiative, which is supported by the Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Service and Food Terminal Inc.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/12/13/40-kilo-rice-now-available-to-more-markets-train-stations-says-da>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Tiangco hails expansion of Rice for All program: 'Sakto sa Kapaskuhan'

BY ELLSON QUISMORIO

Dec 14, 2024 05:26 PM

AT A GLANCE

- Navotas lone district Rep. Toby Tiangco lauded the Department of Agriculture (DA) for its timely move of expanding its Rice-for-All program during the holiday season.



Navotas lone district Rep. Toby Tiangco

Navotas lone district Rep. Toby Tiangco lauded the Department of Agriculture (DA) for its timely move of expanding its Rice for All program during the holiday season.

Tiangco said this will allow more Filipinos to purchase more affordable rice.

“Sakto sa Kapaskuhan ang pagpapalawak ng implementation ng Rice-for-All Program. Mabibili na sa mas marami pang public markets, pati na train stations, ang P40 kada kilo na bigas kaya maiibsan din nito ang mga gastusin ng ating mga kababayan,” he said.

(The expanded implementation of the Rice-for-All program is timely for Christmas. This will expand the availability of P40-per-kilo rice at public markets and train stations, which will ease the burden of cost on our countrymen.)

Tiangco said the program aligns with the administration's commitment to fight inflation and lower the prices of goods.

"The President's marching orders have always been clear - we must take every step possible to keep prices down and help Filipinos deal with inflation," he said.

"I'm confident this program will continue to expand, given the President's clear directive to explore all avenues to lower the prices of food staples. Kahit papa'no, mas masaya ang Pasko kung mas magaan sa bulsa ang mga biling tulad ng bigas," he added.

(Christmas will somewhat be happier if basic goods like rice will become cheaper.)

According to DA, rice priced at ₱40 per kilo under the program is now available in Maypajo Public Market (Caloocan City), Murphy Market and Cloverleaf Balintawak (Quezon City), La Huerta Market (Parañaque City), and Trabajo Market (Sampaloc, Manila).

The Rice-for-All program is also accessible at Light Rail Transit (LRT) Recto Station and the Metro Rail Transit (MRT) stations in Ayala, North Avenue, and Cubao.

"We commend the Department of Agriculture, led by Secretary Tiu, for their relentless efforts to bring down the prices of basic food commodities across the country," he added.

https://mb.com.ph/2024/12/14/tiangco-hails-expansion-of-rice-for-all-program#google_vignette

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Big unprogrammed funds contained in 2025 budget



AT GROUND LEVEL - Satur C. Ocampo - The Philippine Star

December 14, 2024 | 12:00am

A record-high P6.149 trillion in unprogrammed funds have been inserted in the 2025 national budget approved by Congress' bicameral conference committee this week.

This has instantly evoked suspicions among budget observers that the huge additional fund may be availed of by House members in their campaign for re-election in the mid-term polls in May. This, in light of their having increased – by more than 100 percent – the House of Representatives' budget, from P16.3 billion this year to P33.7 billion in 2025.

It's not clear, from media reportage on the national budget, if that huge amount was different from the P531.665-billion in unprogrammed funds that the national government can use to address unexpected situations or prioritized important projects.

Under the National Expenditure Program (NEP), unprogrammed funds amounted to only P158.665 billion, but the House increased it by P373 billion.

The original program for the national budget was set at P5.767 trillion. This represented P4.009 trillion under the 2024 national budget and P1.757 trillion in automatic appropriations, continuing appropriations from 2023 and unprogrammed appropriations.

Apparently, P382.327 billion in additional unprogrammed appropriations have been inserted in the running budget.

In this regard, the contentious Ayuda para sa Kapos ang Kita Program (AKAP) has been restored by the bicameral conference committee. Introduced as a “surprise insertion” by the House in the 2024 national budget, the AKAP provision was heavily criticized by several senators, because it was neither in the NEP nor in the Senate's approved version of the 2024 annual budget.

Sen. Grace Poe, chairperson of the Senate appropriations committee, explained to the media the Senate's move on the controversial program. She said:

“We have agreed to reduce the AKAP fund. From the initial amount that the House asked for [that was] P39 billion, if I am not mistaken, we were able to lower it to about P26 billion.”

Aside from being a last-minute insertion, the AKAP program was criticized for its “loose wording.” Moreover, it is only being widely available for members of the House.

As a compromise, the House – which has the prerogative to introduce additions to the national budget that it prepares – agreed to provide P5-million AKAP funds for the members of the Senate.

Teodoro Casiño, a former legislator now chairman of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan), criticized the AKAP program as a “glaring attempt to legalize ‘ayuda politics’ in time for the 2025 elections.”

“By routing funds through politicians,” he added, AKAP “paves the way for massive vote-buying under the guise of financial assistance, turning the General Appropriations Act (national budget) into an instrument for electioneering.”

A genuine “people’s budget,” Casiño pointed out, should “prioritize the needs of ordinary Filipinos – health, education and livelihood – not the ambitions and pockets of a privileged few.”

The AKAP is supposedly aimed at providing financial aid to people who are unemployed or who earn much less than the minimum wage. The AKAP fund is assigned for implementation by the DSWD.

Unprogrammed appropriations, it must be noted, may only be availed of when revenue is collected from new taxes or from non-tax sources, or there are approved loans for foreign-assisted projects. These factors have not been cited as existing by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

This year, the DBM has already adjusted the national budget two times: it added P65.173 billion last September and, in October, it added P98.904 billion more.

But that hasn't been all: latest data from the DBM showed that P121.875 billion in unprogrammed funds were added to the national budget in November, the Business Mirror reported yesterday.

Also, DBM figures show that additional funds were given to the following executive departments: P86.037 billion to the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH); P5 billion to the Department of Social Work and Development (DSWD); P2.973 billion to the DPWH, Department of Transportation (DOTr) and the Department of Agriculture (DA) as support for foreign-assisted projects; and P2.816 billion to the Department of Health (DOH) to fund priority social programs for health.

The Department of National Defense has been given a notable increase of P8.857 billion. Besides that, the national government provided P4.320 billion as support for the controversial

“barangay development program” of the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC).

Moreover, the 2025 national budget included an increase in soldiers’ subsistence allowance from P150 to P350 a day, or P10,500 a month. Speaker Martin Romualdez disclosed that Marcos Jr. had directed the increase.

Other executive departments were given budgetary increases, as follows: Information and Communications Technology (DICT), P4.007 billion; Tourism, P262.269 million; Trade and Industry (DTI), P1.520 million; DENR, P162 million; DILG, P131.4 million; DAR, P108.6 million; DFA, P415.222 million; Migrant Workers, P245 million; Finance, P6.818 million; NEDA, P59.597 million; Presidential Communications Office, P18.254 million and Mindanao Development Authority, P339.327 million.

On the other hand, the following executive departments and agencies have suffered cuts in their annual budgets: DSWD took the biggest cut of P15.923 billion; Commission on Higher Education, P26.912 billion; DOH, P25.795 billion; DA, P20 billion; DOLE, P18.3 billion and DOTr, P16.083 billion.

Although the 1987 Constitution provides that education must be allotted the highest budget, it got a big slash of P11.569 billion. Similarly, state colleges and universities also suffered budget cuts, totalling P7.233 billion. Other reduced allocations were those of the DOJ, P1.603 billion; Housing and Urban Development, P583 million and Science and Technology, P172.5 million.

The proposed budget for the Office of the Vice President (Sara Duterte) has been reduced by P1.3 billion, retaining only its P733-million allocation as previously approved by both chambers of Congress. The slashed fund was reallocated between the DOH and the DSWD.

No national government subsidy for 2025 has been allocated to PhilHealth. This was because, according to Senator Poe, the initial allocation of P74 billion was removed in the bicameral committee approved budget because the agency has not yet used its P600-billion reserve fund.

<https://www.philstar.com/opinion/2024/12/14/2407193/big-unprogrammed-funds-contained-2025-budget>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DA expands rice-for-all program in Metro Manila

[Romina Cabrera](#) - The Philippine Star

December 14, 2024 | 12:00am



Individuals line up for affordable rice sold at P29 per kilo at the Kadiwa store inside the National Irrigation Administration Office in Quezon City on July 5, 2024.

The STAR / Michael Varcas

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) has expanded its rice-for-all program, which sells rice at P40 kilo, to more public markets and train stations in Metro Manila.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, who led the latest rollout of the Kadiwa ng Pangulo kiosk at the Pasay City Public Market yesterday, said the government aims to increase the number of Kadiwa stores in the coming weeks to ensure more Filipinos have access to reasonably priced rice.

“We will continue to expand these Kadiwa kiosks to more cities and municipalities in the coming weeks to ensure that rice prices reflect true market conditions, especially following President Marcos’ decision to reduce tariffs from 35 percent to 15 percent in July,” Tiu Laurel said.

The DA has expanded the program to nine additional locations, which include markets in Caloocan, Quezon City and Paranaque, and in Sampaloc, Manila.

It has also opened Kadiwa stores in key stations in Cubao, Recto, North Avenue and Ayala Avenue.

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2024/12/14/2407297/da-expands-rice-all-program-metro-manila>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Philippines milk imports to hit 2.65 million metric tons

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

December 14, 2024 | 12:00am



In its Dairy Market Review, the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) projected that the Philippines' dairy imports would hit 2.648 million MT this year, about 325,000 MT higher than last year's 2.323 million MT.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — The country's imports of milk and milk products are seen increasing by 14 percent to over 2.6 million metric tons (in milk equivalent) this year, driven by higher demand from food processors coupled by softer world market prices.

In its Dairy Market Review, the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) projected that the Philippines' dairy imports would hit 2.648 million MT this year, about 325,000 MT higher than last year's 2.323 million MT.

The full-year import forecast is close to the country's 2020-2022 import average of 2.653 million MT, based on FAO data.

The FAO attributed the increase to improved consumer demand and increased food service sales in the country.

The international agency noted that there has been "increasing spending on food consumed out of home and the overall increased demand from the hotel, restaurant and institutional sector" in the Philippines.

The Philippines was cited as one of the countries that would contribute to the marginal increase in global dairy trade, which is estimated to grow by 0.4 percent year-on-year to 85 million MT this year.

“This relatively stable trade outlook is mainly driven by improved consumer demand and increased food service sales in some countries induced by the post COVID-19 recovery of tourism, the increasing spending on food consumed out of home and the overall increased demand from the hotel, restaurant and institutional sector, notably in the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Algeria, Mexico and the United States,” the FAO said.

The Philippines is seen as one of the countries that would mitigate the decline in global skimmed milk powder trade, according to the FAO. World SMP trade is projected to fall by 1.8 percent year-on-year to 2.6 million MT, the FAO added.

“More positive demand prospects are expected in the Philippines and Indonesia, especially after last year’s decreases, induced by higher demand from the food processing and services sectors and relatively lower international SMP prices,” the international agency said. Meanwhile, the country’s domestic milk output will grow by more than six percent to 32,000 MT from last year’s 30,000 MT, the FAO projected. The Philippines will surpass its average output of 28,000 MT from 2020 to 2022, according to the FAO.

The country imports virtually all of its dairy supplies as local production remains miniscule. The National Dairy Authority (NDA), tasked to oversee nationwide dairy production, plans to hike the country’s milk sufficiency ratio to five percent by 2028 from the current level of 1.5 percent.

Some of the agency’s plans to achieve the target include expanding the national dairy herd, boosting milk yields, creating demand, raising public awareness and increasing farmers’ incomes.

The NDA targets to grow the national dairy herd through stock farms, multiplier farms and nucleus farms. He explained that imported cattle would be acclimatized at stock farms before their offspring are distributed to multiplier farms and eventually to farmer beneficiaries.

The NDA is set to construct five stock farms across key locations: General Tinio in Nueva Ecija, Ubay in Bohol, Malaybalay in Bukidnon, Carmen in Cotabato and Prosperidad in Agusan del Sur.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/12/14/2407173/philippines-milk-imports-hit-265-million-metric-tons>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Marcos wants tougher action vs agri smugglers

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

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 02:33 PM December 14, 2024



This photo shows the turnover of the confiscated P178.5 million worth of frozen mackerel to the Department of Agriculture (DA) at the Manila International Container Port on Saturday, December 14, 2024, with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. (2nd from left), DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel (2nd from right), Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla (left) and Bureau of Customs chief Bienvenido Rubio (right). (Photo from the Bureau of Customs)

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Saturday ordered the Bureau of Customs (BOC) and the Department of Agriculture (DA) to strictly implement the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act or Republic Act No. 12022.

According to Marcos, the chain enabling smugglers to continue profiting from people must be broken.

“I’ve spoken to our Bureau of Customs, and I’ve spoken to the Department of Agriculture and we have to keep going. We need to strengthen this further,” Marcos said in a statement.

This came after Marcos led the turnover of the seized frozen mackerel worth P178.5 million to the Department of Agriculture.

The frozen goods arrived at the Manila International Container Port last September 28 and 29 without the necessary permits from the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources.

Marcos also noted that the smuggling of 21 containers of frozen mackerel marked the first instance under the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act.

The law categorizes smuggling, hoarding, profiteering, and cartel operations as acts of sabotage and are subject to non-bailable offenses punishable by life imprisonment.

“The key to this was coordination between the different agencies. That’s always the most important because the different agencies were all working together, all the way up to the end,” Marcos added.

Marcos then expressed optimism on the continued operations against smugglers of agricultural products.

“We need to control, we need to supervise our food supply,” he said.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2015542/marcos-wants-tougher-action-vs-agri-smugglers>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

BOC: Seized P178.5-million frozen mackerel to benefit 150,000 families

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

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 01:47 PM December 14, 2024



This photo shows the turnover of the confiscated P178.5 million worth of frozen mackerel to the Department of Agriculture (DA) at the Manila International Container Port on Saturday, December 14, 2024, with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. (2nd from left), DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel (2nd from right), Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla (left) and Bureau of Customs chief Bienvenido Rubio (right). (Photo from the Bureau of Customs)

MANILA, Philippines — Approximately 150,000 families will benefit from the seized frozen mackerel worth P178.5 million, the Bureau of Customs (BOC) said Saturday.

According to the BOC, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., the Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Social Welfare and Development, and Department of Interior and Local Government will distribute the frozen goods to 17 local government units in Metro Manila and in one region each in Region III and Region IV-A.

“An estimated 150,000 families are expected to benefit from the donation, which will begin distribution on the same day, ensuring immediate support to communities in need,” the BOC said in a statement.

It added that the donation will also be given to city jails, public hospitals, and care facilities.

The BOC also said that President Marcos the donation of the frozen mackerel to the DA during his inspection at the Manila International Container Port on Saturday, adding that the chief executive “underscored the importance of utilizing forfeited goods for the benefit of the people.”

The shipment arrived at the port last September 28 and 29 without complying with the necessary Sanitary and Phytosanitary Import Clearance from the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources.

Upon getting abandoned and forfeited, laboratory tests were conducted to ensure that the mackerel is safe for human consumption, the BOC added.

READ: BOC seizes P2-M smuggled onions in Manila

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1990321/boc-seizes-p2-m-smuggled-onions-in-manila>

[**https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2015530/boc-seized-p178-5-million-frozen-mackerel-to-benefit-150000-families**](https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2015530/boc-seized-p178-5-million-frozen-mackerel-to-benefit-150000-families)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Bird flu case in Camarines Norte will not affect retail prices, supply

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

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 10:36 AM December 13, 2024



INQUIRER FILE PHOTO

The Department of Agriculture (DA) said the detection of the first case of bird flu in Camarines Norte won't affect retail prices and supply amid the holiday season.

The Bureau of Animal (BAI) said on Wednesday that Camarines Norte recorded its first case of highly pathogenic avian influenza this month, the latest area to be hit by this animal disease.

"We do not see any impact of the new active case of avian influenza in Talisay, Camarines Norte... [on local supply]," Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said in a Zoom interview on Thursday.

"It will not have an impact on [retail] prices," de Mesa, concurrently serving as the DA's spokesperson, told reporters.

De Mesa said only Pandi, Bulacan and Talisay, Camarines Norte have active cases of bird flu based on the latest tally while previously reported cases were already controlled.

"But then again if you look at our cases, our bird flu incidents are easily controlled. And immediately, once controlled, we will declare the area bird-flu free," he added.

The BAI launched an investigation following the detection of type A subtype H5N2 at a duck farm located in Talisay, which was reported by the Animal Disease Diagnosis and Reference Laboratory on Dec. 6.

This would trace the movement of birds and identify additional risks while the DA's regional field office in Bicol has activated its command center to oversee operations.

This was the first time that BAI recorded this type of strain but de Mesa said the agency still has to disclose the incident for transparency purposes.

“The more common strain is H5N1. If you will research H5N1, you'll find it is more virulent and spreads more easily compared to H5N2, which is less likely to be transmitted to humans. In other words, H5N2 has a lesser impact, but it still needs to be reported by the [BAI],” he added.

While getting to the bottom of this situation, the BAI already culled infected animals on Dec. 10 and concluded the 1-kilometer surveillance the following day.

De Mesa assured that certain measures are in place to curb the spread of bird flu and other animal diseases in the Philippines including quarantine and biosecurity protocols.

According to the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), avian influenza is a highly contagious viral disease affecting both domestic and wild birds. It is caused by viruses divided into multiple subtypes whose genetic characteristics rapidly evolve.

In Metro Manila markets, whole chicken retailed between P175 and P240 per kilogram as of Dec. 11, higher than P140-P200 per kg on the same day a year ago, according to the DA's price monitoring.

<https://business.inquirer.net/496274/bird-flu-case-in-camarines-norte-will-not-affect-retail-prices-supply>

REMATE:

Mas maigting na aksyon vs smuggling ng agri products ipinakakasa ni PBBM

December 14, 2024 14:38



MANILA, Philippines- Inatasan ni Pangulong Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. ang Bureau of Customs (BOC) at ang Department of Agriculture (DA) para paigtingin ang implementasyon ng Republic Act No. 12022 o ang Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act of 2024.

Ipinalabas ng Pangulo ang kautusan kasunod ng pag-inspeksyon sa P178.5 milyong halaga ng smuggled mackerel sa Maynila, araw ng Sabado.

Binigyang-diin ni Pangulong Marcos ang pangangailangan ng pinaigting na aksyon laban sa smugglers na nakasisira sa supply chain, labis na nakaaapekto sa presyo ng agricultural products sa lokal na pamilihan.

Iginiit ng Chief Executive ang pagkakasamsam sa smuggled mackerel ay tanda ng unang kaso na isinampa sa Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act of 2024.

“Kaya’t ito ‘yung buong tinatawag na chain na kailangan nating buwagin,” ayon kay Pangulong Marcos.

“At ito’y, as I said, is the first case under the new law of the Anti-Agricultural Sabotage Act. So, I’ve spoken to our Bureau of Customs, and I’ve spoken to the Department of Agriculture and we have to keep going. Kailangang patibayin pa natin ito,” dagdag na wika nito.

Sa kabilang dako, pinangunahan ni Pangulong Marcos ang pag-inspeksyon sa 21 container vans ng frozen mackerel sa Port Area sa Maynila. Ang shipment ay naharang ng Intelligence and Investigation Service (CIIS) ng BOC sa Manila International Container Port (MICP).

Ang frozen goods, nagkakahalaga ng P178.5 milyon ay nasamsam ng BOC sa pakikipagtulungan sa Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) ng DA.

“Ang naging susi rito ay ang coordination between the different agencies. ‘Yun lagi ang pinakamahalaga because the different agencies were all working together, all the way up to the end. Because ang end-consumer nito, DSWD,” ayon kay Pangulong Marcos.

Winika pa ng Pangulo na ang mga nasamsam na mackerel ay ipamamahagi sa mga pamilya sa evacuation centers na apektado ng kamakailan lamang na sakuna.

Isasagawa ito sa pamamagitan ng Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) at iba pang grupo gaya ng Bureau of Corrections (BuCor).

Idineklara naman ng BFAR na ang mackerel ay angkop para sa human consumption.

Iniulat ng mga awtoridad na noong Sept. 28 at 29, may kabuuang 58,800 karton sa 21 containers ng frozen mackerel shipments mula Tsina ang dumating sa MICP.

Sinabi ng mga opisyal, na ang shipment, consigned sa Pacific Sealand Foods Corp., ay lumabag sa DA Memorandum Order No. 14, s. 2024 na nagsususpende sa pagpapalabas ng Sanitary and Phytosanitary Import Clearances para sa importasyon ng “scads, mackerel, at bonito.”

Nasamsam din ng BOC ang P5.87 bilyong halaga ng smuggled agricultural products mula July 2022 hanggang November 2024 bilang bahagi ng government efforts para tugunan ang agricultural sabotage.

Naghain naman ang ahensya ng 250 kaso na may kinalaman sa agricultural products na nagkakahalaga ng P8.59 billion mula 2018 hanggang 2024.

Iniulat ng BOC ang apat na convictions na may kinalaman sa illicit importation ng agricultural products. **Kris Jose**

<https://remate.ph/mas-maigting-na-aksyon-vs-smuggling-ng-agri-products-ipinakakasan-pbbm/>

REMATE:

Kadiwa ng Pangulo Rice-for-All program pinalawig

December 14, 2024 09:14



MANILA, Philippines- Pinalawig ng Department of Agriculture (DA) ang footprint ng Kadiwa ng Pangulo Rice-for-All program kiosks, kung saan nagbebenta ito ng bigas sa mas mababang halaga, sa mas maraming pampublikong pamilihan at metro light rail stations sa Metro Manila.

Sinabi ng DA nitong Biyernesd na kasunod ng initial rollout noong nakaraang linggo ng Rice-for-All program sa limang public markets at piling train stations sa National Capital Region (NCR), palalawigin nito ang inisyatiba sa siyam na karagdagang lokasyon.

Kabilang sa mga bagong pamilihan at LRT/MRT stations ang Maypajo Public Market (Caloocan City), Murphy Market at Cloverleaf Balintawak (Quezon City), La Huerta Market (Parañaque City), Trabajo Market (Sampaloc, Manila), at ilang key train stations —Cubao (LRT2), Recto (LRT2), North Avenue (MRT3), at Ayala Avenue (MRT3).

Sinabi ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. na “the [Rice-for-All] program, which offers well-milled rice at P40 per kilo, is a realization of President Bongbong Marcos’ vision to provide affordable rice options to more Filipinos.”

“This program is separate from the P29 rice initiative, which specifically supports vulnerable sectors, including senior citizens, persons with disabilities, solo parents, and indigents,” dagdag ng opisyal.

Inihayag ng Agriculture chief na ipagpapatuloy ng DA ang pagpapalawig sa Kadiwa ng Pangulo kiosks na nag-aalok ng P40 per kilo rice “to more cities and municipalities in the coming weeks to ensure that rice prices reflect true market conditions, especially following President Marcos’ decision to reduce tariffs from 35% to 15% in July.”

“The DA will be unrelenting in pushing this program to keep rice traders and retailers honest, and ensure consumers aren’t taken advantage of by unscrupulous businessmen,” aniya pa.

Ang Rice-for-All program ay isang inisyatiba sa ilalim ng Kadiwa ng Pangulo program — kolaborasyon sa pagitan ng Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Service ng DA at Food Terminal Inc. (FTI). **RNT/SA**

<https://remate.ph/kadiwa-ng-pangulo-rice-for-all-program-pinalawig/>

REMATE:

Presyo ng manok, itlog ‘di tataas sa gitna ng bird flu sa CamNor – DA

December 13, 2024 08:16



MANILA, Philippines – Tiniyak ng Department of Agriculture (DA) sa publiko na walang tataas sa presyo ng itlog at manok sa kapaskuhan, sa kabila ng pagtuklas ng Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) H5N2 sa isang duck farm sa Camarines Norte.

Kinumpirma ng Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) ang aktibong kaso noong Disyembre 6, na minarkahan ang pangalawang lugar na may patuloy na kaso ng avian flu, kasunod ng Pandi, Bulacan.

Sinabi ni DA Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa sa isang panayam sa Zoom na ang mga aktibong kaso ay hindi makakaapekto sa mga presyo ng manok. Ang mga kasalukuyang presyo ay nananatiling stable, na may buong manok mula

PHP175 hanggang PHP240 kada kilo, at maliliit na itlog na nasa pagitan ng PHP7 hanggang PHP8.75 bawat isa.

Ipinaliwanag ni De Mesa na ang H5N2, na naitala sa bansa sa unang pagkakataon, ay hindi gaanong virulent at naililipat kumpara sa mas karaniwang H5N1 strain. Ang BAI ay aktibong nag-iimbestiga sa pinagmulan ng virus at tinitiyak ang mahigpit na mga hakbang upang maprotektahan ang industriya ng hayop at manok.

“We will remain vigilant in addressing all transboundary diseases,” giit ni De Mesa. *Santi Celario*

<https://remate.ph/presyo-ng-manok-itlog-di-tataas-sa-gitna-ng-bird-flu-sa-camnor-da/>