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MANILA BULLETIN:

South Dakota poultry banned again in Philippines after bird flu outbreak

BY [DEXTER BARRO II](#)

Jan 23, 2025 01:11 PM

AT A GLANCE

- The Department of Agriculture (DA) imposes another temporary ban on the entry of domestic and wild birds, as well as poultry products, from South Dakota in the United States following a recent outbreak of the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI).

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In a statement on Thursday, Jan. 23, the DA said the ban seeks to protect the local poultry industry from the potential entry and succeeding impact of the virus.

The order came after reports that several outbreaks of H5N1 avian influenza, a subtype of HPAI, have been affecting domestic birds in South Dakota.

The DA noted that this was later confirmed by America's National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NSVL) on Dec. 17, 2024.

As an emergency measure, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel has issued Memorandum Order (MO) No. 04 to suspend the processing and issuance of sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) import clearances for South Dakota's poultry products.

Under Laurel's order, the prohibition shall cover the importation of domestic and wild birds, including eggs, semen for artificial insemination, day-old chicks, and other poultry products.

The entry of products that are already in transit, loaded, or arrived at local ports may be allowed, provided that they were slaughtered or produced before Nov. 13, 2024.

If such products are not covered by this provision, veterinary quarantine officers and inspectors are mandated to confiscate them.

The Philippines earlier imposed a temporary ban on poultry products coming from South Dakota on Nov. 23, 2023.

The DA likewise cited the threat of H5N1 avian influenza as the cause of the moratorium.

The ban was lifted nine months later, on Aug. 31, 2024, after South Dakota recorded no outbreaks after May 29 of the same year.

According to the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), the HPAI is a highly contagious viral disease that affects both domestic and wild birds.

The virus can spread through direct contact with secretions from infected birds through feces and contaminated feed and water.

The WOAH explained that because of its resistant nature, including the ability to survive for long periods when temperatures are low, the virus can also be carried on farm equipment and spread easily from farm to farm.

https://mb.com.ph/2025/1/23/philippines-reimposes-ban-on-birds-poultry-products-from-south-dakota#google_vignette

MANILA BULLETIN:

Gov't warns retailers: Comply with P58 imported rice price cap or face penalties

BY [DEXTER BARRO II](#)

Jan 23, 2025 10:28 AM

The Department of Agriculture (DA) is urging retailers to comply with the maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) of P58 for imported rice, which took effect on Monday, Jan. 20.

On Tuesday, officials of the DA and the Department of Trade and Industry (DA) inspected stalls selling rice at the Trabajo Market in Manila to ensure their strict compliance with the MSRP.

The government officials found that while vendors mostly complied with the new directive, there were still some retailers selling rice above the P58 per kilo limit.

“May mga namo-monitor pa tayo rito na P60 to P65 na rice per kilo pero brands kasi siya at local, hindi dapat mag-a-apply sa local ang MSRP. Relatively, bumababa na rin naman ang prices at sumasabay naman sila sa directives natin,” said DA Assistant Secretary Genevieve Velicaria-Guevarra.

(We're still monitoring some rice prices here at P60 to P65 per kilo, but these are branded and local varieties, where the MSRP shouldn't apply. Relatively, prices are decreasing and they are following our directives.)

She explained that retailers are just clearing out their inventory of rice purchased at a high price. Afterward, they will comply with the MSRP.

The DA did not impose any penalty during Tuesday's initial monitoring.

The agency, however, warns that guidelines would be strictly enforced once the official regulations are released in February.

The MSRP for imported rice was implemented to ensure that rice remains affordable for consumers while also supporting the profitability of the rice industry.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel earlier said that further adjustments to the MSRP should be expected in the coming weeks.

Laurel warned that if the MSRP fails to bring down rice prices to “reasonable levels”, the DA will recommend price controls and ceilings.

Violations of these measures may result in fines of up to P1 million for offenders.

Meanwhile, DA Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa is now urging retailers to negotiate prices with their suppliers to align with the P58 MSRP.

“Dapat mapag-usapan nila immediately ang stocks dahil sa susunod, hindi na puwedeng makakita kami ng ganito kataas na presyo, lalo na ‘yong P60 to P65 per kilo,” said De Mesa.

(They need to immediately discuss the stocks because in the future, we should no longer see such high prices, especially those at P60 to P65 per kilo.)

“We'll give them enough time to negotiate with their suppliers but eventually, in two weeks' time, we will have another round of monitoring,” he added.

Velicaria-Guevarra, for her part, expressed appreciation for local government units (LGUs) for ensuring compliance with the new directive.

She said mayors in Metro Manila are actively monitoring prices in their public and private markets.

“Yon naman ang kanilang commitment at talagang nagpapasalamat kami at tuloy-tuloy ang kanilang suporta,” she added.

(That is their commitment and we are truly grateful for their continuous support.)

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/1/23/da-wants-retailers-strict-compliance-of-p58-msrp-of-imported-rice>

MANILA BULLETIN:

DA teams up with retail giants to offer affordable rice; Metro Manila first to benefit

BY [DEXTER BARRO II](#)

Jan 23, 2025 10:27 AM

The Department of Agriculture (DA) said it is eyeing partnerships with the country's major retail companies to expand the availability of affordable rice nationwide.

In a statement on Thursday, Jan. 23, the DA said this initiative aims to stabilize rice prices and provide greater access for Filipino households.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel had a meeting with representatives from supermarkets, groceries, and convenience stores on Tuesday to discuss the matter.

"This is a solution that we believe will stabilize rice prices faster and more efficiently. But we need to find the right balance to operationalize this properly and secure everyone's cooperation," said Laurel.

The DA said it is considering over 3,200 retail outlets across the country, including SM, Robinsons, Puregold, 7-Eleven, and MerryMart.

It noted that these retail chains are crucial in reaching millions of consumers on a daily basis.

The agency said this program will be piloted in Metro Manila, wherein rice prices were monitored to remain high.

This shall include the P29-per-kilo rice, which will only be available for the country's vulnerable sectors.

The P29 rice, which comes from aging stocks of the National Food Authority (NFA), was launched last year under the government's Kadiwa Ng Pangulo (KNP) program.

Additionally, retail stores will also have access to the DA's Rice-for-All (RFA) program, which was also implemented through Kadiwa centers.

This will offer various rice grades, including RFA5 or the 5 percent broken priced at P45-per-kilo; RFA 25 or the 25 percent broken at P38; and RFA 100 or the 100 percent broken at P36.

Food Terminal Inc. (FTI), a state-owned corporation, shall handle the supply and packaging of rice distributed through participating retail stores.

The agriculture secretary said the pilot initiative will be monitored over several months before the agency considers a potential expansion to other regions with high rice prices.

"The DA is optimistic that this collaboration will serve as a model for future efforts to enhance food security and affordability," added Laurel.

Earlier, the agency urged the Metro Manila Council to authorize the development of new KNP centers.

Laurel, in particular, wants to expand the stores across 150 public and private markets.

At present, such establishments are only present in 20 markets in Metro Manila.

The KNP, implemented by the DA, provides the public with affordable goods through farmers' direct selling of goods to consumers.

Gov't warns retailers

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Extra rice buffer stock

The National Food Authority (NFA) said that it requires an additional funding of P9 billion to comply with the law-mandated increase in the national rice buffer stock.

NFA Administrator Larry Lacson said the agency is now obligated to maintain a buffer stock equivalent to 15 days of rice consumption, an increase from the previous nine-day requirement.

In a statement, Lacson said this comes after the recent enactment of Republic Act (RA) No. 12078, which amended the Rice Tariffication Law.

Based on the agency's data, 37,000 metric tons (MT) of rice is the daily average for national consumption. Adding six days to the buffer stock will require the NFA to procure about 300,000 MT of palay or unmilled rice from local farmers, with an estimated price of P23 per kilo.

"We were initially allocated a budget of P9 billion for buffer stocking this year, based on the 9-day requirement," said Lacson.

"But the additional 6 days will necessitate an extra P9 billion for palay procurement considering that our palay price procurement per kilo increased in 2024," he explained.

Restoring NFA's influence

RA No. 12078 also earmarked P2 billion for the NFA's rice procurement program, which is an excess of the collected rice tariffs under the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) set at P30 billion.

The RCEF is a program of the Department of Agriculture (DA) that aims to modernize rice farming and support local farmers.

While an additional P2 billion for its palay procurement looks promising on paper, Laurel said it should ideally cover up to 20 percent—or around 4 million MT—of the country's total domestic production.

Currently, the procurement rate remains at a minimal 3 to 4 percent.

"The NFA used to be a market maker—both a buyer and seller of rice. Now it is restricted to buffer stocking and buying rice from local rice farmers," said Laurel, chairman of the NFA Council.

"We aim to restore its influence on palay pricing by purchasing more local rice, helping to boost Filipino farmers profitability," he added.

Earlier, the NFA Council approved a resolution that enables the agency to sell rice to local government units (LGUs) for disaster preparedness.

Lacson said the NFA will release around 25,000 MT of rice every month, noting that this will not jeopardize the buffer stock needed to respond to emergencies or calamities.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/1/23/da-partners-with-retailers-for-affordable-rice>

MANILA BULLETIN:

There is no one solution to the problems of an industry

BY [YVETTE TAN](#)

Jan 24, 2025 00:02 AM

AVANT GARDENER



Last week, I guested on The Powerful Komiksman Podcast hosted by Jerald Dorado, aka komiksman, which can be viewed in full on YouTube.

We were introduced by Jean Karl Gaverza who runs Philippine Spirits, a website dedicated to the various mythological creatures that can be found on the archipelago.

I was invited in my capacity as a horror writer and expected the conversation to revolve around the craft of fiction writing and my thoughts on horror and the supernatural, particularly in the Philippine setting.

So why am I writing about it in my agriculture column?

Dorado had read that I was an agriculture columnist and wanted to hear my thoughts on the country's food situation. And though we talked about many things, from my interest in horror and the supernatural to the recent scandal that rocked the literary world, it was the clip of our conversation on Philippine agriculture that got the most views on TikTok.

The clip focuses on two things: one, that we are no longer an agricultural country, and two, some of our laws need to be reviewed as though they may mean well, they have had unintended negative consequences on the agriculture industry. The example I gave for the latter was the ASIN Law. Republic Act No. 8172, also known as "An Act for Salt Iodization Nationwide" (ASIN) was enacted in July 1995 with the aim to supplement the nutrition of Filipinos, particularly in far-flung, landlocked areas. The law made it illegal to produce salt locally if it wasn't iodized. Unfortunately, it didn't account for salt farmers' access to the iodization process. Salt self-sufficiency fell from 85 percent in the 90s to seven percent in 2023. Imagine being an archipelago and having to import 97 percent of your salt!

This is finally changing thanks to the increasing interest in local heirloom salt, something made possible because of local chefs and chef-driven TV shows, who (rightfully) love to highlight the different kinds of salts available in the country, each one with its own distinctive taste. There is also Republic Act No. 11985, or the “Philippine Salt Industry Development Act,” which was passed on March 11, 2024, which aims to “provide support through appropriate technology and research, and adequate financial, production, marketing, and other support services to revitalize the salt industry, attain increased production by salt farmers and salt producers, achieve salt self-sufficiency, and become a net exporter of salt.” Hopefully, this will bring the Philippines back to at least 85 percent self-sufficiency.

This is just one aspect of the agriculture industry. There are many others, most of them even more tangled than this one. There are no simple solutions to the problems in the agriculture industry, nor am I an expert in any of its fields, but when asked what I, in my limited capacity, think should be done, my answer was that we have to face the truth and work from there. We have to stop thinking of ourselves as an agricultural nation because we stopped being one a long time ago and instead work toward being one once again. We should stop resting on laurels we don’t have and instead use becoming food secure and an agricultural exporter as our goal. Folks in the industry know this, so it isn’t as if I’m saying anything new or revolutionary.

The clip on how we are no longer sparked a lot of debate on TikTok. While many people agreed and lamented about the need for a robust agriculture industry, some people were bewildered. “What has salt got to do with agriculture?” someone asked. Comments like this, I believe, are the barometer by which we should judge our citizenry. If there are people who don’t know what the connection between salt and agriculture is, then it only brings home the point that we aren’t an agricultural nation.

While the clip generated a lot of discourse, I don’t know if it had any real effect outside of social media. While I hope it opened people’s eyes to the country’s dire need to bolster its agriculture industry and food security, it doesn’t mean anything if they don’t act beyond typing angry comments. There is no one solution to the problems that plague the industry, but there are many people, both in the government and private sectors, who are trying their best to solve the problems in front of them. I believe that the Philippines can become an agricultural country once again, but first, it has to accept that it isn’t one anymore.

I get asked a lot how a horror writer became interested in agriculture and while I like to joke that it’s because I don’t want to go hungry, it’s not far from the truth. A hungry nation is a horror worse than any fiction.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/1/24/there-is-no-one-solution-to-the-problems-of-an-industry>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DA: Kadiwa rice soon in supermarkets

Bella Cariaso - The Philippine Star

January 24, 2025 | 12:00am



People line up at the Kadiwa center in the Department of Agriculture office in Quezon City yesterday to buy rice at P29 per kilo.

Michael Varcas.

MANILA, Philippines — Affordable rice sold at Kadiwa outlets will soon be available at over 3,200 retail outlets including supermarkets, groceries and convenience stores, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. announced on Thursday after reaching an agreement with some of the country’s top retail chains.

Tiu Laurel said that he met with representatives from SM, Robinsons, 7-Eleven, Puregold and MerryMart, and discussed the government’s effort to stabilize rice prices and improve access for Filipino households.

The Department of Agriculture chief said that the affordable rice – including the P29 per kilo rice for vulnerable sectors; the P38 and P45 per kilo of rice for 25 percent and five percent broken under the Rice-for-All Program, and the P36 per kilo “sulit rice,” – will be available in over 3,200 retail outlets of SM, Robinsons, 7-Eleven, Puregold and MerryMart.

Tiu Laurel said the program will be piloted in Metro Manila, adding that Food Terminal Inc., a government-owned corporation, will handle the supply and packaging of rice distributed through participating retail chains.

Meanwhile, farmers’ group Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas yesterday described the government’s plan to declare a food security emergency as “superficial” and a short-term measure that fails to address the issues plaguing the country’s rice sector.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2025/01/24/2416468/da-kadiwa-rice-soon-supermarkets>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Temporary ban on bird imports from South Dakota imposed due to bird flu outbreak

[Dominique Nicole Flores](#) - Philstar.com

January 23, 2025 | 5:17pm



Chickens are pictured at a poultry farm in Tepatitlan, Jalisco State, Mexico, on June 6, 2024. The World Health Organization said on June 6, 2024, it was awaiting full genetic sequence data after a man died of bird flu in Mexico in the first confirmed human infection with the H5N2 strain. The source of exposure to the virus was unknown, the WHO said, although cases of H5N2 have been reported in poultry in Mexico

AFP / Ulises Ruiz

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines is once again banning poultry imports from South Dakota, United States, following a bird flu outbreak, the Department of Agriculture (DA) announced Thursday, January 23.

This comes five months after the country lifted its last import ban. The DA said the temporary restriction was prompted by reports of H5N1 avian influenza among domestic birds in South Dakota, confirmed by the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) in Ames, Iowa.

The DA issued Memorandum Order No. 4, stating that domestic and Under Memorandum Order No. 4, the ban covers all domestic and wild birds, as well as their byproducts, including poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs and semen.

H5N1 is a subtype of the Influenza A virus that spreads among birds. Unlike other strains, such as H7N6, it has a higher transmission rate.

While human infections are rare, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) warns that exposure to bird flu may cause fever, eye irritation, cough, sore throat and body aches.

The DA cited a 2016 agreement between US and Philippine veterinary authorities, which only enforces a state-wide ban if at least three counties in a state report Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) cases.

The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) confirmed that South Dakota has met this threshold.

As part of the emergency measures, the DA has halted the processing and evaluation of import clearances for affected poultry products.

However, shipments already in transit, loaded and accepted at Philippine ports before the order takes effect — provided they were slaughtered or produced before November 13, 2024 — will be exempted.

The DA has also ordered veterinary quarantine officers to intercept and confiscate shipments of banned poultry products at all major ports of entry.

"Stoppage and confiscation of all shipments of the above-stated commodities into the country by all Veterinary Quarantine Officers/Inspectors at all major ports of entry," the DA added.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel said the measure aims to prevent local poultry farms from being affected by the virus and protect the country's multi-billion-peso poultry industry.

The last import ban from South Dakota was made on Nov. 23, 2023. It was lifted on Aug. 27, 2024.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2025/01/23/2416344/temporary-ban-bird-imports-south-dakota-imposed-due-bird-flu-outbreak>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DA mulls up to P1 million fine for violators of P58 per kilo rice price cap

[Dominique Nicole Flores](#) - Philstar.com

January 23, 2025 | 4:09pm



Newly delivered sacks of rice from Regions II and III are being organized inside the National Food Authority (NFA) warehouse in Valenzuela on Jan. 20, 2025.

The STAR / Michael Varcas

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) has capped imported rice at P58 per kilo in Metro Manila markets to help bring down prices. But what happens if this measure falls short?

In a [statement](#) on Wednesday, January 22, the DA warned that if the price cap fails to lower rice prices to reasonable levels, it will recommend stricter price controls and ceilings, with penalties of up to P1 million for violators.

“The agriculture chief has warned that if the MSRP doesn’t bring down rice prices to reasonable levels, the DA will recommend for price controls and ceilings which shall impose fines of up to P1 million on violators,” the agency said. The P58 per kilo cap for 5% broken imported rice took effect Monday, January 20, following consultations with rice industry stakeholders, importers, and retailers.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel said the price of rice with a higher percentage of broken grains should be lower than P58 per kilo. However, DA monitoring found some markets still selling rice above the cap, at P59 to P60 per kilo.

The cap, however, does not apply to locally produced and branded rice, some of which are still being sold at P60 to P65 per kilo.

Selling off remaining stock

DA Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said retailers of these brands explained they are clearing out their remaining stock, which was bought at higher prices, before adjusting to the P58 cap.

“Relatively, prices are already going down, and they are complying with our directives. However, these brands say they acquired their stocks at a high price, so they are just selling off their remaining supply before adhering to the P58 MSRP,” she said in Filipino.

While the DA has not imposed sanctions, it urged markets to comply with the price guidelines. Tiu Laurel said the agency is monitoring prices but lacks the mandate to penalize violators. The DA will coordinate with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to finalize enforcement measures.

The DA chief also said adjustments to the price cap may be made in the coming weeks.

Current prices. Here are the latest rice prices in Metro Manila markets based on the DA’s monitoring as of January 22:

Imported commercial rice

- **Special: P53 to P61 per kilogram**
- **Premium: P51 to P58 per kilogram**
- **Well-milled: P40 to P52 per kilogram**
- **Regular milled: P38 to P48 per kilogram**

Local commercial rice

- **Special: P55 to P63 per kilogram**
- **Premium: P48 to P58 per kilogram**
- **Well-milled: P40 to P55 per kilogram**
- **Regular milled: P37 to P48 per kilogram**

Some of these prices are higher than [last week’s](#).

Delays in declaring food security emergency

Beyond price caps, the DA is also considering declaring a food security emergency, which would allow the National Food Authority (NFA) to release its rice buffer stocks to stabilize market prices. The NFA has around 300,000 metric tons of rice in its warehouses. The agency initially targeted declaring the emergency on January 22, but the National Price Coordinating Council (NPCC) has yet to provide the DA with an approved resolution.

Despite the delay, the DA said it still expects the emergency measure to proceed, with NFA stocks possibly hitting the market starting February 1.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2025/01/23/2416337/da-mulls-p1-million-fine-violators-p58-kilo-rice-price-cap>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

DA reimposes import ban on poultry products from South Dakota

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

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 02:01 PM January 23, 2025



INQUIRER.net stock images

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) has reimposed an import ban on poultry products from South Dakota in the United States after receiving reports of outbreaks of H5N1 avian influenza.

According to the Memorandum Order (MO) No. 4 signed by DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. on Wednesday, the ban covered the importation of domestic and wild birds and their products, including poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs, and semen.

In a statement on Thursday, Laurel said that the import ban “is intended to prevent the entry of bird flu virus to protect the health of the local poultry industry.”

The secretary also said that US veterinary authorities confirmed reports on December 17, 2024 of several outbreaks of the influenza virus that is affecting domestic birds in South Dakota. The National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, Iowa confirmed the presence of bird flu.

Laurel then ordered the Bureau of Animal Industry to suspend the processing and issuance of sanitary and phytosanitary import clearances for the importation of

The MO also said that the transit to local ports before the issuance of the order to US authorities is allowed, given that the poultry products were slaughtered or produced on or before November 13, 2024.

In August 2024, the agency lifted import restrictions from South Dakota and California. The import ban was issued to South Dakota in November 2023 after logging cases of bird flu.

The MO also noted that the veterinary authorities of the US and the Philippines entered an agreement in 2016 “that a state-wide ban shall only be imposed if there are three (3) or more counties affected with HPAI [Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza] in one state.”

It added that South Dakota has three or more counties affected with the HPAI based on the reports of the World Organization for Animal Health.

<https://business.inquirer.net/502791/da-reimposes-import-ban-on-poultry-products-from-south-dakota>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Big retail chains asked to sell cheap NFA rice

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

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 02:26 AM January 24, 2025

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) plans to partner with major retail chains to sell cheaper rice at supermarkets and convenience stores nationwide, starting with Metro Manila.

In a statement on Thursday, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said the agency had met with representatives from supermarkets, groceries and convenience stores to discuss this proposal. The agency said the network of more than 3,200 retail outlets, including SM, Robinsons, 7-Eleven, Puregold and MerryMart, was crucial in stabilizing the retail prices of this Filipino staple.

“This is a solution that we believe will stabilize rice prices faster and more efficiently,” Tiu Laurel said. “But we need to find the right balance to operationalize this properly and secure everyone’s cooperation.”

Once launched, this program will first be implemented in the metropolis and monitored for several months before expanding to other regions facing similar challenges. This initiative will offer aging stocks from the National Food Authority (NFA) via its P29-per-kilo rice program, which sells quality rice to vulnerable sectors such as senior citizens, persons with disabilities, solo parents and indigents.

Broken grains

Another component of this initiative is the sale of various rice grades, including the 5-percent-broken variety, 25-percent-broken variety, 100-percent-broken variety and Sulit Rice. Broken rice refers to rice grains that are fragmented or broken during processing such as milling.

Food Terminal Inc., a government-controlled corporation, will handle the supply and packaging of rice distributed to participating retail chains.

“By collaborating with retail networks, the DA aims to make a long-term impact on stabilizing rice prices nationwide, especially in urban areas where fluctuations are more pronounced,” it added.

Earlier, the DA urged retailers to comply with the maximum suggested retail prices (MSRP) for rice, set at P58 per kilogram, so that consumers could purchase the staple at reasonable prices. The agency reported earlier that most vendors have complied with the MSRP, although some retailers were still selling the commodity above the MSRP, based on their monitoring.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary Genevieve Velicaria-Guevarra said some sellers were offering branded rice produced locally for P60 to P65 per kg, although the MSRP does not apply to local products.

“Relatively, prices are already going down, and they are complying with our directives. However, these brands reportedly acquired their stocks at a higher cost, so they are just selling off their remaining inventory before complying with the P58 MSRP,” Guevarra said. The DA said that although no penalties would be imposed yet, recommended retail prices would be strictly enforced once the rules are issued next month.

The MSRP for imported rice took effect on Jan. 20.

The DA had implied the MSRP may be lowered in the coming weeks depending on the developments in the global market. The agency had warned that it would recommend price controls and ceilings, which could impose fines of up to P1 million on violators, if the MSRP still fails to lower retail rice prices.

Although price monitoring showed that retail prices of rice are dropping, the declaration of a food security emergency for rice was still needed to address this. According to the DA, local regular milled rice ranged from P37 to P48 per kg as of Jan. 22, lower than P50-P53 per kg in the same period a year ago. Local well-milled rice retailed from P40 to P55 per kg, also lower than P49-P55 per kg.

Imported regular milled rice was selling for P38 to P48 per kg while imported well-milled rice was priced from P40 to P52 per kg. **INQ**

<https://business.inquirer.net/502850/big-retail-chains-asked-to-sell-cheap-nfa-rice>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

DA eyes partnership with retail chains to expand rice distribution

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

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 11:23 AM January 23, 2025



MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) is eyeing the country’s major retail chains to distribute affordable rice nationwide, emphasizing their crucial role in reaching many consumers.

A statement on Thursday said that DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. met with representatives of major retail chains on Tuesday to discuss the initiative.

“This is a solution that we believe will stabilize rice prices faster and more efficiently,” Laurel said in the same statement.

“But we need to find the right balance to operationalize this properly and secure everyone’s cooperation,” Laurel added.

Laurel also said that the initiative will be monitored for a few months before it goes on “potential expansion” across other regions that also experience fluctuations in rice prices.

The DA noted that the initiative will be implemented in Metro Manila, where it will distribute the P29 rice for vulnerable sectors and the Rice-for-All program that offers various rice grades.

The agency added that Food Terminal Inc. will operate the supply and packaging of rice that will be distributed to the participating retail chains.

Last Tuesday, Laurel called for establishing Kadiwa stores in all public and private markets in Metro Manila where P29 per kilo of rice can be sold to vulnerable sectors.

He also said that the National Food Authority will sell rice to local government units at P36 per kilo starting in February 2025.

<https://business.inquirer.net/502755/da-eyes-partnership-with-retail-chains-to-expand-rice-distribution>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

NFA seeks P9 billion additional budget to increase rice buffer stock

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

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 12:50 PM January 23, 2025



NFA rice (File photo by RAFFY LERMA / Philippine Daily Inquirer)

MANILA, Philippines — The National Food Authority (NFA) is seeking an additional budget of P9 billion this year to cover the additional cost of increasing its buffer stock, as mandated by the amended Rice Tariffication Law.

Republic Act No. 12078, the amended RTL signed by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. last December, now requires the NFA to maintain a buffer stock covering 15 days of national rice consumption, up from the previous nine days.

“We were initially allocated a budget of P9 billion for buffer stocking this year, based on the nine-day requirement,” NFA administrator Larry Lacson said in a statement on Wednesday.

“But the additional six days will necessitate an extra P9 billion for palay procurement considering that our palay price procurement per kilo [will] increase in 2024,” he added.

Lacson noted that the additional six days will require the grains agency to procure approximately 300,000 metric tons of palay from local farmers at an estimated price of P23 per kilogram.

The average national consumption is pegged at 37,000 metric tons of rice a day.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said the NFA's palay procurement should ideally account for up to 20 percent of the country's total domestic production—around 4 million metric tons—compared to the current rate of approximately 3-4 percent currently.

“The NFA used to be a market maker—both a buyer and seller of rice. Now it is restricted to buffer stocking and buying rice from local rice farmers. We aim to restore its influence on palay pricing by purchasing more local rice, helping to boost Filipino farmers' profitability,” said Tiu Laurel, also the NFA Council chair.

Per RA No. 12078, the NFA also receives P2 billion from rice tariffs above the P30 billion allocated to the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF).

The RCEF provides funding for various programs aimed at boosting farmers' productivity and increasing their income and competitiveness after liberalizing rice trading in the Philippines.

The law requires the NFA to maintain an optimal level of rice inventory to sustain the government's disaster relief programs during natural or man-made calamities and to address food security emergencies on rice. It should be sourced solely from local farmers.

Food security emergency

The same NFA stocks can be sold to areas where there is a rice supply shortage or an extraordinary increase in rice prices once the Department of Agriculture (DA) declares a food security emergency for rice.

The DA has been floating the possibility of making such an emergency declaration to arrest rising retail prices of the staple Filipino food.

In an interview on Wednesday, Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said the DA has yet to receive an official copy of the National Price Coordinating Council (NPCC) resolution recommending the food security emergency.

De Mesa, also the DA's spokesperson, said a copy of the NPCC resolution, which was already approved, is being circulated to solicit comments or inputs from government agencies that are part of the price council.

“Since we don't have it yet (resolution), again as committed by the [agriculture] secretary, the DA will review it as part of due diligence in two days, and then afterwards, there might be a possible declaration,” he told reporters.

De Mesa said the emergency declaration is still needed even if retail rice prices are declining to make rice affordable, as some are selling the staple food at higher prices based on the DA's monitoring.

The DA had imposed the maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) for imported rice within Metro Manila, set at P58 a kilo, in a move to temper rising rice prices.

The agency had said the MSRP, which took effect on Jan. 20, could be lowered depending on global rice price movements.

Meanwhile, the NFA Council approved on Tuesday a resolution allowing the NFA to sell rice to local government units (LGUs) for disaster preparedness.

Lacson said that ideally, the NFA should release about 25,000 MT of rice every month to LGUs without jeopardizing the buffer stock needed to respond to emergencies, calamities, or a national food emergency declaration.

<https://business.inquirer.net/502771/nfa-seeks-p9-billion-additional-budget-to-increase-rice-buffer-stock>

BUSINESS WORLD:

29 rice eyed for broader distribution in groceries

January 23, 2025 | 8:31 pm



Rice is sold at a Kadiwa Store inside the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) in Malate, Manila, May 30, 2024.

— PHILIPPINE STAR/EDD GUMBAN

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said it is seeking to expand the distribution of its P29 and Rice for All programs to include retail outlets in Metro Manila.

“The program will be piloted in Metro Manila, where rice prices remain high despite tariff reductions and falling global rates” the DA said in a statement on Thursday.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. said he has met with representatives from the supermarket, grocery, and convenience store industries to expand the program.

“With over 3,200 retail outlets, including SM, Robinsons, 7-Eleven, Puregold, and MerryMart, the DA sees these networks as crucial in reaching millions of consumers daily,” the DA added.

The DA said participating establishments will sell subsidized P29 rice, which are taken from ageing stocks held by the National Food Authority. The intended beneficiaries are vulnerable members of society.

Rice for All offers various rice grades ranging from 5% broken rice to 100% broken rice.

“This is a solution that we believe will stabilize rice prices faster and more efficiently,” Mr. Laurel said.

“But we need to find the right balance to operationalize this properly and secure everyone’s cooperation,” he added.

Food Terminal, Inc. will handle the supply and packaging of rice distributed through participating retail chains.

Mr. Laurel said that the program's Metro Manila results will be reviewed before expanding to other regions.

"The DA is optimistic that this collaboration will serve as a model for future efforts to enhance food security and affordability," Mr. Laurel added. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2025/01/23/648687/p29-rice-eyed-for-broader-distribution-in-groceries/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Coconut yields could fall 20% due to El Niño stress

January 23, 2025 | 8:31 pm



PHILSTAR FILE PHOTO

COCONUT yields are estimated to have declined 20% in 2024 due to the dry conditions brought on by El Niño, according to the United Coconut Association of the Philippines (UCAP).

“Reduced rainfall can stress coconut trees, leading to decreased fruit yields as water scarcity affects the productivity of the plants. El Niño’s result in about 20% reduction in yield,” UCAP said in a statement on Thursday.

Rainfall was weaker than usual in the first half of 2024 due to El Niño, leading to drought and dry spells.

Agricultural damage caused by El Niño was estimated at P15.3 billion on lost volume of 330,717 metric tons (MT), across 109,481 hectares of farmland, according to the DA’s final estimate.

UCAP added that global demand continues to increase with coconut oil prices rising to a 24-month high in 2024.

About 70% of Philippine coconut oil production is exported.

“The combination of diminished supply due to El Niño and the persistent growth in global demand for coconut products have created the perfect storm for a spike in coconut oil prices in recent months,” it said.

The US Department of Agriculture said in a report that El Niño dampened coconut oil exports last year due to declining production.

Exports were estimated to drop to 900,000 MT during the 2024 to 2025 market year, from 1.14 million MT the prior year.

“The Philippines is a price taker for crude coconut oil, with prices largely determined in Rotterdam where commodity brokers exert market forces beyond the country’s influence,” it added.

In October, the Department of Energy ordered the increase in the coconut oil content of biofuel to 3% or B3.

UCAP said coconut oil demand continues to rise as it is seen as a more sustainable, organic, and natural alternative for applications in food, nutrition and personal and home care.

It added that the higher biodiesel blend may have a short-term impact on domestic supply. However, it could potentially stimulate long-term growth in the coconut oil industry.

“The increase in demand coming from biodiesel encourages the industry to be more productive and efficient. It is the much-needed catalyst for a long-overlooked industry to enter a new growth supercycle,” it said. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2025/01/23/648685/coconut-yields-could-fall-20-due-to-el-nino-stress/>

REMATE:

PH gov't nagbabala sa retailers: Tumalima sa P58 imported rice price cap o maparusahan

January 23, 2025 18:36



MANILA, Philippines- Hinikayat ng Department of Agriculture (DA) ang retailers na sumunod sa maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) na P58 para sa imported rice, na naging epektibo, araw ng Lunes, Enero 20.

Kamakailan ay magkasama ang mga opisyal ng DA at Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) na nag-inspeksyon ng mga stall na nagbebenta ng bigas sa Trabajo Market sa Maynila upang masiguro ang kanilang mahigpit na pagsunod sa MSRP.

Natuklasan kasi ng mga opisyal ng pamahalaan na habang karamihan sa vendors ay sumusunod sa bagong direktiba, may ilan namang retailers ang nagbebenta ng bigas ng mas mataas sa P58 per kilo.

“May mga namo-monitor pa tayo rito na P60 to P65 na rice per kilo pero brands kasi siya at local, hindi dapat mag-a-apply sa local ang MSRP. Relatively, bumababa na rin naman ang prices at sumasabay naman sila sa directives natin,” ang sinabi ni DA Assistant Secretary Genevieve Velicaria-Guevarra.

Ang katwiran ayon kay Velicaria-Guevarra, inuubos lamang ng retailers ang kanilang imbentaryo ng bigas na nabili sa mataas na halaga. Pagkatapos nito ay susunod na sila sa MSRP.

Hindi naman nagpataw ng anumang parusa ang DA sa initial monitoring nito.

Gayunman, ang babala ng departamento ay mas magiging mahigpit ang mga ipatutupad na alituntunin sa oras na ang mga opisyal na regulasyon ay ipalabas na sa Pebrero.

Ang MSRP para sa imported rice ay ipinatupad upang tiyakin na ang bigas ay mananatiling abot-kaya para sa consumers habang sinusupportahan ang kakayahang kumita ng industriya ng bigas.

Nauna nang sinabi ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel na ang karagdagang mga pagsasaayos sa MSRP ay dapat na asahan sa mga darating na linggo.

Nagbabala naman si Laurel na kung mabibigo ang MSRP na ibaba ang presyo ng bigas sa “reasonable levels,” irerekomenda ng DA ang price controls at ceilings.

Ang mga lalabag sa naturang hakbang ay pagmumultahin ng hanggang P1 milyon para sa mapatutunayang nagkasala.

Samantala, hinikayat naman ni DA Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa ang mga retailers na i-negotiate ang mga presyo sa kanilang suppliers para makahanay sa P58 MSRP.

“Dapat mapag-usapan nila immediately ang stocks dahil sa susunod, hindi na puwedeng makakita kami ng ganito kataas na presyo, lalo na ‘yong P60 to P65 per kilo,” ayon kay De Mesa.

“We’ll give them enough time to negotiate with their suppliers but eventually, in two weeks’ time, we will have another round of monitoring,” dagdag na pahayag nito.

Labis namang pinahalagahan ni Velicaria-Guevarra ang pagkilos ng local government units (LGUs) para masiguro na sumusunod sa bagong direktiba ang mga vendors.

Sinabi nito na ang mga alkalde sa Metro Manila ay aktibong mino-monitor ang mga presyo sa kanilang public at private markets.

“Yon naman ang kanilang commitment at talagang nagpapasalamat kami at tuloy-tuloy ang kanilang suporta,” ang sinabi ni Velicaria-Guevarra. **Kris Jose**

<https://remate.ph/ph-govt-nagbabala-sa-retailers-tumalima-sa-p58-imported-rice-price-cap-o-maparusahan/>

REMATE:

P9B dagdag na badyet inihirit ng NFA para sa mas maraming rice buffer stock

January 23, 2025 18:00



MANILA, Philippines- Hangad ng National Food Authority (NFA) ang karagdagang budget na P9 bilyon ngayong taon para saklawin ang karagdagang halaga para paramihin ang buffer stock nito, gaya ng nakamandato sa inamyendahang Rice Tariffication Law.

Nakasaad sa Republic Act No. 12078, ang inamyendahang RTL na nilagdaan ni Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos Jr. noong nakaraang Disyembre, nire-require ang NFA na panatilihin ang buffer stock para sa 15 araw na national rice consumption, mula sa dating siyam na araw lamang.

“We were initially allocated a budget of P9 billion for buffer stocking this year, based on the nine-day requirement,” ang sinabi ni NFA administrator Larry Lacson.

“But the additional six days will necessitate an extra P9 billion for palay procurement considering that our palay price procurement per kilo [will] increase in 2024,” dagdag na wika nito.

Sinabi pa ni Lacson, sa karagdagang anim na araw ay ire-require ang DA na kumuha ng 300,000 metric tons ng palay mula sa lokal na magsasaka, ipinagpapalagay sa P23 per kilogram ang presyo.

Ang average national consumption ay 37,000 metric tons ng bigas sa isang araw.

“The NFA’s palay procurement should ideally account for up to 20 percent of the country’s total domestic production—around 4 million metric tons—compared to the current rate of approximately 3-4 percent currently,” ayon kay Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.

“The NFA used to be a market maker—both a buyer and seller of rice. Now it is restricted to buffer stocking and buying rice from local rice farmers. We aim to restore its influence on palay pricing by purchasing more local rice, helping to boost Filipino farmers’ profitability,” dagdag ni Tiu Laurel, isa ring NFA Council chair.

Ayon sa RA No. 12078, makatatanggap din ang NFA ng P2 billion mula sa rice tariffs maliban sa P30 billion na inilaan sa Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF).

Ang RCEF ang nagbibigay ng pondo para sa iba’t ibang programa na naglalayong palakasin ang ‘productivity’ ng mga magsasaka at itaas ang kanilang kita at competitiveness matapos na gawing liberal ang rice trading sa Pilipinas.

“The law requires the NFA to maintain an optimal level of rice inventory to sustain the government’s disaster relief programs during natural or man-made calamities and to address food security emergencies on rice. It should be sourced solely from local farmers,” ang nakasaad sa ulat.

“The same NFA stocks can be sold to areas where there is a rice supply shortage or an extraordinary increase in rice prices once the Department of Agriculture (DA) declares a food security emergency for rice,” batay pa rito.

Samantala, pinalutang naman ng DA ang posibilidad na magkaroon ng emergency declaration para pigilan ang pagtaas ng retail prices sa mga pangunahing pagkain ng mga Pinoy. **Jose Kris**

<https://remate.ph/p9b-dagdag-na-badvet-inihirit-ng-nfa-para-sa-mas-maraming-rice-buffer-stock/>

REMATE:

South Dakota poultry muling ipinagbawal sa Pinas sa bird flu outbreak

January 23, 2025 15:49



MANILA, Philippines- Muling nagpataw ang Department of Agriculture (DA) ng ‘temporary ban’ sa pagpasok ng ‘domestic at wild birds’ at maging ng poultry products, mula South Dakota sa Estados Unidos.

Kasunod ito ng kamakailan lamang na outbreak ng ‘highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI).’

Sa isang kalatas, sinabi ng DA na hangad nito na maprotektahan ang local poultry industry mula sa potensyal na pagpasok at matagumpay na epekto ng virus.

Ang kautusan ay matapos maiulat na may ilang outbreaks ng H5N1 avian influenza, isang subtype ng HPAI, nakaapekto sa domestic birds sa South Dakota.

Sinabi pa ng DA na kalaunan ay nakumpirma ito ng America’s National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NSVL) noong Disyembre 17, 2024.

Bilang isang emergency measure, nagpalabas si Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel ng Memorandum Order (MO) No. 04 na nagsususpende ng proseso at pagpapalabas ng sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) import clearances para sa poultry products ng South Dakota.

Sa ilalim ng kautusan ni Laurel, “the prohibition shall cover the importation of domestic and wild birds, including eggs, semen for artificial insemination, day-old chicks, and other poultry products.”

“The entry of products that are already in transit, loaded, or arrived at local ports may be allowed, provided that they were slaughtered or produced before Nov. 13, 2024. If such products are not covered by this provision, veterinary quarantine officers and inspectors are mandated to confiscate them,” ayon pa rin sa kautusan.

Nauna rito, ipinag-utos ng Pilipinas ang temporary ban sa mga poultry products na manggagaling mula sa South Dakota noong Nobyembre 23, 2023.

Tinukoy ng DA ang banta ng H5N1 avian influenza bilang sanhi ng moratorium.

Binawi lamang ang ban makaraan ang siyam na buwan, Aug. 31, 2024, matapos na itala ng South Dakota na “no outbreaks” matapos ang May 29 ng kahalintulad na taon. **Kris Jose**

<https://remate.ph/south-dakota-poultry-muling-ipinagbawal-sa-pinas-sa-bird-flu-outbreak/>

REMATE:

Grupo ng magsasaka: Food Security Emergency sa Pinas, isang malaking budol!

January 23, 2025 11:44



MANILA, Philippines – Iginiit ng Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) na ang deklarasyon ng Food Security Emergency ng administrasyong Marcos Jr. at ng Department of Agriculture (DA) ay malinaw na panibagong pambubudol na nagtatago sa aniyo ng mga huwad na solusyon sa malalang problema ng mataas na presyo ng bigas.

“Walang dudang band-aid solution lamang ang deklarasyong ito. Para bang sinusubukang takpan ang malalang sugat na likha ng Rice Liberalization Law at iba pang neoliberal na polisiyang anti-magsasaka at anti-mamamayan,” ani KMP chairperson Danilo Ramos.

Ayon sa KMP, ang plano ng DA na maglabas ng 300,000 metric tons ng bigas ng National Food Authority sa merkado ay para lamang sa dalawang hanggang tatlong araw na konsumo. Hindi nito tinutugunan ang ugat ng mataas na presyo ng bigas, gayundin ang pagkalugmok ng mga magsasaka at konsyumer.

Sinabi ni Ramos na isa ring kandidatong Senador ng Makabayan na isang Pagpapanggap ang ginagawa ng DA na susuportahan daw ang mga lokal na magsasaka sa pamamagitan ng pagbili ng lokal na palay, habang tuloy-tuloy ang pag-asa ng gobyerno sa importasyon. “Sa taong 2024, umabot sa 4.68 milyong metric tons ang inangkat na bigas ng Pilipinas, at inaasahang lalagpas pa ito sa 5.22 milyong metric tons ngayong 2025. Pinapabagsak ng walang kontrol na importasyon ang farmgate price ng palay at lalo pang nagpapahirap sa mga magsasaka,” ani Ramos.

Kabilang din sa mga diumano’y solusyon ng DA ang pagtatakda ng Maximum Suggested Retail Price (MSRP) para sa bigas. Pero ayon sa KMP, malinaw na ito ay isa lamang ilusyon.

“Hindi maibaba ang presyo ng bigas kung ang kontrol sa suplay at pagpepresyo ay nasa mga pribadong trader at importer. Habang ipinapasa ng gobyerno ang pasanin sa mga magsasaka, mamimili at maliliit na retailer, walang konkretong aksyon laban sa may pakana ng hoarding, smuggling, at price manipulation,” dagdag pa ni Ramos.

Ayon sa KMP, tahasang pag-amin ng kabiguan ng DA at administrasyong Marcos Jr ang deklarasyon ng Food Security Emergency. Mula Rice Liberalization Law hanggang sa Executive Order No. 62, patuloy na hinayaan ng gobyerno ang kontrol sa suplay ng pagkain ng bansa sa mga dayuhan at pribadong interes.

Hinikayat ng KMP ang sambayanang Pilipino na magkaisa laban sa mga neoliberal na polisiyang nagpapahirap sa bayan. (*Santi Celario*)

<https://remate.ph/grupo-ng-magsasaka-food-security-emergency-sa-pinas-isang-malaking-budol/>

REMATE:

Kadiwa rice target ibenta sa supermarket, convenience store

January 23, 2025 09:39



MANILA, Philippines – Pinag-aaralan ng Department of Agriculture (DA) ang posibilidad na gawing available ang abot-kayang bigas mula sa Kadiwa stores sa supermarkets at convenience stores.

Ayon kay DA spokesperson Arnel de Mesa, nakipagpulong na ang DA sa mga namumuno ng malalaking supermarket chains at convenience stores upang talakayin ang plano. Pumayag ang mga ito na ibenta ang Kadiwa rice sa kanilang mga tindahan sa parehong presyo tulad ng sa mga Kadiwa stalls.

Kapag natupad ang plano, maaaring makabili ang mga konsyumer ng bigas sa iba't ibang presyo, kabilang ang P29/kilo Kadiwa rice, P36/kilo “Sulit Rice” (purong durog na bigas), at P38/kilo “Rice-for-All” (halo ng durog na bigas). Kung ikukumpara, ang imported rice na may parehong kalidad ay ibinebenta sa P45 per kilo, kaya’t mas mura ang bigas na galing sa lokal na produksyon.

Sa kasalukuyan, ang Kadiwa rice ay binebenta sa iba't ibang lokasyon, kabilang na ang mga stalls sa ilang MRT-3 at LRT-2 stations. *RNT*

<https://remate.ph/kadiwa-rice-target-ibenta-sa-supermarket-convenience-store/>

REMATE:

Food security emergency reso, hinihintay pa rin ng DA

January 23, 2025 08:14



Inanunsyo ng Department of Agriculture (DA) noong Miyerkules na hinihintay pa nila ang opisyal na kopya ng resolusyon mula sa National Price Coordinating Council (NPCC) ukol sa deklarasyon ng food security emergency para sa bigas.

Ayon kay DA spokesperson Arnel De Mesa, ang resolusyon ay kasalukuyang iniikot pa sa mga ahensya, bagaman ito ay naaprubahan na.

Dahil wala pa silang opisyal na kopya, hindi pa sila makakagawa ng karagdagang hakbang.

Sa kabila ng pagkaantala, binigyang diin ni De Mesa ang pangangailangan ng deklarasyon upang mapabilis ang pagpapalabas ng bigas mula sa National Food Authority (NFA), na may halos 300,000 metrikong toneladang bigas na nakuha mula sa mga lokal na magsasaka.

Ipinunto rin niya na may ilang retailers na hindi pa rin sumusunod sa bagong ipinatupad na maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) para sa 5 porsyentong sirang imported na bigas, na nagkakahalaga ng PHP 58 bawat kilo sa Metro Manila.

Kapag natanggap na ang opisyal na resolusyon, plano ng DA na suriin ito sa loob ng dalawang araw bago magpatuloy sa deklarasyon.

Ang food security emergency ay magbibigay-daan sa NFA na magbenta ng bigas sa mga lokal na pamahalaan at ibang ahensya, linisin ang mga imbakan, at tulungan ang mga lokal na magsasaka sa darating na panahon ng anihan. *RNT*

<https://remate.ph/food-security-emergency-reso-hinihintay-pa-rin-ng-da/>

MANILA STANDARD:

DA bringing cheaper rice to major groceries, supermarkets in NCR

By Othel V. Campos

January 23, 2025, 7:45 pm

The Department of Agriculture (DA) will bring affordable rice to major groceries and supermarkets in Metro Manila, Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel said Thursday.

The DA met with representatives from supermarkets, groceries and convenience stores on Tuesday to discuss a government-led initiative to stabilize rice prices and enhance accessibility for Filipino households across the nation.

“This is a solution that we believe will stabilize rice prices faster and more efficiently. But we need to find the right balance to operationalize this properly and secure everyone’s cooperation,” said Tiu Laurel.

He said the DA would work with over 3,200 retail outlets including SM, Robinsons, 7-Eleven, Puregold and MerryMart for the initiative.

It will be piloted in Metro Manila, where rice prices remain high despite the reduced tariffs and declining global rates. It includes the P29 Rice program where aging stocks at the National Food Authority (NFA) will be made available for vulnerable sectors.

Another is the Rice-for-All (RFA) program, which offers various rice grades including RFA5 or 5-percent broken grains, RFA25 or 25-percent broken grains and RFA100 or 100-percent broken grains, popularly known as Sulit Rice.

State-owned Food Terminal Inc. (FTI) will manage the supply and packaging of rice distributed through participating retail chains.

The KADIWA ng Pangulo program, which focuses on food security and affordable prices, has been instrumental in addressing rising food costs.

By partnering with retail networks, the DA aims to create a sustainable impact on stabilizing rice prices, particularly in urban areas where fluctuations are more acute.

<https://manilastandard.net/business/314550030/da-bringing-cheaper-rice-to-major-groceries-supermarkets-in-ncr.html>

THE MANILA TIMES:

DA, retailers tie up to sell cheaper rice

By Giselle P. Jordan
January 24, 2025

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) will be partnering with major retailers to make affordable rice more accessible to consumers.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. met on Tuesday with representatives of supermarkets, groceries and convenience stores to discuss ways of widening the availability of rice and stabilize market prices.

Partnerships with SM, Robinsons, 7-Eleven, Puregold, and MerryMart are "a solution that we believe will stabilize rice prices faster and more efficiently," he said.

"But we need to find the right balance to operationalize this properly and secure everyone's cooperation."

The program will be piloted in Metro Manila and will have two components: P29 per kilo rice — comprising aging but still consumable stocks from the National Food Authority that is sold to the poor and vulnerable sectors — and the Rice-for-All program with different rice grades such as 5-percent broken (RFA5), 25-percent broken (RFA25) and 100-percent broken (RFA100) or Sulit Rice.

Government-owned Food Terminal Inc. will manage the supply and packaging of rice to be sold by retailers.

The DA claimed that the Kadiwa ng Pangulo program was helpful in addressing stubbornly high rice prices and that the partnership with retail giants would have a long-term impact on prices, especially in urban areas.

The partnership with retailers will be expanded to other areas in the country should the Metro Manila pilot test prove successful, the department added.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/01/24/business/top-business/da-retailers-tie-up-to-sell-cheaper-rice/2043633>

THE MANILA TIMES:

Fresh ban on birds from South Dakota

By Giselle P. Jordan
January 24, 2025

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) has imposed another temporary ban on the importation of domestic and wild birds, and poultry products from South Dakota in the United States, following a recent highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreak.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said the prohibition on the entry to the Philippines of domestic and wild birds, day-old chicks, eggs, semen for artificial insemination and other poultry products is a move "to protect the health of the local poultry industry," a multibillion peso industry vital to food security and which draws large investments and creates jobs for Filipinos.

US authorities on Dec. 17 confirmed reports of several H5N1 avian influenza outbreaks affecting domestic birds in South Dakota. The National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, Iowa, noted the presence of the bird flu virus.

Tiu Laurel has issued Memorandum Order (MO) 04 directing the Bureau of Animal Industry to suspend the processing and issuance of sanitary and phytosanitary import clearances for any shipments of such products from South Dakota.

The MO also orders veterinary quarantine officers and inspectors across the country to confiscate these poultry products. However, commodities in transit or at the local ports after the ban are exempted from the MO. Heat-treated poultry products and those slaughtered on or before Nov. 13 are also exempted from the ban.

The Philippines first issued a temporary ban on South Dakota poultry in November 2023 due to bird flu. It was lifted in August 2024.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/01/24/business/top-business/fresh-ban-on-birds-from-south-dakota/2043628>

THE MANILA TIMES:

582 Samal farmers get free fertilizer

By Ernie Esconde

January 24, 2025

SAMAL, Bataan — The Department of Agriculture started distributing free commercial fertilizers on Thursday to help the farmers in this town for the dry season cropping.

Field technician Roy Vinzon of the Samal municipal agriculture office said the distribution is under the program Fertilizer Discount Voucher for dry season 2024–2025 of the agriculture department.

Beneficiaries under the government's Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) were 582 farmers, including 256 who are planting hybrid seeds and 326 farmers on inbred seeds.

The free fertilizers consisting of urea at P1,700 per bag and complete (14 – 14-14) at P1,650 per bag has a total amount of P2,202,159.80 with P1,160,488 for hybrid seed planters and P1,041,671.80 for user of inbred seeds.

A farmer is entitled to free fertilizers at P3,400 per hectare for hybrid seeds and P4,000 per hectare for RCEF inbred seeds.

Vinzon said government program for farmers is continuous.

"Hopefully our farmers will continue to plant as the country needs them so that all of us will have food to eat," said Vinzon.

"They should not lose their patience since the government's aid is continuous," added Vinzon.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/01/24/regions/582-samal-farmers-get-free-fertilizer/2043575>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

DA bans chicken from South Dakota

Ada Pelonia
January 23, 2025

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) slapped a temporary ban on poultry products from South Dakota, United States, due to bird flu outbreaks in that state.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. signed Memorandum Order (MO) 4, which banned the entry of imported domestic and wild birds including their products, such as poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs, and semen from the US state.

Tiu Laurel said the temporary ban will prevent the entry of bird flu virus “to protect the health of the local poultry industry.”

“The local poultry industry is a multi-billion-peso business that spurs large investments, creates jobs, and helps ensure food security,” Tiu Laurel said. The DA said it decided to issue the ban after US veterinary authorities confirmed several outbreaks of H5N1 High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (HPAI) in South Dakota, which affected domestic birds. The agency submitted its official report on December 17.

It added that the rapid spread of H5N1 HPAI in the US in a short period since its first laboratory detection “necessitates a wider coverage of trade restriction to prevent the entry of HPAI virus and protect the health of the local poultry population.”

The DA said there has been a mutual HPAI-related arrangement in 2016 between the veterinary authorities of the USA and the Philippines wherein a state-wide ban should only be imposed if there are three or more counties affected by HPAI in one state.

Following this report, Laurel ordered the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) to suspend the issuance of sanitary and phytosanitary import clearance (SPSIC) to the affected commodity.

He also noted that only birds slaughtered or products processed on or before November 13, 2024, will be allowed to enter the country. The ban does not cover heat-treated products.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/01/23/da-bans-chicken-from-south-dakota/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Top PHL retailers may soon sell cheap rice–DA

Ada Pelonia
January 23, 2025

The Department of Agriculture (DA) is tapping the country’s major retail chains to distribute cheaper rice nationwide.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said he met with representatives from supermarkets, groceries, and convenience stores to discuss the initiative which aims to stabilize prices of the food staple. With over 3,200 retail outlets, including SM, Robinsons, 7-Eleven, Puregold, and MerryMart, the agency considers these networks as crucial in reaching millions of Filipinos daily.

“This is a solution that we believe will stabilize rice prices faster and more efficiently. But we need to find the right balance to operationalize this properly and secure everyone’s cooperation,” Laurel said in a statement. The DA said the program would be piloted in Metro Manila where retail rice prices remained high despite tariff reductions and declining global quotations.

It will feature two main components, such as the P29 Rice or aging stocks from the National Food Authority (NFA) for vulnerable sectors and the Rice-for-All program which offers various rice grades, including 5 percent broken, 25 percent broken, and 100 percent (Sulit Rice) broken rice varieties. The agency said Food Terminal Inc. (FTI), a government-owned corporation, would handle the supply and packaging of rice distributed through participating retail chains.

Laurel noted that the pilot initiative would be monitored over several months before potential expansion to other regions facing similar challenges. By collaborating with retail networks, the agency said it wants to make “a long-term impact” on stabilizing rice prices nationwide, especially in urban areas where fluctuations are more evident.

“The DA is optimistic that this collaboration will serve as a model for future efforts to enhance food security and affordability.” The prevailing price of imported well-milled and regular milled rice stood at P46 and P42 per kilo, respectively, based on the latest government price monitoring report.

For local well-milled and regular milled rice, the DA’s price monitoring showed prevailing price is nearly P47 and P42 per kilo, respectively.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/01/23/top-phl-retailers-may-soon-sell-cheap-rice-da/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

The rice dilemma: Understanding why inflation might stay out of reach despite monetary easing

BusinessMirror Editorial
January 24, 2025

AS the Philippines grapples with the volatility of rice prices, the delicate balance of agricultural policy and monetary policy comes into sharp focus. The warnings from former Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) deputy governor Diwa Guinigundo underscore a pressing concern: the precarious state of rice supply could undermine the effectiveness of monetary policies designed to foster economic stability and growth. (*Read the BusinessMirror story: “Rice inflation risks, high BSP cautioned,” January 22, 2025*).

Rice, a staple that holds an 8.9 percent weight in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), is more than just a dietary staple; it is a critical indicator of economic health. The situation is clear: as one of the largest rice importers globally, the Philippines confronts a dual challenge of a weakened peso and increasing fuel costs, both of which are likely to drive up food prices and inflation even more. Guinigundo’s cautionary remarks regarding the BSP’s potential interest rate cuts are not mere speculation; they are rooted in the tangible impacts of a volatile agricultural sector.

The BSP’s strategy must be recalibrated in light of these developments. Easing monetary policy too soon could unleash a new wave of inflation, particularly if food prices remain erratic. Guinigundo, now a country analyst for Global Source Partners, rightly points out that the central bank’s forward guidance should extend beyond nominal economic indicators, incorporating the harsh realities of agricultural supply challenges. The ongoing issues within the Department of Agriculture have led to a declaration of a food security emergency—a clear signal that the situation is dire.

While the decision to release 300,000 metric tons of rice from the National Food Authority reserves is a step towards addressing the crisis, the real impact may be minimal. Guinigundo highlights that this quantity barely scratches the surface of the country’s daily rice consumption. The NFA’s approach—selling rice through government-run Kadiwa centers—raises questions about sustainability and effectiveness. The government’s promise to bring rice prices down to P28 per kilo is increasingly unrealistic, especially when broken rice is already selling for P58 per kilo.

The recent resolution from the National Price Coordinating Council urging the DA to declare a food security emergency reflects an urgent need for decisive action. Agriculture Secretary

Francisco Tiu Laurel's plan to distribute rice stocks to local government units at controlled prices is a temporary fix, but without addressing the root causes of supply shortages, such measures will merely provide a band-aid solution.

As we move forward, it is crucial that the BSP and the DA collaborate closely to align their strategies. Monetary policies should be guided by a comprehensive understanding of agricultural dynamics, while agricultural policies must prioritize productivity and resilience against external shocks.

Currently, the relationship between monetary policy and agricultural stability is more important than ever. The BSP must exercise caution in its monetary easing approach, while the DA must confront the underlying issues in rice production and distribution. Together, they can forge a path toward economic resilience, ensuring that well-meaning policies translate into tangible benefits for all Filipinos. National economic stability, including rice prices, requires a unified and dedicated approach.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/01/24/the-rice-dilemma-understanding-why-inflation-might-stay-out-of-reach-despite-monetary-easing/>

PILIPINO STAR NGAYON:

Murang bigas mabibili sa supermarket - DA

[Angie dela Cruz](#)

January 24, 2025 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Tiniyak ng Department of Agriculture (DA) na higit pa nilang palalawakin ang Kadiwa ng Pangulo Rice-for-All sa mga malalaking retail chains sa bansa kabilang ang mga supermarket.

Ang paniniyak ay ginawa ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. kasunod ng kanyang pakikipagpulong sa mga kinatawan ng mga supermarkets, groceries, at convenience stores para talakayin ang inisyatibang ito na layong mapatatag ang presyo ng bigas.

Ayon kay Tiu Laurel, sa tulong ng mahigit 3,200 retail outlets, kabilang ang SM, Robinsons, 7-Eleven, Puregold, at MerryMart, mas magiging accessible ang murang bigas sa milyun-milyong mamimili araw-araw.

“Naniniwala kami na ang solusyon na ito ang magpapatatag ng presyo ng bigas nang mas mabilis at mas epektibo,” sabi ni Tiu Laurel.

Target ng DA na simulan ang pilot rollout nito sa Metro Manila kasama ang ibebentang P29 kada kilong bigas para sa mga mahihirap na sektor at Rice-for-All (RFA) Program kung saan kabilang sa alok ang RFA5 (5% broken), RFA25 (25% broken), at RFA100 (100% broken), o Sulit Rice.

Ang Food Terminal Inc. (FTI), isang government-owned corporation, ang mamamahala sa supply at packaging ng bigas na ipapamahagi sa mga kasali sa retail chains.

Dagdag pa ng Kalihim, babantayan ang pilot initiative sa loob ng ilang buwan bago ito palawakin sa ibang rehiyon.

<https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/metro/2025/01/24/2416455/murang-bigas-mabibili-sa-supermarket-da>