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**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

## *DA to offer ‘nutri, sulit rice’ soon*

[Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

December 9, 2024 | 12:00am



Workers unload sacks of premium rice from a trailer truck in Caloocan City on October 3, 2024.

Miguel De Guzman / The Philippine STAR

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture will start selling “nutri rice” at P38 per kilo for consumers who have diabetes, a DA official said yesterday.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary for agribusiness, marketing and consumer affairs Genevieve Velicaria-Guevarra said the product is among the new affordable rice to be introduced by the DA.

On Thursday, the DA launched the P40-per-kilo rice under the Rice-for-All program in five markets in Metro Manila.

“For our New Year offering, we will introduce a new variety. It will be a good alternative not just for the nutrition aspect, but also because it is cheaper,” Guevarra said.

According to Guevarra, a test is being conducted to determine the nutritional level of “nutri rice” compared with regular white rice.

The DA will also introduce the “sulit rice” at P36 per kilo.

“It is white (rice) but super broken,” Guevarra said.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu-Laurel Jr. said the DA is formulating the guidelines for the nutritious and sulit rice.

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2024/12/09/2406045/da-offer-nutri-sulit-rice-soon>

**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

# *World Bank gives Philippines ‘very satisfactory rating’*

[Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

December 9, 2024 | 12:00am



In an interview, World Bank Task Team Leader to the PRDP and senior agriculture economist Mio Takada cited the very satisfactory results of the three-week mission conducted to assess the PRDP original and scale-up projects.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — The World Bank gave the Philippines a “very satisfactory rating” in the implementation of the P34-billion World Bank and European Union-funded projects under the Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP).

In an interview, World Bank Task Team Leader to the PRDP and senior agriculture economist Mio Takada cited the very satisfactory results of the three-week mission conducted to assess the PRDP original and scale-up projects.

“We have an opportunity to visit Mindanao in Bukidnon and Marinduque in Southern Luzon, all the activities are very satisfactory and people have very strong ownership on the ground and projects are maintained well,” Takada said.

She said the income of farmer beneficiaries also increased by 20 percent, adding that the PRDP projects helped in addressing poverty in the country.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) said the original PRDP project has benefitted more than three million Filipinos nationwide through 1,170 completed subprojects worth P34 billion.

According to Takada, the World Bank has already approved 75 infrastructure subprojects worth P11.44 billion under the PRDP scale-up project, 30 of which are under construction a year since its launch.

Takada said that local government units want to see the expansion of the PRDP activities in more areas, especially those recovering from the impact of COVID-19.

“They want to expand the support, that is why we are very glad to see the impacts of the projects,” she said.

According to Takada, the PDRP projects in Marinduque include farm-to-market roads to help farmers transport their coconut.

DA Assistant Secretary and PRDP national project director U-Nichols Manalo said that the farm-to-market roads improved the transportation of agriculture products.

“The reduction in travel time also increased the income of the farmers,” Manalo said.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/12/09/2406087/world-bank-gives-philippines-very-satisfactory-rating>

**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

# *Supplies of red onions enough to last until February*

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

December 9, 2024 | 12:00am



The fresh red onion and shallots supply as of Nov. 29 reached 44,506.11 MT which the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) estimated to be enough to meet the country's requirements for the commodity for 76 days or until Feb. 13, 2025.

MANILA, Philippines — The country's red onion stocks remain ample and could last until the middle of February next year, with current inventory reaching almost 45,000 metric tons (MT) at the end of November, according to latest government estimates.

The fresh red onion and shallots supply as of Nov. 29 reached 44,506.11 MT which the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) estimated to be enough to meet the country's requirements for the commodity for 76 days or until Feb. 13, 2025.

All of the country's red onion supplies this year were locally produced following a bumper harvest causing the government to stop any importation of the commodity.

Retail prices of red onions have remained stable and affordable throughout the year with the latest government price monitoring report showing that the commodity is fetching between P70 and P150 per kilo in Metro Manila markets despite the absence of imported supplies.

The BPI report showed that the most number of onion stocks was recorded in the National Capital Region at 21,221.17 MT followed by Central Luzon at 18,858.24 MT.

Meanwhile, the country's yellow onion stocks, which were all imported, during the reference period reached 1,854.57 MT, enough to last until next week, based on the BPI report.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. approved the additional importation of 1,000 MT of yellow onions two weeks ago to plug the shortfall in domestic stocks and prevent any price spikes in the retail market.

The agriculture chief approved earlier this year the importation of 16,000 MT of yellow onions to ensure that the country would have sufficient stocks of the spice until the end of the year.

“The additional imports cannot arrive after Dec. 30 because I think it is already enough (to fill the gap in supply),” Tiu Laurel said in an earlier interview.

Latest BPI data showed that as of Nov. 21, about 12,320 MT of yellow onions have arrived in the country.

Retail price of imported yellow onions in Metro Manila ranged from P70 to P160 per kilo, according to the Department of Agriculture.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/12/09/2405926/supplies-red-onions-enough-last-until-february>

**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:**

## *Cordillera brew fuels generations*

By: [Vincent Cabreza](#) - Reporter / [@Inquirer\\_Baguio](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 03:50 AM December 09, 2024



FROM HOMEGROWN BEANS Demand for coffee grew more during the pandemic when young Cordillerans began roasting, packing and selling homegrown coffee beans online. Soon they put up their own gourmet coffee shops. These days, small coffee stalls have sprouted in local markets and alleys for residents. —Photos by Neil Clark Ongchangco

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET, Philippines — In the 1970s, people would gather at corner stalls for a cup of coffee after finishing their market errands, whether in Baguio, in the Mountain Province capital of Bontoc, or in La Trinidad in Benguet, the province where one of the finest and most flavorful arabica beans are grown in the country.

However, the marketing of arabica coffee began to gain momentum in the 1990s, as coffee makers turned home brewing into an affordable luxury, according to Valentino Macanes, a professor and researcher at Benguet State University here.

Most backyards in Benguet grow arabica trees solely for personal consumption, he said.

As Metro Manila's chief supplier of vegetables, Benguet has grown a lucrative industry out of salad vegetables like cabbage and lettuce, which are planted in gardens carved from mountainsides. But becoming an equally robust trade as vegetables has been a bit of a struggle for coffee growers in the Cordillera.

The high altitude has been hospitable to the arabica, which has a sweet aftertaste, and the stronger robusta thriving in Kalinga province, but the mountains have insufficient farm areas for commercial coffee production, said Macanes, who serves as director of his university's Institute of Highland Farmer System and Agroforestry.

Many commercial coffee trees are grown under the canopies of rainforests, he said.

### **Side hustle**

Farmers consider coffee trees as a side hustle, Macanes pointed out.

"It takes three years for a new coffee tree to mature and become harvestable. It only takes two to three months for farmers to harvest vegetables which are sold quickly," he said.

Yet upland coffee remains a key component of the Philippine Coffee Roadmap, which the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Department Trade and Industry drew up to improve the Philippines' performance in the world coffee market.

The 2017-2022 roadmap worked out production enhancement programs and market scenarios to raise the Philippines' ranking after it placed 25th among the top coffee global producers in 2014 which was led by Brazil, data from the Food and Agriculture Organization showed.

The country produced 37,727 metric tons (MT) of green coffee beans that year compared to Brazil's 2,804,070 MT.

As of 2022, the Philippines produced 58,285 MT of green coffee beans (only 1 percent of the world's 10,782,334 MT production), according to data supplied by Miriam Pastor, point person for high-value crops at the DA Cordillera. The Cordillera generated 997.83 MT of the Philippines' 2022 production, which was grown in 5,162.11 hectares of upland farms.



Records place 1714 as the year Spanish Franciscan missionaries introduced coffee to what is now Lipa City in Batangas province, Macanes said.

By the early 1800s, the southern Tagalog region had coffee barons, many of them given the honorific “Don,” who dominated the market during that period, he said.

Arabica was brought to the Cordillera in the 19th century through the trade lane called the Spanish Trail which snakes through Benguet, Mountain Province and the borders of Ifugao, said Macanes, citing a historical account of Benguet arabica written by the Agnep Heritage Farm.

First introduced to Galliano (or Gallano, now La Union province’s Aringay town) by military Gov. Manuel Scheidnagel in 1875, arabica was transplanted in 1877 “to the plateaus at an altitude of 1,219 meters above sea level, or masl (4,000 feet) to 1,524 masl (5000 feet)” by the succeeding governor, Enrique Oraqa, who “distributed seeds among the people of the barrios of the province,” the Agnep paper says, drawing from Spanish accounts compiled by the 1903 Census of the Philippine Islands of the American colonial government.

Coffee became the subject of dispute when another Spanish governor tried to force Benguet communities to expand their plantations in 1888. The directive triggered an uprising in a community called Daklan where people tried to destroy the coffee trees, Macanes said, “but the plants sprouted back.”

Benguet communities like Kabayan town soon embraced backyard coffee trees. The beans were roasted over open fire and, when brewed as a morning beverage, “produced a smokey flavor people seemed to like,” Macanes said, which many modern Benguet households still practice.

### **Currency**

Macanes said coffee beans were so highly valued these were used as currency to pay local workers.

This still applies to some households in the region, he said. “These trees are sometimes how families cope when times are hard. They sometimes pay rent or tuition using coffee beans which is why their children still keep these trees around,” Macanes said.

Commercial demand for arabica and upland robusta grew at the turn of this century, when gourmet coffee shops started to proliferate in Metro Manila and major cities, including Baguio, between the late 1990s and the early 2000s, Macanes said.

Top coffee suppliers began trooping here, he said, including manufacturers of popular powdered coffee brands.

“They met with our bigger coffee farmers. But they immediately caved when they could not produce enough supply to fill up monthly orders for arabica,” Macanes said.

Benguet coffee again found its resurgence during the COVID-19 pandemic because young Ibaloy and Kankana-ey began packaging and selling arabica online and have put up start-up cafes for young consumers who love brewed coffee, he said. This trend applies to other Cordillera provinces, including Kalinga’s capital city of Tabuk.

Some of these young entrepreneurs have been roasting coffee beans harvested straight from their own backyard trees or larger farms, Macanes said. But limited supplies meant many of these coffee hubs could not expand, he said, because the average cluster of backyard trees could only generate about 2 kilos of beans.

## **Production**

A survey conducted by DA’s second Cordillera Highland Agricultural Resource Management Project tallied 1,944,947 coffee trees in the mountain region, and 1,021,940 of these are fruit-bearing, with the biggest concentrations in Kalinga (37 percent), Mountain Province (24 percent) and Benguet (20 percent).

But as of last year, Benguet still contributed 61 percent of the region’s green coffee bean production, with Kalinga (21 percent) and Ifugao (11 percent) trailing behind. Arabica represents 60 percent of the 2023 total production, followed by robusta (38 percent), and 1 percent each of the “liberica” and “excelsa” varieties.

Back in 2012, entrepreneur Pacita “Chit” Juan observed that coffee production nationwide has been dropping despite an increase in coffee consumption by Filipinos. That year, Juan served as chair of the Philippine Coffee Board.

That downtrend is reflected in DA Cordillera data. From 2014 to 2023, coffee production slid down to its lowest of 797.94 MT in 2019, picking up slightly to 1,003.13 MT in 2020 which was when the pandemic broke out. Production again dropped to 997.83 MT in 2022, before rising to 1,013.62 MT last year.

The DA has been spending for the rejuvenation of older coffee trees to jump-start harvest, from 69,131 old coffee trees located in nine sites in 2017 to 7,500 old coffee trees located in 12 sites in 2021. The agency also invested in pulpers, roasters, and even hermetic bags so farms can grow, process and package their beans.

### **Ancestral lands**

Macanes said the government had yet to tap another resource that is often neglected: ancestral domains.

Most indigenous communities in Cordillera towns have ancestral domain titles issued by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples to recognize their communal property which are watersheds or forestlands.

Macanes said domain owners could introduce coffee as their economic industry to their respective ancestral domain sustainable development and protection plan. These vast forests could serve as local hubs for coffee plantations and would easily triple Cordillera production once the coffee trees mature, he said.

Private companies have also tried to introduce coffee trees within Baguio forests, like the pine tree canopies of Camp John Hay.

The potential increase in production to be provided by ancestral lands should keep the businesses put up by IP children going by a hundred years, Macanes said.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2013571/cordillera-brew-fuels-generations>

**BUSINESS WORLD:**

# *Coconut output likely flat next year amid aging trees*

December 9, 2024 | 12:02 am



MICHAEL LOUIE-UNSPLASH

By **Adrian H. Halili**, *Reporter*

PHILIPPINE COCONUT production growth is likely to be flat next year given low yields from the country's aging trees, an industry player said.

"We estimate coconut production to stay at the levels similar to previous years as efforts to improve productivity will take time to bear fruit," Romeo I. Chan, Axelum Resources Corp. chairman and chief executive officer, said in an e-mailed reply to questions.

Philippine coconut output has steadily decreased in recent years as most of the country's fruit-bearing trees are now too old. Coconut and its by-products remain the country's top agricultural export.

The volume of coconut production hit 14.89 million metric tons (MT) in 2023, slightly lower than 14.93 million MT a year earlier, according to data from the Philippine Statistics Authority.

"At present, the most evident challenges are the low productivity of coconut trees and inadequate infrastructure support," Mr. Chan said. "Senile trees, weather disturbances and climate change have led to declining harvest yields over the years."

Last year, President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. ordered the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) to draft a plan to rehabilitate the coconut industry, including planting 100 million coconut trees by 2028.

Among the agency's rehabilitation plan seeks to address the advanced age of the nut-bearing trees. The agency is seeking to replant about 8.5 million coconut trees this year.

Under the Philippine Coconut Industry Development Plan 2024-2034, the replanting project is expected to increase coconut output by 4.7 billion nuts annually worth P33.1 billion by 2034.

In 2025, the PCA aims to replant 15.3 million trees, followed by 25.4 million yearly between 2026 and 2028.

Mr. Chan said the government's replanting goal could be reached if the state and private sector work together.

"In addition, the absence or lack of development in coconut regions has increasingly contributed to it being one of the most marginalized sectors, with coconut farmers considered among the poorest in the country," he added.

Mr. Chan said the struggling industry could be boosted with the appropriate use of the coco levy fund.

In 2021, Republic Act No. 11524 or the Coconut Farmers and Industry Trust Fund Act signed by then President Rodrigo R. Duterte mandated the creation of a fund that places coconut levy assets to a trust fund that will finance the rehabilitation and modernization of the industry.

"The proper utilization of the coco levy fund will be critical to help modernize the coconut industry, reinforce capabilities of smallholder farms and uplift coconut farming communities," he said.

The law also calls on the Bureau of the Treasury to transfer P10 billion to the trust fund, another P10 billion in the second year, P15 billion in the third year, another P15 billion in the fourth year and P25 billion in the fifth year.

Axelum is a Philippine Stock Exchange-listed manufacturer and exporter of coconut products.

<https://www.bworldonline.com/agribusiness/2024/12/09/639963/coconut-output-likely-flat-next-year-amid-aging-trees/>

**BUSINESS WORLD:**

# *DA seeks to boost palay yield in Iloilo province*

December 9, 2024 | 12:01 am



BW FILE

PHOTO

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) on Sunday said it would allocate P82.5 million more to boost rice production in farms in Iloilo province.

In a statement, the agency said the extra budget would fund 16,500 hectares more allotted for hybrid rice production in the province.

The agency said this would increase the farm area planted with unmilled rice by “more than 50%.”

“Weather permitting, the additional hectareage that will be planted with hybrid varieties should increase our rice harvest during this dry season,” Dennis R. Arpia, executive director for Region VI, said.

He added that attaining five metric tons (MT) per hectare on hybrid seeds would suffice despite the potential yield of 10 MT per hectare for the seed variety, citing the unpredictable weather in Western Visayas.

The average yield of palay in Iloilo was 3.4 MT per hectare in 2023, below the national average yield of 4.2 MT per hectare.

“If rains come during the flowering stage, they could significantly impact yields,” Mr. Arpia said.

Iloilo is among the country's top rice-producing provinces, producing 1.07 million MT last year or 5.33% of the total 20.06 million MT output in 2023.

The DA said the potential yield for rice in the province could be improved with higher-yield varieties, better irrigation, proper nutrition and recommended cultural management practices.

The department said some areas in Western Visayas have begun planting palay for the incoming dry season, while farmers have been delayed in their harvest due to El Niño. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/agribusiness/2024/12/09/639962/da-seeks-to-boost-palay-yield-in-iloilo-province/>

**THE MANILA TIMES:**

## *P82.5-M in fresh funds to boost Iloilo rice yield*

By Giselle P. Jordan  
December 9, 2024

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) has approved a supplemental P82.5-million budget to increase rice production in Iloilo, one of the country's biggest producers of the staple.

With the additional funds, the DA's Region 6 office will be able to further support hybrid rice production in the province, expanding a program to an additional 16,500 hectares.

Region 6 comprises the provinces of Aklan, Antique, Capiz, Iloilo, Guimaras and Negros Occidental, with a total of 322,000 hectares for rice planting, or 14 percent of the country's total rice production.

However, its yield is below the national average of 4.2 metric tons (MT) per hectare, amounting to just 3.4 MT in 2023. This is expected to improve with agricultural interventions such as higher-yield varieties, irrigation guarantees, proper nutrition, and management practices.

DA Region 6 director Dennis Arpia said that if weather conditions permitted, additional land would be planted with hybrid rice varieties. While hybrid rice can yield up to 10 metric tons per hectare under ideal circumstances, he said just 5 metric tons of harvest would be fine given the unpredictable weather conditions.

While farmers in parts of the Western Visayas region have started planting for the dry season, others are just winding up their harvests due to delays caused by El Niño.



[https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/12/09/business/top-business/p825-m-in-fresh-funds-to-boost-iloilo-rice-yield/2018112?fbclid=IwY2xjawHDG8xleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHRa-zYzTMhLxyAWFqV-cKNNYbUnPOrQX0y13Tvs6w3IHxMiCadyxwZQsA\\_aem\\_nw9-VccES\\_dIRes8XbIn-Q](https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/12/09/business/top-business/p825-m-in-fresh-funds-to-boost-iloilo-rice-yield/2018112?fbclid=IwY2xjawHDG8xleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHRa-zYzTMhLxyAWFqV-cKNNYbUnPOrQX0y13Tvs6w3IHxMiCadyxwZQsA_aem_nw9-VccES_dIRes8XbIn-Q)

**BUSINESS MIRROR:**

## *‘Agri policy tweaks to bolster PHL food security’*

Butch Fernandez  
December 9, 2024

Greater government support through the amendments to the Agricultural Tariffication Act of 1996 will allow planters to increase the nation’s rice output, Senate President Chiz Escudero said on Sunday.

Senate Bill (SB) 2779 embodying the changes will be signed into law on December 9 by President Ferdinand Marcos. Escudero said the country’s rice farmers will receive greater support through the provision of farm machinery and equipment, free distribution of high quality inbred certified seeds, and other interventions.

The law extends the life of the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF), which is sourced from the tariffs collected from the importation of rice, until 2031.

It also authorizes an increase in the annual allocation to the RCEF, from the current P10 billion to P30 billion until the year 2031.

“We must boost the support for our farmers so we can meet the goal of increasing rice yield and lower prices of rice for our people. Rice is important to every Filipino, and this is why the Senate moved to ensure these goals are met,” said Escudero.

Under the new law, a buffer stock of rice will be maintained, equivalent to 30 days at any given time, to sustain disaster relief programs of the government during natural or man-made calamities and to address food security emergency situations on rice.

The Department of Agriculture, through the Bureau of Plant Industry, will be strengthened to conduct a stronger inspection and monitoring of warehouses and

agricultural facilities as part of the goal to ensure a stable supply of rice in the market, as well as quality control of rice being sold to consumers.

“We want to avoid a situation where the price of rice shoots up unnecessarily due to smuggling or hoarding. This has long been a problem in the country that should be addressed immediately.”

The new law also empowers the Secretary of Agriculture to respond better to a declaration of rice food shortage or an extraordinary increase in rice prices.

During periods marked by an extraordinary increase in the prices of rice, the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to designate importing entities, with the exception of the National Food Authority, to import rice to augment the supply of rice and stabilize prices.

SB 2779 was sponsored by Senator Cynthia Villar as chair of the Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform. It is a consolidation of the bills filed by Senators Imee Marcos, Robin Padilla, and Villar.

[https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/12/09/agri-policy-tweaks-to-bolster-phl-food-security/?fbclid=IwY2xjawHDG-FleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHe4RiAZLkIwIrtSFBu1hxofC4Bi9CfR64hI5wPvEdDhmv0Fy76otsWZoqw\\_aem\\_MGIB-113NniK-sejDn1ooA](https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/12/09/agri-policy-tweaks-to-bolster-phl-food-security/?fbclid=IwY2xjawHDG-FleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHe4RiAZLkIwIrtSFBu1hxofC4Bi9CfR64hI5wPvEdDhmv0Fy76otsWZoqw_aem_MGIB-113NniK-sejDn1ooA)

**BUSINESS MIRROR:**

## *Group: Bfar must release data on vessel tracking devices*

Ada Pelonia  
December 9, 2024

Environment group Oceana urged the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (Bfar) to release data on vessel tracking devices.

Oceana, an international marine protection organization, called on the Department of Agriculture (DA) to compel Bfar to release the vessel monitoring measures (VMM) data to “effectively enforce the laws that would address illegal fishing, overfishing, and resource depletion.”

“Transparency for this data and effective collaboration with other law enforcement agencies and stakeholders are indispensable if we must address persistent overfishing and illegal fishing which are causing the decline of fish population,” Oceana Vice President Gloria Estenzo Ramos said.

“This can be achieved by the Bfar, (which) is in possession of these data, to share access to monitoring, control and surveillance mechanisms, such as VMM/VMS for other enforcement agencies...to immediately respond to violations when these are being committed.”

Citing data from Karagatan Patrol, Oceana noted that fishing vessels inside municipal waters rose to 28,822 as of November from 26,295 in 2022.

The group, together with the League of Municipalities of the Philippines, launched Karagatan Patrol in 2019 as an online platform.

The initiative is set to provide the government and law enforcement agencies with leads of commercial fishing vessels located inside municipal waters based on the night lights detected by Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite (VIIRS) technology.

Under the Fisheries Code, small-scale fishermen have exclusive fishing rights in coastal waters 15 kilometers from the coastline.

Oceana said it inquired from Bfar about the status of the implementation of VMM rules or FAO 266 including the list of fishing vessels apprehended or those that have violated fisheries laws and regulations.

The group noted that Bfar said 90 percent of commercial fishing vessels have installed transponders. However, the group claimed that the agency refused to release the list of commercial fishing vessels that have violated fisheries laws.

Oceana, in its position paper, said the disclosure of this information to the other enforcement agencies would aid in abating and deterring continuous illegal encroachment. The group cited Bfar's mandate on the sharing of information to improve monitoring, control, and surveillance on fisheries.

[https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/12/09/group-bfar-must-release-data-on-vessel-tracking-devices/?fbclid=IwY2xjawHDG-RleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHTmEp93Z1Bg67qJVup-sSbpNcDhfGdTx7fVWhABjcjE9myUiLtBMBubFog\\_aem\\_mHyA-CrCU5AtrYv5vbvljw](https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/12/09/group-bfar-must-release-data-on-vessel-tracking-devices/?fbclid=IwY2xjawHDG-RleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHTmEp93Z1Bg67qJVup-sSbpNcDhfGdTx7fVWhABjcjE9myUiLtBMBubFog_aem_mHyA-CrCU5AtrYv5vbvljw)

**BUSINESS MIRROR:**

## *Iloilo to get more govt funds for rice cultivation*

Ada Pelonia  
December 9, 2024

The Department of Agriculture (DA) gave its go-ahead for an additional allocation of P82.5 million for rice production in Iloilo, one of the country's major rice-producing provinces.

“We continue to look for extra funds to help our rice farmers produce more to increase their income and help the country bolster food security,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said.

“The Marcos administration is fully committed to helping millions of Filipinos who depend on agriculture reap the benefits of their hard work.”

The agency said this funding will allow its Region 6 office to prop up hybrid rice production for an additional 16,500 hectares. The move will increase the area planted with rice by over 50 percent from the previous target of 30,000 hectares for the dry season.

Western Visayas, which consists of the provinces of Aklan, Antique, Capiz, Iloilo, Guimaras, and Negros Occidental, has 322,000 hectares of rice fields and contributes 14 percent to national production.

However, the DA noted that its average yield of 3.4 metric tons (MT) per hectare in 2023 is below the national average of 4.2 MT.

It added that this yield could be improved through higher-yield potential varieties, ensured irrigation, proper nutrition and cultural management practices, among other interventions.

“Weather permitting, the additional hectare that will be planted with hybrid varieties should increase our rice harvest during this dry season,” Region 6 Executive Director Dennis Arpia said.

He noted that while hybrid seeds can yield up to 10 MT per hectare under ideal conditions, the regional office would be satisfied with 5 MT per hectare, considering the unpredictable weather in the region.

“If rains come during the flowering stage, they could significantly impact yields.”

The agency said some areas in Western Visayas have started planting for the dry season, while others are still completing their harvest, which was delayed by the El Niño weather phenomenon.

The DA had said the series of storms that struck the country could further shrink paddy rice output by the end of the year.

Laurel said the agency now expects palay production to settle at 19.3 million metric tons (MMT) by yearend, lower than its forecast of 19.41 MMT.

The agency earlier said the Philippines may end 2024 with a palay output of 19.41 MMT, lower than the record 20.06 MMT the country produced last year. This projected figure is equivalent to 12.69 MMT of milled rice.

[https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/12/09/iloilo-to-get-more-govt-funds-for-rice-cultivation/?fbclid=IwY2xjawHDH1hleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHe-S16v4E3am5r33kOb5Z6v3CW0jmARB9FukTEoXUVwlB-IUPuv5dLUGhA\\_aem\\_YsguAWSX0c3t7MSYCbCQLA](https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/12/09/iloilo-to-get-more-govt-funds-for-rice-cultivation/?fbclid=IwY2xjawHDH1hleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHe-S16v4E3am5r33kOb5Z6v3CW0jmARB9FukTEoXUVwlB-IUPuv5dLUGhA_aem_YsguAWSX0c3t7MSYCbCQLA)

**BUSINESS MIRROR:**

## *Zambales local govt unveils pioneering project for mango sector*

Henry Empeño  
December 9, 2024

Iba, Zambales—The provincial government of Zambales has launched the Zambales Green Mango Valley Project, a P50-million four-year pioneering program to promote, expand and sustain the production of Zambales’s highly popular carabao or “Dinamulag” mango, regarded as one of the sweetest in the world.

Governor Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. said the provincial government granted late last month an initial P6.46 million to the Samahang Magmamangga ng Zambales (SMZ) to establish modern mango production areas to showcase new production technology for wider promotion and adoption by local mango growers.

The pilot farms under Phase 1 of the project, Ebdane said, will be at the 31.6-hectare Batungbacal Farm in Palauig town and the government-owned Sitio Buen farm in Botolan. A third site, the 24-hectare Alma’s Farm in Iba, will be part of the project, but will be funded privately, the governor said.

For Phase 2, the Zambales provincial government, led by the Provincial Agricultural Office, will undertake the rehabilitation and rejuvenation of existing mango trees in the province starting next year at a cost of P40 million.

Under Phase 3, mango nurseries will be established in the towns of Santa Cruz, Botolan, and San Marcelino at a cost of P3.17 million.

“This is the first comprehensive effort to modernize and revitalize what has always been Zambales’ pride, the Dinamulag mango,” Ebdane said in a statement on Friday.

He said the Zambales Green Mango Valley Project will expand mango production areas, increase yield per hectare, and strengthen the mango value chain to further develop and sustain the mango industry. It will include integrated crop



management, technological and environmental sustainability inputs, and marketing support to help local mango growers and traders become more competitive, he added.

Arnel Abayan, supervising agriculturist at the Zambales Provincial Agriculture Office, said the project will actively promote and expand the cultivation of the “Sweet Elena” strain of the Zambales carabao mango variety, which originated in Santa Cruz, the northernmost town here.

This strain made it to the Guinness Book of Records in 1995 as the world’s sweetest and is most sought after because of its superior sweetness, size, soluble solids, edibility of flesh, as well as physical appearance.

Abayan said recent records placed provincial mango production at only 17,975.31 metric tons from 396,181 trees in a total area of 7,558 hectares, or an average yield of only 2.378 tons per hectare, which is way below the national average of 12 tons per hectare. The project, he said, aims to reach or even surpass the national average yield.

According to the project design, the P6.46 million for Phase 1 will be spent for land clearing, flower induction, chemical application, fruit bagging, irrigation and fertilization, as well as security and harvesting at the demo farms.

For Phase 2, a total of P40 million will be used for pruning some 20,800 mango trees in the province from 2025 to 2028 at a cost of P1,013.22 per tree. This is expected to increase production by 50 to 60 percent of the yield per tree, which was previously recorded at 42 kilos.

Phase 3, meanwhile, which will establish mango nurseries, will cost P3.17 million. This is designed to ensure a consistent supply of high-quality seedlings, accelerate the farm expansion process, increase current production levels to meet increasing demand, and strengthen Zambales’s mango value chain by providing a stable and continuous supply of raw materials for processing industries.

Ebdane said the local mango industry has declined over the years because of pests, bad weather, poor management, and antiquated production technology. “But this time we will turn things around for the industry and for our growers and traders.”

[https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/12/09/zambales-local-govt-unveils-pioneering-project-for-mango-sector/?fbclid=IwY2xjawHDH2FleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHVM8TtAbAZ49Xq1dj1kdVmDpa3GD4l-DSH6wIXKMNETIhPsyRoSBXl-hFA\\_aem\\_1Af4Q1s-zzHikJxK5uL5zg](https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/12/09/zambales-local-govt-unveils-pioneering-project-for-mango-sector/?fbclid=IwY2xjawHDH2FleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHVM8TtAbAZ49Xq1dj1kdVmDpa3GD4l-DSH6wIXKMNETIhPsyRoSBXl-hFA_aem_1Af4Q1s-zzHikJxK5uL5zg)

**BUSINESS MIRROR:**

## *Housing, agri-related firms got bulk of state subsidies*

Reine Juvierre S. Alberto  
December 9, 2024

STATE-RUN firms received higher subsidies amounting to P11.968 billion in October 2024, data from the Bureau of the Treasury (BTr) showed.

Budgetary support to government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) in October 2024 surged by 30.24 percent to P11.968 billion from P9.189 billion during the same month a year ago.

Of the amount, major non-financial government corporations obtained the highest share (89.49 percent) with P10.711 billion, up by 30.94 percent from last year's P8.180 billion. More than half, or P5.832 billion, was extended to the National Irrigation Administration (NIA).

The National Food Authority (NFA) and National Housing Authority (NHA) received P3 billion and P1.732 billion, respectively.

Moreover, the remaining P1.242 billion was divided among 24 other government corporations while P15 million was extended to government financial corporations, such as the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (P10 million) and the Credit Information Corp. (P5 million).

During the January to October 2024 period, GOCCs received lesser government subsidies amounting to P117.210 billion, down by 19.89 percent year-on-year from P146.316 billion.

The bulk, or 65.74 percent, of the total subsidies went to major non-financial government corporations, obtaining P77.059 billion as of the end of October. This is higher by 16 percent than the P66.559 billion given during the same period last year.

The NIA received the largest support with P60.213 billion, followed by the NHA and NFA with P5.531 billion and P5.250 billion, respectively.

Other government corporations also cornered 29.61 percent or P34.708 billion of the subsidies extended during the 10-month period. This, however, dipped by 55.65 percent from the P78.262 billion granted a year ago.

Specifically, the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. (PhilHealth) obtained the highest subsidy with P9.599 billion, trailed by the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management (Psalm) Corp. (P8 billion) and Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) (P2.228 billion).

### **GFI subsidies**

Meanwhile, government financial institutions received the remaining 1.90 percent or P5.443 billion of the overall subsidies, which surged by 1,019 percent year-on-year from P486 million.

The Philippine Crop Insurance Corp. (PCIC) acquired P3.150 billion, while the Social Housing Financing Corp. (SHFC) and the Small Business Corp. (SBC) got P1.033 billion and P1 billion, respectively.

The 10-month worth of subsidies represents 62.26 percent of the programmed budgetary support for the year, which is set at P188.230 billion. Last year, the government extended a total of P163.535 billion in budgetary support.

The national government provides subsidies to state-run firms to fund operations not covered by corporate revenues or to finance specific programs or projects.

[https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/12/09/housing-agri-related-firms-got-bulk-of-state-subsidies/?fbclid=IwY2xjawHDH2VleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHe-S16v4E3am5r33kOb5Z6v3CW0jmARB9FukTEoXUVwlB-IUPuv5dLUGhA\\_aem\\_YsguAWSX0c3t7MSYCbCQLA](https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/12/09/housing-agri-related-firms-got-bulk-of-state-subsidies/?fbclid=IwY2xjawHDH2VleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHe-S16v4E3am5r33kOb5Z6v3CW0jmARB9FukTEoXUVwlB-IUPuv5dLUGhA_aem_YsguAWSX0c3t7MSYCbCQLA)

**ABANTE TONITE:**

# Mga rice farmer swak sa dagdag ayuda – Chiz Escudero

December 8, 2024



Asahang lalakas ang produksiyon ng mga magsasaka dahil sa dagdag na suportang ibibigay ng gobyerno sa pamamagitan na inamiyendahang Agricultural Tariffication Act of 1996, ayon kay Senate President Francis “Chiz” Escudero.

Dahil sa inaasahang paglagda ni Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos sa Senate Bill No. 2779 sa Lunes, Disyembre 9, sinabi ni Escudero na makakatanggap ang mga rice farmer ng suporta sa pamamagitan ng probisyon ng farm machinery at equipment, libreng distribusyon ng high quality inbred certified seeds, at iba pa.

Pinalawig din ng batas na ito ang buhay ng Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) na kinukuha mula sa taripang kinokolekta sa importasyon ng bigas hanggang 2031.

Mula sa kasalukuyang P10 bilyong taunang alokasyon sa RCEF, gagawing P30 bilyon ang pondo hanggang 2031.

“Kailangan palakasin ang suporta sa ating mga magsasaka para makamit natin ang hangarin na makapag-ani ng mas marami pang bigas at mapababa ang presyo nito para sa ating mga mamamayan,” ani Escudero.

Pananatilihin din ang buffer stock ng bigas na katumbas sa 30 araw upang mapanatili ang disaster relief program ng pamahalaan sa panahon ng kalamidad at tugunan ang food security emergency situation sa bigas. (Dindo Matining)

[https://tonite.abante.com.ph/2024/12/08/mga-rice-farmer-swak-sa-dagdag-ayuda-chiz-escudero/?fbclid=IwY2xjawHDHA1leHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHe4RiAZLkIwIrtSFBu1hxofC4Bi9CfR64hI5wPvEdDhmv0Fy76otsWZoqw\\_aem\\_MGIB-113NniK-sejDn1ooA](https://tonite.abante.com.ph/2024/12/08/mga-rice-farmer-swak-sa-dagdag-ayuda-chiz-escudero/?fbclid=IwY2xjawHDHA1leHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHe4RiAZLkIwIrtSFBu1hxofC4Bi9CfR64hI5wPvEdDhmv0Fy76otsWZoqw_aem_MGIB-113NniK-sejDn1ooA)

**ABANTE:**

# Kamara sa Agri: Abusadong mga rice importer, trader arestuhin

Abante News

• December 8, 2024



Kinalampag ni House Deputy Majority Leader Rep. Erwin Tulfo ang Department of Agriculture (DA), sa pangunguna ni Sec. Francisco Tiu Laurel, na umpisahan ng hulihin ang mga mapanamantalang mga rice importers at traders sa bansa dahil sa patuloy na mataas na presyo ng bigas sa merkado.

Ani ni Cong. Tulfo, “P35 per kilo ang imported rice paglabas sa ating pier, e bakit wala pa rin tayong nakikitang bigas na less than P50 ang kilo sa palengke”?

“Ang ibig lang sabihin nito sa bulsa lang ng mga importers at traders napupunta lahat ng profit o kita at hindi man lang nila patikmin ang taumbayan”.

Dagdag pa ng ACT-CIS partylist Representative bumaba ang presyo ng bigas sa abroad kung saan galing ang ating mga imported rice.

Bumaba na rin daw ang taripa sa imported na bigas kaya't dapat lang daw bumaba na rin presyo ng bigas sa palengke.

“Kung P35 per kilo ang gastos nila sa pagbili at pagpaparating nila ng bigas sa bansa dapat nasa P45 ang kilo na lang ng bigas sa palengke kasama na yung kanyang kita doon at ng rice retailer”, paliwanag ni Tulfo.

“Panahon na mag-sampol si Sec. Laurel ng tusong importer na makasuhan at kumpiskahin mga bigas nito dahil sa overpricing”, anang mambabatas.

Aniya, “pero ang problema, mukhang nakatunganga lang ang DA natin at nag-aantay ng biyaya mula sa langit”.

“Unless kumilos si Sec. Laurel, hindi bababa ang presyo ng bigas sa palengke”, pahabol pa ni Cong. Tulfo.

<https://www.abante.com.ph/2024/12/08/kamara-sa-agri-abusadong-mga-rice-importer-trader-arestuhin/>