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MANILA BULLETIN:

Fishers, farmers' groups hit SC ruling on commercial fishing

BY JEL SANTOS

Jan 4, 2025 03:49 PM



Fishers' group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya), the Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) and the MAGSASAKA Party-List (MPL) strongly denounced the Supreme Court decision allowing commercial fishing vessels within the 15-kilometer municipal waters.

In a statement, Pamalakaya warned that the municipal fisheries output in the first quarter of the year might “fall significantly” if the SC decision takes effect.

Based on records, the group said the total volume of the municipal fisheries production was estimated at 196.13 thousand metric tons or 20.3 percent of the entire fisheries production in the third quarter of 2024.

“Bagsak na ang produksyon ng munisipal na mangingisda dahil sa iba't-ibang salik, at pinangangambahan pa ang higit na pagdausdos nito dahil sa pagligalisa sa pagpasok ng mga commercial fishing vessels sa aming tradisyunal na pangisdaan. Imbes na palakasin ang kapasidad ng mga maliliit na mangingisda na makapag-ambag sa kabuuang produksyon ng pagkain, lalo pang pinahina ito dahil sa hindi patas na batas sa pangisdaan (The production of municipal fishers has already dropped due to various factors, and there are fears of an even greater decline with the legalization of commercial fishing vessels entering our traditional fishing grounds. Instead of strengthening the capacity of small-scale fishers to contribute to

overall food production, it has been further weakened by the unfair fisheries law),” said Pamalakaya Vice Chairperson Ronnel Arambulo.

The group said it will persistently challenge the ruling through gathering of petitions from the affected municipal fisherfolk, and working with the local government units that share the same opposition.

Meanwhile, the FFF and MPL also opposed the SC First Division’s ruling which struck down a longstanding provision of the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998 reserving municipal waters for the exploitation and use by the country's two million small fishers.

The two groups criticized the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) and the Department of Agriculture (DA) for "sleeping on the job" for failing to appeal the Court's decision within the required period.

FFF Board Chairman and MPL first nominee Leonardo Montemayor said a new bill should be filed and passed in the next Congress to correct the “grave injustice and economic injury” against the fisherfolk.

"The Fisheries Code clearly limits fishing from the municipal shorelines up to 15 kilometers in favor of municipal fishers. On a case-to-case basis only, a commercial fisher may be allowed starting at the 10.1-mark upwards, provided he meets the following conditions: water depth of at least 7 fathoms, use of sustainable fishing methods, prior consultation with artisanal fisherfolk and other stakeholders, and no previous violation of Philippine laws," said Montemayor, who co-authored the Fisheries Code (Republic Act No. 8550, later amended by R.A. No. 10654 in 2015 and served as Agriculture chief in 2001.

For his part, MPL chairman Argel Joseph Cabatbat warned of worsening degradation of fishery resources as a result of the recent SC decision allowing commercial fishing.

On Dec. 19, 2024, the Supreme Court nullified provisions of the Fisheries Code restricting commercial fishing within municipal waters and upheld a Malabon Regional Trial Court decision stemming from a legal challenge filed by commercial fishing operators.

Next week, the Pamalakaya will troop to the Department of Agriculture (DA) to denounce Secretary Francisco Tiu-Laurel Jr. over his “continued silence” on the issue.

“Bilang kalihim ng DA, dapat na mas manaig kay Laurel ang boses ng mga maliliit na mangingisda, imbes na ang interes ng kanyang mga kauring operator ng commercial fishing. Kaya hamon namin sa DA na agarang magsagawa ng hakbang para panatilihin ang eksklusibong karapatan ng mga maliliit na mangingisda sa 15-kilometrong munisipal na pangisdaan(As the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Laurel should prioritize the voices of small-scale fishers over the interests of his fellow commercial fishing operators. Therefore, we challenge the DA to take immediate action to uphold the exclusive rights of small-scale fishers in the 15-kilometer municipal fishing grounds),” the group said.

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https://mb.com.ph/2025/1/4/fishers-farmers-groups-hit-sc-ruling-on-commercial-fishing#google_vignette

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Food security remains elusive



HIDDEN AGENDA - Mary Ann LL. Reyes - The Philippine Star

January 4, 2025 | 12:00am

Broiler raisers have been lamenting about the declining liveweight prices of chicken, with prices falling by more than P20 per kilo after Christmas, the steepest decline ever.

According to United Broiler Raisers Association (UBRA) chairman Elias Jose Inciong, while it has already been traditional that after Christmas, there is a drop in demand and supplies are high, what makes this year different is that there is a record drop in prices.

He noted that while inventory is equal with last year's, demand this year is poorer.

UBRA reported that the average liveweight price of regular-sized broiler (1.5 to 1.69 kilos) as of Dec. 27 collapsed to P110 per kilo from P131.50 per kilo last Dec. 20. Prices continued to decline after Dec. 27 to as low as P110 per kilo which is the breakeven cost for most broiler raisers.

Inciong said that the drop is very precipitous, with the decline in prices after Christmas only around P5 to P10 per kilo.

It has been noted that the drop in liveweight prices comes at a time when broiler raisers reel from higher production costs, in particular the elevated day-old-chick prices that have remained above P40 per head throughout last year.

As early as last November, UBRA had been complaining that farmgate prices for broilers or chicken raised for meat production have dropped to P80 per kilo, which is way below the estimated production cost of P105 to P110 per kilo, leaving broiler producers with losses of around P25 to P30 per kilo of chicken.

In June of last year, the farmgate price or the price at which farmers sell their produce, was at P159.94 per kilo.

Chicken farmers were hoping that the usually high demand for chicken during the holiday season would bring farmgate prices up. Unfortunately, this did not happen.

What is sadder though is the fact that while the liveweight prices, referring to the price of chicken before it is dressed, has dropped significantly, the retail price of dressed (slaughtered, defeathered, eviscerated whole bird with the head and feet removed and ready-to-cook) chicken has remained stable.

According to reports from the Department of Agriculture, the retail price of dressed chicken remained at P180 to P250 per kilo in key Metro Manila markets.

Latest data from the National Meat Inspection Service also revealed that the nationwide dressed chicken inventory remained above 55 million kilos with at least 40 million of which are imported stocks.

This means that while demand may be there, there is simply too much supply of dressed chicken, mostly imported and usually cheaper.

UBRA chairman Gregorio San Diego last November attributed the low farmgate prices to a surge in broiler chicken imports despite recent declines in consumption.

With consumers also not benefitting from the low farmgate prices, San Diego said that it is the importers who benefit as they can slightly reduce their prices to encourage consumers to purchase imported broilers over locally produced ones.

If neither the producers nor the consumers are benefitting from the situation, then there continues to be something seriously wrong with the way government has been dealing with the problem, with traders and importers the only ones being favored by this flawed structure of our agricultural sector.

In a December 2024 report, the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources noted that the Philippine poultry industry is experiencing a crisis characterized by a sharp decline in farmgate prices due to oversupply, a surge in imports and persistently high retail prices.

It pointed out that the disconnect between farmgate and retail prices emphasizes the significant market inefficiencies in the supply chain. This disparity, the report explained, not only diminishes the profitability of local producers but also raises concerns about fairness, transparency and distribution of value across the supply chain.

The report projects that due to an oversupply of chicken in the market, the broiler chicken sector is expected to face sustained downward pressure on farmgate prices in the short term, adding that the gap between farmgate and retail prices benefits importers while local producers struggle to stay profitable.

It also stressed that the oversupply in the poultry market, worsened by the lingering effects of typhoons, may continue to suppress farmgate prices as the year progresses, challenging the sustainability of local production.

The report recommended government interventions and potential adjustments in the pricing structure to address these market imbalances and stabilize prices in the coming months.

It also noted that public support is equally crucial, as consumers can help by prioritizing locally produced poultry, directly aiding struggling farmers. Advocating for policy reforms to ensure fairer pricing mechanisms can contribute to a more equitable and sustainable poultry industry, it added.

The paper, written by Clarizel Gomez, also mentioned about a proposed livestock bill which has already passed the Senate that targets P15 billion in tariff collections to be earmarked for the livestock, poultry and dairy competitiveness enhancement fund to support disease control, repopulation, food safety and animal feed production programs.

The bill seeks to address rising costs and outbreak of disease and proposes a 10-year livestock and poultry development fund, modelled after the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) to assist small-scale farm raisers. Counterpart bills are still pending in the Lower House.

Unfortunately, while those who created the RCEF may have had the best of intentions, it has so far failed to uplift the situation of rice farmers in the country. The Rice Tariffication Law of 2019 enabled rice importers to sell larger volumes of rice in the country by paying tariffs of at least 35 percent, eliminating the previous cap on imports. The RCEF receives its funding from tariffs on rice imports.

There are those who espouse the view that the Philippines is better off importing what it needs, if local producers cannot compete.

Are we ready to say goodbye to our Philippine agricultural sector? Will attaining food self-sufficiency and food security for the country remain just a pipe dream?

Reliance on imports makes us vulnerable to the vagaries of the world market. What would happen if major exporters were to reduce or to stop their exports just like what happened at the height of the Russia-Ukraine war? Or what if there is a heat wave or drought?

A study by the Mercator Research Institute on Global Commons and Climate Change has estimated that worldwide, the potential collapse of food imports threatens the food security of 200 million people.

It noted that major exporting nation such as Russia, Thailand and Vietnam tend to adopt restrictive export policies when seeking to pull their own domestic markets through difficult time, such as during extreme weather events which take its toll on harvests.

Depending on other countries for our basic needs will expose us not only to geopolitical risks such as wars but other risks such as those that are weather-related, shipping disruptions, whims and caprices of our trading partners and international institutions, among others.

Losing our agricultural sector and domestic production to imports should never be an option. A strong agricultural-based economy is important not only for food security but also for employment and income especially in rural areas. Just look at Vietnam and Thailand. They are able to attain economic progress while having a strong agricultural sector. They remain as huge

agricultural exporters. Except for Brunei and Singapore, agriculture remains as the main source of livelihood in the region.

For comments, email at maryannreyesphilstar@gmail.com.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2025/01/04/2411648/food-security-remains-elusive>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Removing branding on rice to proceed

[Cecille Suerte Felipe](#), [Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

January 4, 2025 | 12:00am



Workers are seen unloading sacks of rice in Tondo, Manila on November 19, 2024.

STAR / Ryan Baldemor

MANILA, Philippines — As part of government efforts to bring down the retail price of rice, the move of Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. to remove branding on rice will proceed, despite warnings that it could further sow confusion.

In an interview, Agriculture Assistant Secretary and spokesman Arnel de Mesa said that officials of the Department of Agriculture (DA) met twice to finalize the plan to remove the labeling of rice.

This was after Tiu Laurel said retailers and traders are intentionally confusing consumers with premium rice imports to justify the high prices of the grains.

Tiu Laurel has said that he wants to standardize the labeling of rice so that consumers will not be shortchanged by unscrupulous traders.

De Mesa said that during a visit to the Guadalupe Market in Makati, Tiu Laurel discovered that a particular variety of imported rice was being retailed for over P60 per kilo despite its landed cost of only P40 per kilo.

According to De Mesa, based on their consultation with traders and importers, they have already profited if at least P6 to P8 per kilo will be added to the landed cost of the imported staple.

‘Deceptive tactic’

Meanwhile, watchdog group Bantay Bigas yesterday said that the move of the government to sell “sulit rice” and “nutri rice” is a “deceptive tactic” amid the broken promise to bring down the retail price of the staple to P20 per kilo.

Bantay Bigas spokesperson Cathy Estavillo was referring to the move of the DA to sell “sulit” rice at P36 per kilo and “nutri” rice at P38 per kilo this year.

Reducing the price of rice to P20 per kilo was a key campaign promise of Marcos during the 2022 presidential race.

“The decision to sell Rice-For-All in the Kadiwa centers was not effective as the retail price of rice remains high at P50 to P65 per kilo,” Estavillo said.

“In reality, these programs (nutri and sulit rice) won’t drive down market rice prices because the government still relies on importation, and the pricing and supply are controlled by private traders, hoarders and smugglers. The ongoing implementation of the Rice Liberalization Law and Executive Order 62 only worsens this situation,” Estavillo added.

She added there should be a comprehensive plan to lower the retail price of rice and help local farmers.

However, De Mesa debunked allegations that the plan to sell “sulit” and “nutri” rice is a “deceptive tactic” of the government.

He noted that the agriculture secretary himself had said it is difficult to bring down the retail price of rice to P20 per kilo in view of the high farmgate price of palay and the prevailing costs in the international market.

“As of now, this is the attempt of the government to show that we will have these kinds of (sulit and nutri) rice,” de Mesa said.

Help millers

Former senator Francis Pangilinan urged the government to help small-scale rice and corn millers compete with big players and weather the influx of cheaper imported grains in the market.

Pangilinan issued the call after the Philippine Statistics Authority reported that the number of barangays with rice and corn mills dropped to 15,436 in 2023, 6.3 percent lower than the 16,476 barangays recorded in 2013.

“It is sad and worrisome that more than a thousand small rice and corn millers have closed within a decade as victims of big players and the influx of cheap imported rice and corn in the market,” Pangilinan said. “Quick action is needed from the government so that they remain standing and protect the livelihood of small farmers.”

Pangilinan said the government must beef up the capability of small-scale rice and corn millers to raise production by providing them with access to essential farm machinery.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2025/01/04/2411736/removing-branding-rice-proceed>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Despite end of holidays, vegetable prices remain high

[Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

January 4, 2025 | 12:00am



Based on the monitoring of the DA in Metro Manila markets, the retail price of tomatoes even increased by P80 per kilo, compared to its cost of P270 per kilo a week ago.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — The retail price of vegetables remained high despite the end of the holidays, with tomatoes reaching P350 per kilo, according to the Department of Agriculture (DA).

Based on the monitoring of the DA in Metro Manila markets, the retail price of tomatoes even increased by P80 per kilo, compared to its cost of P270 per kilo a week ago.

The DA added that the retail price of siling labuyo or wild chili also reached as high as P900 per kilo.

On the other hand, bell pepper reached P900 per kilo; broccoli, as high as P370 per kilo; cauliflower, P320 per kilo; carrots, as high as P280 per kilo; Baguio beans, as high as P200 per

kilo; potatoes, as high as P220 per kilo; cabbage, P150 per kilo and pechay Baguio, as high as P120 per kilo.

Prices of lowland vegetables are also high as bitter melon is sold as high as P160 per kilo; string beans, as high as P160 per kilo; eggplant, as high as P160 per kilo; pechay Tagalog, as high as P120 per kilo; and squash, as high as P70 per kilo.

Meanwhile, local red onions are sold for as high as P170 per kilo while imported white onions are sold as high as P180 per kilo; imported garlic, as high as P210 per kilo and ginger, as high as P260 per kilo.

The DA blamed the damage brought by the successive typhoons for the spike in the retail price of vegetables.

Tropical cyclones Kristine, Leon, Marce, Nika, Ofel and Pepito have devastated the country in a span of less than one month in the last quarter of 2024.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2025/01/04/2411751/despite-end-holidays-vegetable-prices-remain-high>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

BFAR appeals SC ruling on delimitation of municipal waters

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

January 4, 2025 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) has asked the Supreme Court (SC) to reverse its decision allowing commercial fishing within the country's 15-kilometer municipal waters reserved for small-scale fishers.

“This decisive action underscores the agency's unwavering commitment to utilizing all available legal remedies to secure a fair and just resolution of the case,” BFAR said in a statement, explaining its move to file a motion for reconsideration of the SC's ruling.

“This move reflects the agency's proactive stance in ensuring that the implications of the court's decision are thoroughly reviewed, particularly given the potential impact on national policies, environmental conservation and the livelihoods of those in the fisheries sector,” BFAR added.

Former Agriculture secretary Leonardo Montemayor has accused BFAR and the Department of Agriculture (DA) of “sleeping on the job and failing to appeal the Court's decision within the required period.”

Last Dec. 19, the High Tribunal nullified provisions of the Fisheries Code restricting commercial fishing within municipal waters.

It also upheld a Malabon Regional Trial Court decision that deemed preferential access for small-scale fishers unconstitutional. The ruling was in response to a petition by Mercidar Fishing Corp.

BFAR said it “recognizes the gravity of this case, which has far-reaching consequences for sustainable resource management, environmental protection and the welfare of affected communities.”

While awaiting the resolution of its motion for reconsideration, BFAR stressed it would keep its “steadfast dedication” to its core mandate of protecting and conserving the nation's aquatic resources.

“The agency remains resolute in its mission to uphold the welfare of small-scale fishers and coastal communities who are vital stakeholders in the country's fisheries sector,” BFAR added.

BFAR emphasized the importance of adhering to due process and fostering judicial transparency.

“The agency remains hopeful that the judicial process will yield a resolution that protects both the environment and the people who depend on its resources,” BFAR said.

Montemayor, who is also the board chairman of the farmers’ group Federation of Free Farmers (FFF), joined various small fisherfolk organizations in opposing the decision of the SC’s First Division, which struck down a longstanding provision of the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998 reserving municipal waters for the exploitation and use by the country’s two million small fishers.

According to Montemayor, as a peasant sector representative in the 10th Congress, he co-authored the Fisheries Code or Republic Act No. 8550, later amended under RA 10654.

International marine conservation group Oceana, together with various civil society organizations and a coastal local government unit, submitted to the SC a petition to intervene.

“Our fisheries are in crisis due to unchecked overfishing and illegal practices. While science-backed reforms under RA 10654 offer a clear path to recover from these, we are disappointed to find the courts and our government agencies acting in the opposite direction,” Oceana vice president Gloria Estenzo Ramos said.

“To protect both our marine ecosystems and our artisanal fisherfolk, we must enforce the law and stand firm against exploitation,” she added.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2025/01/04/2411769/bfar-appeals-sc-ruling-delimitation-municipal-waters>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

ASF cases slightly up by end of December 2024 – BAI

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

08:02 AM January 04, 2025



PHOTO FROM AFP/INQUIRER FILES

MANILA, Philippines – The number of active [African swine fever \(ASF\) cases](#) nationwide slightly increased towards the end of December 2024, based on the Bureau of Animal Industry's (BAI) tally.

In a report, the BAI said 21 provinces in 11 regions have active ASF cases as of Dec. 27, 2024.

Provinces with ASF cases are Abra, Kalinga, Ilocos Norte, La Union, Cagayan, Zambales, Batangas, Quezon, Occidental Mindoro, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes, Masbate, Sorsogon, Bohol, Leyte, Southern Leyte, North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Agusan del Norte and Surigao del Sur.

The total count was a slight increase from 19 provinces in 10 regions recorded by the agency as of Dec. 6, 2024.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) instituted various measures such as government-controlled vaccination and strict border checkpoints as well as revised some policies to prevent the further spread of animal diseases.

“Another major accomplishment yung I think would be how we tackled the ASF issue this year. The checkpoints we established were quite good. We are constantly communicating with the LGUs (local government units) and the stakeholders that’s why the ASF didn’t spread too much,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said last month.

Tiu Laurel said the DA simplified the classification of areas based on whether or not they are infected with ASF to address the stigma that comes with such. It was targeting to release the policy this month.

“It’s easier. There’s already a stigma with the current system because hog raisers or piggeries do not want to be placed in the red zone. That system already has a negative connotation with everybody,” he said.

Under the DA’s existing rules, a particular area is placed under a red zone if there are confirmed outbreaks or active cases and a pink zone for those with no ASF but are adjacent to an infected zone.

This zoning system was implemented in 2019 after the Philippines recorded its first ASF outbreak that same year.

Tiu Laurel also said the DA would also allow pigs to be transported from ASF-infected areas, provided they undergo testing and present negative results.

Moreover, the DA is targeting to distribute 490,000 doses of ASF vaccines nationwide. So far, the initial 10,000 doses have been distributed, while the rollout of 150,000 doses is ongoing.

<https://business.inquirer.net/499781/asf-cases-slightly-up-by-end-of-december-2024-bai>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Stakeholders convene in Bacolod to boost sugar industry, promo

- BusinessMirror
- January 3, 2025ad



File photo: Workers cook brown sugar in a factory in Bacolod, Negros Occidental

KEY stakeholders in the sugar industry gathered in Bacolod City in November for the first-ever Joint Sugar Tripartite Council-District Tripartite Council (STC-DTC) Congress to collaboratively explore strategies for revitalizing the sector while ensuring the well-being of sugar workers.

This three-day event provided an avenue for various stakeholders to discuss proposed amendments to the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the Republic Act (RA) 6982, or the Sugar Amelioration Act of 1991.

Atty. Sixto Rodriguez, Jr., DOLE regional director for Western Visayas, in his opening message, highlighted the commitment of stakeholders to uplift the lives of vulnerable workers in the sugar industry.

He described the landmark event as a platform to advance the principles of RA 6982, which he called “an act of social justice” that recognizes the vital contributions of sugar workers and ensures their rights and welfare are prioritized.

The congress kicked off with discussions on industry updates, key SAP milestones, and a review of proposed revisions. Day two featured best practices sharing, validation of outputs, and the closing ceremony.

In his closing remarks, Undersecretary for the Workers' Welfare and Protection Atty. Benjo Santos M. Benavidez recognized the inputs of the participants that outlined the program's coverage and the requirements for the availment of benefits.

“Your efforts laid out a clear guideline on who gets what at sino ba ang dapat makatanggap (and who should receive),” the Labor Undersecretary said, as he called for a more efficient and simplified availment process.

“We hope we can ameliorate the lives of workers in the sugar industry and we hope the business of stakeholders will also grow . . . all we want are decent jobs for our workers in sugar industry,” he added, partly in Filipino.

DOLE Assistant Secretary Amuerfina R. Reyes also emphasized the shared responsibilities of planters, millers, and workers in sustaining a strong and productive sugar industry. She called for unity, collaboration, and policy review to better address the challenges faced by workers.

“Our planters, millers and workers have respective roles to play in ensuring a stable and productive sugar industry,” she said, urging stakeholders to address the gaps in implementing the SAP.

The congress, which concluded with a field visit to the sugar plantations and millers, included participation from millers, planters, sugar workers' groups, and other stakeholders from 10 sugar-producing regions nationwide. Atty. Brando D. Noroña of the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) presented an industry situationer and presided over an open forum that tackled key issues and concerns raised by participants.

The event was organized by the Bureau of Workers with Special Concerns (BWSC), led by then Director Ahmma Charisma Lobrin-Satumba, to engage stakeholders in identifying potential amendments to the IRR of the Social Amelioration Program. The Congress served as a venue for discussing steps to enhance the industry and ensure the protection and welfare of sugar workers.

Image credits: [Nonie Reyes](#)

https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/01/03/stakeholders-convene-in-bacolod-to-boost-sugar-industry-promote-workers-welfare/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR06vcXkzaX10Xu2WAoZbC0AvUse51uudHHdLue6_wY6hGwlgYkK5eai4_aem_KDlyY76OsrCEvSL1YaOvFQ

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Government must extend aid to farmers amid grain imports surge—Kiko

- Butch Fernandez
- January 3, 2025ad



A farmer harvests rice crop in a paddy field in this file photo.

STRESSING the urgency of extending timely aid to farmers adversely affected by bad weather, ex-senator Kiko Pangilinan is nudging concerned government agencies to boost support for small-scale rice and corn millers amid an imported grains surge.

The government's assistance will help small-scale rice and corn millers compete with big players amid the influx of cheaper imported grains in the market.

Pangilinan issued the call after the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported that the number of barangays with rice and corn mills dropped to 15,436 in 2023, or 6.3 percent lower than the 16,476 barangays recorded in 2013.

“It’s sad and alarming that over a thousand small-scale rice and corn millers have been forced to close down in the past decade, victims of the aggressive market tactics of big players and the surge of cheaper imported rice and corn in the market,” Pangilinan said, partly in Filipino.

The former lawmaker also stressed: “We need quick action from the so they can survive and the livelihood of small farmers is protected.”

Pangilinan said the full implementation of the Sagip Saka Law, which he authored, can help address the situation. The law allows the national and local governments to directly purchase from farmers and fisherfolk without going through public bidding.

“This law can do much to boost the income of farmers because the government itself, with its billions of funding for buying, will become their customer,” he explained.

Moreover, the former senator said the government must beef up the capability of small-scale rice and corn millers to raise production by providing them with access to essential farm machinery.

Based on 2022 PSA data, 12,376 barangays nationwide had available rice mills while 4,578 barangays had an existing corn mill.

During his term as food security czar from June 2014 to September 2015 under the administration of President Benigno Simeon “Noynoy” Aquino III, Pangilinan said measures he initiated had reduced rice prices by up to P3 pesos per kilo through various interventions.

Pangilinan claimed that under his watch, rice inflation went down from 15 percent to 0.8 percent in a span of one year. This, in turn, brought down nationwide inflation to its lowest rate in 20 years, he noted.

Image credits: AP

https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/01/03/government-must-extend-aid-to-farmers-amid-grain-imports-surge-kiko/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR1CyL-S4aK20_TfD2p09_F5DJnbm0EVcsQq7SOgA21TCZzJs0Ns2piRUP4_aem_4Ob1Yg1oN2lrS1BVGQwy3w

REMATE:

‘Sulit, Nutri’ rice ibebenta sa Kadiwa centers ngayong Enero

January 3, 2025 11:07



MANILA, Philippines- Ilulunsad ng Department of Agriculture (DA) ang dalawang abot-kayang rice options, ang Sulit Rice at Nutri Rice, bilang bahagi ng “Rice for All” initiative nito, kung saan sisimulan itong ibenta ngayong buwan.

Sinabi ni DA Spokesperson Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa nitong Huwebes na ibebenta ang rice varieties na ito sa Kadiwa ng Pangulo Centers sa buong bansa, piling public markets, at train stations sa Metro Manila.

“Sulit Rice, priced at PHP35 to PHP36 per kilo, consists of 100 percent broken grains but maintains good quality. We’ve tested cooking it at the office, and the quality is satisfactory,” pahayag ni De Mesa sa Bagong Pilipinas interview.

Mas masustansya ang Nutri Rice, ibinebenta sa halagang P37 hanggang P38 kada kilo.

“The nutrients in Nutri Rice are substantial, which is why we call it Nutri Rice. It offers both fiber and essential vitamins and minerals,” paliwanag ni De Mesa.

Bukod dito, patuloy na mag-aalok ang DA ng Rice for All sa halagang P38 hanggang P39 kada kilo.

“Marami tayong supply at we can assure the public na sapat ang supply para sa lahat,” pagtitiyak ng opisyal.

Nilalayan ng DA na makarekober ang palay production at umabot sa 20 million metric tons ngayong taon. **RNT/SA**

<https://remate.ph/sulit-nutri-rice-ibebenta-sa-kadiwa-centers-ngayong-enero/>