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MANILA BULLETIN:

DA justifies onion import, emphasizing preemptive measure to avert price crisis

BY [DEXTER BARRO II](#)

Feb 10, 2025 01:48 PM

AT A GLANCE

- Amid criticisms from farmer groups, Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel defended the agency's decision to authorize the importation of 4,000 metric tons (MT) of red and white onions, describing it as a preemptive measure against potential price surges.

Amid criticisms from farmer groups, Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel defended the agency's decision to authorize the importation of 4,000 metric tons (MT) of red and white onions, describing it as a preemptive measure against potential price surges.

During a briefing in Malacañan on Monday, Feb. 10, Laurel noted that data from the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) revealed a deficit of 7,000 MT of onion stocks by February.

He said this prompted the DA to permit the importation of 3,000 MT of red onions and 1,000 MT of white onions.

"It's not even enough to fill in the estimated gap. So, hindi dapat mag-worry (there's no need to worry)," said Laurel.

"Mahirap naman kung wala akong gawin at hayaan na lang maghintay ako ng situation kung kailan talaga magha-harvest ang farmers," he added.

[It would be difficult if I don't do anything and just wait for the situation when the farmers will harvest.]

The Agriculture chief revealed that he received a report on Monday morning from large-scale onion producers in Nueva Ecija, stating that their full harvest is expected to occur between the third week of March and early April.

Laurel said the situation calls for urgent action, as onion prices could surge to levels similar to the 2022 crisis.

During that year, retail prices saw absurdly high spikes of up to P700 per kilo due to a supply shortage exacerbated by delayed imports.

The DA chief noted that prices of red onion in public markets, such as Balintawak, have jumped recently from P110 to P170 per kilo.

"I have to think of the consumers also, not just the farmers," he stressed.

Since the plan to import onions was announced on Thursday, farmer groups across the country have criticized the agency's move as the local harvest season is set to begin.

The DA was even accused of making a "deliberate act of economic sabotage" that would only benefit importers.

When asked about this, Laurel responded that everyone is entitled to their opinions.

"I'm not a farmer, I'm not an importer, I'm the DA Secretary and I'm here to manage the situation," he said.

Laurel noted that this preemptive measure is "very tactical", noting that the imports' volume, quantity, and even time are all "limited".

He said this should address any potential spikes in prices.

LGUs signing up

Following last week's declaration of a food security emergency, Laurel said he is optimistic that the National Food Authority (NFA) will release its rice buffer stocks next week.

Under the emergency, the NFA is directed to disburse its stocks to the Kadiwa ng Pangulo (KNP) program, local government units (LGUs), and other government agencies.

So far, over 50 LGUs have signified their intent to sell rice.

Laurel said the implementation is still taking time since a proper documentation between the NFA, LGUs, and Food Terminal Inc. (FTI) is still needed to be secured.

“By next week, maro-rollout na hopefully ‘yan (hopefully, that will be rolled out),” he added.

The DA’s food security emergency declaration was prompted by a resolution of the National Price Coordinating Council (NPCC), which identified the "extraordinary" nature of the price increases in rice.

The NFA is mandated to release its stocks to help stabilize prices.

The agency currently holds a buffer stock of approximately 300,000 MT of rice.

About 150,000 MT of this stock will be released over the next six months, prioritizing areas near warehouses to minimize freight costs. However, if necessary, the NFA may increase this volume.

https://mb.com.ph/2025/2/10/laurel-allays-farmers-s-fear-says-onion-imports-a-preemptive-measure#google_vignette

MANILA BULLETIN:

Agri chief tightens belt: Focus on projects with strong returns

BY [DEXTER BARRO II](#)

Feb 10, 2025 08:57 AM

Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel is committed to enforcing fiscal discipline within the agency, emphasizing the need to prioritize projects that offer strong and sustainable returns.

As the DA develops its multi-year budget plan, Laurel wants to prioritize initiatives with an internal rate of return of 12 to 14 percent per year or a payback period of no more than seven years to ensure profitability. “We don’t have infinite resources, and we can’t afford to waste them,” he said in a statement.

Laurel, who previously served as president of the family-owned Frabelle Fishing Corporation before his appointment, is keen on applying his business acumen to the agency’s operations and budgeting.

He stressed that every peso spent by the DA must generate returns that support both the project’s sustainability and national agricultural development.

The agriculture chief told officials that projects that fail to meet investment-grade criteria would not receive allocation from the agency’s budget, even if they were agriculturally viable.

Laurel recalled that a recent proposal for a mushroom farming initiative would take more than a decade to recoup the investment.

“At eight percent, it would take 12 years to recover the investment. That is not good business,” he explained.

Under the ₱6.326 trillion national budget for 2025, the DA received an allocation of ₱237.4 billion.

While this year’s budget is an increase from the proposed ₱211.3 billion, it is a massive cut from the agency’s initial request of ₱513 billion.

Laurel is advocating for a more efficient resource allocation, with a focus on a results-driven approach that balances agricultural viability with financial practicality.

“We need to think like businesspeople, not just farmers,” he said.

The DA chief is likewise calling for a multi-pronged approach in agricultural activities to strengthen the sector’s resilience.

He is specifically proposing that each agricultural town across the country focus on multiple key commodities, instead of relying on a single crop.

Laurel recounted that when Frabelle had a challenging stretch during the financial crisis in the 1990s, it prompted the deep-sea fishing company to diversify into food processing, cold chain, and the shipyard business.

“By having multiple businesses, we ensured that if one has a difficult period, the other businesses could take up the slack,” he said.

However, he pointed out that excessive diversification could lead to inefficiencies. As such, Laurel wants towns to have a “balanced approach” in a bid to withstand downturns in one crop while maintaining focus on others.

“We need to invest wisely, so that we can secure the future of our farmers and our agriculture sector for generations to come,” he added.

https://mb.com.ph/2025/2/10/da-chief-tightens-belt-focus-on-projects-with-strong-returns#google_vignette

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DA sets February 20 deadline for imported onions' arrival

[Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

February 11, 2025 | 12:00am



This photo shows a market vendor at Balintawak Market standing in-front piles of onions while he sorts out fresh and spoiled produce.

Ian Laqui / Philstar.com

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) on Monday said all imported onions should arrive by Feb. 20 to prevent the outsourced bulbs from competing with local produce amid criticism from farmers.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary and spokesman Arnel de Mesa explained that the importation of onions is necessary to prevent retail prices from surging, saying that it is difficult to bring down costs once prices spike.

He noted that onion prices have already reached as high as P200 per kilogram.

“(Agriculture) Secretary (Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.) wants the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) to ensure that there will be no extension on the arrival date of until Feb. 20, again this is to protect our farmers,” De Mesa said.

Tiu Laurel has approved the importation of 3,000 metric tons of onions and 1,000 metric tons of white onions amid the increase in the retail price of the bulbs.

However, De Mesa emphasized that the volume is minimal compared to the country’s monthly consumption of 17,000 metric tons.

“This will only be good for one week. The bulk of the harvest is in March so the imported onions will not reach the peak harvest. This is just to ensure that we will have no shortage,” De Mesa said.

The DA’s decision comes after the 2022 onion crisis, when retail prices soared to P720 per kilogram due to shortages and hoarding.

Farmers' groups have strongly criticized this decision as the harvest season has begun and is expected to peak in March and April.

Former agriculture secretary Leonardo Montemayor called the move ill-timed, pointing out that onion harvest has already started in key producing areas, including Bayambang in Pangasinan, San Jose in Occidental Mindoro and Bongabon and Laur in Nueva Ecija.

In response to concerns about the timing of the imports, De Mesa emphasized the importance of a balanced approach, stating, "We need a careful balancing act to protect our farmers, but we also need to consider our consumers."

Onion farmers described the decision to import bulbs as a "double whammy" as plantations in Nueva Ecija, the country's onion capital, are currently being attacked by armyworms.

Victor Danipog, an onion farmer from Nueva Ecija, said farmers have yet to recover from the losses incurred due to storms in November last year, followed by the recent worm infestation.

Assessment failure

Farmers' group Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura (SINAG) on Monday revealed that the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) failed to include the onion stocks in cold storage facilities when it reported a deficit of at least 7,000 metric tons for this month.

SINAG executive director Jayson Cainglet told The STAR that the BPI only informed onion farmers about the supposed shortage when it organized a Zoom meeting with stakeholders on Jan. 30.

"How did the BPI come up with the data (of 7,000 metric tons shortfall in the supply) when the harvest has yet to start and it did not include the inventory in the cold storages," Cainglet said.

Based on data from the BPI, the current stock of red onions stands at 7,305 metric tons, while the expected harvest for February is only 10,167 metric tons.

The agency also reported that the country's monthly consumption is at 17,566 metric tons of onions.

Cainglet noted that farmers were surprised by the presence of importers during the meeting.

"During the meeting, the BPI already discussed the application for sanitary and phytosanitary import clearance. Farmers panicked as the BPI already presented data on the shortage of onions," Cainglet said.

Some onion farmers decided to harvest early because of the announcement of BPI on the need to import bulbs, Cainglet added.

"We are just echoing the sentiments of the farmers that the farmgate price of onions will go down because of the announcement of BPI on the impending importation," he said.

As of Feb. 7, local red onions were priced at P172.60 per kilo, while local white onions were sold for P118.08 per kilo.

Meanwhile, imported white onions were available at P122.31 per kilo.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2025/02/11/2420703/da-sets-february-20-deadline-imported-onions-arrival>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

NFA rice rolls out next week

Jasper Emmanuel Arcalas, Helen Flores - The Philippine Star

February 11, 2025 | 12:00am



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

The STAR / Michael Varcas

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) is expected to roll out rice from the National Food Authority (NFA) by next week.

On Feb. 4, the country was placed under a food security emergency as measures set in place to pull down rice prices have failed.

With the declaration of a food security emergency, the NFA can start selling its rice stocks.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr., in a press briefing at Malacañang, said more than 50 local government units (LGUs) across the country have signified their interest to procure rice from the NFA.

The NFA will sell the rice stocks at P33 per kilo while the LGUs can resell the staple at P35 per kilo.

Meanwhile, Tiu Laurel said the NFA may recommend the increase in tariff on imported rice once the price of the staple drops to P42 to P45 per kilo.

“We can review, recommend for restoration, or maybe not fully restore – it can be from 15 to 20 (percent) or 15 to 25 or full 35, depending on the situation. Depending on the consultations with everybody,” Tiu Laurel said.

Executive Order 62, issued by President Marcos in June last year, lowered the tariff on imported rice from 35 percent to 15 percent until 2028.

He said the government has to maintain the lower tariffs “until the rice price drops to a certain level.”

“It (reduction on tariff) seems to be working as (prices of rice) are going down,” Tiu Laurel said.

The levy on rice, which covers both in-quota and out-quota rates, is subject to review every four months based on the EO.

Tiu Laurel said he proposed to Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Arsenio Balisacan to conduct the review every six months.

Rice inventory

As of Jan. 1, 2025, the country's rice inventory rose by 6.4 percent year-on-year to 2.16 million metric tons from the 2.03 million MT recorded volume in the same period last year, the Philippine Statistics Authority said yesterday.

PSA data showed that the increase in rice inventory during the reference period was brought about by higher stocks recorded in NFA warehouses and commercial entities.

However, the country's rice stocks fell by 15.7 percent on a monthly basis from the 2.56 million MT recorded inventory in December 2024, according to the agency.

"Of this month's total rice stocks, 48.9 percent were from the households, 37.9 percent were from the commercial sector and 13.2 percent were from the NFA depositories," the PSA said.

Rice stocks in households reached 1.05 million MT while those held by NFA and commercial warehouses reached 144,050 MT and 816,510 MT, respectively, based on PSA data.

"This month's rice stock inventories registered annual increases from the NFA depositories by 485.1 percent and from the households by 5.4 percent. On the other hand, an annual decrease was noted from the commercial sector by 16.5 percent," the PSA said.

"In comparison to the December 2024 rice stocks levels, increments were noted from the NFA depositories by 97.7 percent, and in the households by 17.4 percent. Meanwhile, rice stocks inventory from the commercial sector decreased by 46.1 percent," the PSA added.

In the same report, the PSA said the country's total corn stocks reached 328,400 MT as of Jan. 1, about 45 percent lower than the 597,620 MT recorded inventory in the same month of last year.

"Corn stocks inventory exhibited a month-on-month decrease of 40.1 percent relative to its previous month's inventory level of 548.31 thousand metric tons," it noted.

Corn stocks in both households and commercial entities dropped during the reference period, the PSA said. Additionally, 83.1 percent of the latest corn stocks were in the commercial sector while the remaining 16.9 percent were from the households.

Corn inventory of commercial entities stood at 272,890 MT while those in households reached 55,500 MT, based on PSA data.

"From the same month of the previous year's level, corn stocks inventory recorded annual decreases from the commercial sector by 49.5 percent and from the households by 2.7 percent," the PSA said.

"Relative to the inventory level in December 2024, decreases in the volume of corn stocks were noted from the commercial sector by 43.4 percent and from the households by 16.2 percent," the agency added.

Meanwhile, a maximum suggested retail price (SRP) for pork could be released within the month, Tiu Laurel said.

"We're currently studying that and digging deep on the entire value chain of pork to find out whether or not there's really profiteering. If we identified that there is profiteering, then definitely we will be doing an MSRP also for pork," he explained.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2025/02/11/2420715/nfa-rice-rolls-out-next-week>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Onion farmers protest 'untimely' imports amid peak harvest

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

February 10, 2025 | 12:50pm



A market vendor shows the size comparison of the onion bought from local farmers and a giant onion that came from an undisclosed origin at the Marikina City Public Market on January 23, 2023.

STAR / Jesse Bustos

MANILA, Philippines — Onion farmers are not happy about the government’s decision to import red and white onions during the peak harvest season in February and March.

In an interview with Super Radyo DZBB 594 on Monday, February 10, the Valiant Primary Multi-Purpose Cooperative Inc. of Bongabon, Nueva Ecija, called the importation “untimely,” citing the imminent onion harvest this month.

“We oppose this importation because it is untimely and we are about to harvest and enter the peak season. That is the problem,” Manager Luchie Cena said in Filipino.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) announced on Thursday, February 6, that it has approved the importation of 3,000 metric tons of red onions and 1,000 metric tons of white onions, which are expected to arrive in the coming weeks.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said the move aims to prevent a potential shortage that could drive up prices or be exploited by traders, which was an issue in 2022 when onions reached P700 per kilogram.

He cited a Bureau of Plant Industry report showing that as of mid-January, only 8,500 metric tons of red onions and 1,628 metric tons of white onions were in stock.

This is about half of the country's monthly consumption, which the agency estimates at 17,000 metric tons for red onions and 4,000 metric tons for white onions.

Delay release of imported onions

Cena argued that imports should only be allowed when an agricultural product is needed for immediate consumption. Since white onions reach peak season before red onions, she suggested that the latter be stored in cold storage instead.

“Red onions should only be used when needed for consumption, as white onions are consumed first. Red onions come next,” Cena said in Filipino.

She questioned the basis for declaring a shortage, pointing out that the exact harvest and total yield for the peak season have yet to be determined.

“Right now, how can we say there's a shortage when the exact harvest and the total yield for the peak season have yet to be determined?” Cena said in Filipino.

It is only when the stocks of red onion are released to the market that the DA could identify a potential shortage and decide to import, she added.

What went before

Cena emphasized that importation is a “big deal” for farmers as it creates fear and uncertainty.

In the past, she said it has forced onion farmers to harvest prematurely, anticipating a price drop once imported onions enter the market, which could significantly reduce their earnings.

“If they are going to import only a small amount, they shouldn't release it immediately. Store it in a facility first,” Cena said in Filipino.

Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) chairperson Danilo Ramos said that when farmers harvested onions ahead of schedule in 2024, prices in Dagupan City markets fell to as low as P10 per kilogram due to oversupply.

“Farmers in Nueva Ecija were also forced to dump onions as cold storage facilities overflow and traders prefer imported bulbs,” he said in a statement on Sunday, February 9.

Peasant group Amihan also warned that the importation would drive down farmgate prices — the rate at which onions are bought directly from farmers.

This would hurt farmers rather than benefit them, Secretary General Cathy Estavillo said, as production costs can run into thousands of pesos. In Occidental Mindoro, the group found that expenses reached nearly P200,000 per hectare in 2022.

Farmgate prices. According to the [Philippine Statistics Authority](#) (PSA), the average farmgate price in 2024 was P33.07 per kilogram for white onions and P62.56 per kilogram for red onions. This, however, varies per region.

Retail prices. Meanwhile, retail prices in Metro Manila markets were three to four times higher, based on the DA's [price monitoring](#) as of February 6:

- **Local red onion: P168.94 per kilogram**
- **Local white onion: P118 per kilogram**
- **Imported white onion: P118.99 per kilogram**

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2025/02/10/2420567/onion-farmers-protest-untimely-imports-amid-peak-harvest>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Import clearance fee on sugar alternatives to push through

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

February 11, 2025 | 12:00am



Sources familiar with the matter told The STAR that the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) held multiple dialogues last week with various industry stakeholders, from candy makers to beverage manufacturers, about Sugar Order (SO) 6.

MANILA, Philippines — The imposition of a clearance fee on imported alternative sugars will soon push through after the government resolved the concerns of industry stakeholders regarding the measure, particularly on possible red tape.

Sources familiar with the matter told The STAR that the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) held multiple dialogues last week with various industry stakeholders, from candy makers to beverage manufacturers, about Sugar Order (SO) 6.

SRA administrator and CEO Pablo Luis Azcona met with the industry groups, which included the Federation of Philippine Industries as well as those involved in the confectionery and beverage sectors. The SRA leadership also met with Nestlé Philippines Inc., sources said.

The primary concern of the industry stakeholders was the additional red tape SO 6 would create, resulting in possible delays in the release of shipments that could affect manufacturing of candies, beverages and other products.

The industry stakeholders and the SRA agreed to resolve the former's concerns by implementing various measures that would prevent additional red tape to ensure that production of their goods would not be hampered.

Some of the measures agreed upon by the parties were allowing the advanced application and payment of the import clearance fee and the automatic approval of the clearance within five working days from payment.

Industry stakeholders may also begin filing their application for import clearance once they have secured a sales invoice or delivery receipt with their trade partners.

The SRA will honor a soft copy of the bill of lading for the issuance of the final import clearance.

The agency will establish an online portal and a “green lane” for importers to ease the application process. Under the green lane, importers with proven track record and with no violations will be prioritized in the processing of the fee.

Furthermore, the industry stakeholders agreed to allow the SRA to conduct spot inspections of their shipments, according to sources.

“The biggest concern of the industry players really was the red tape because it would impact their manufacturing processes. So SRA and the industry players came to an agreement on how to resolve the issues,” a source said.

“The industry players agreed that the imposition of the import clearance fee is necessary to separate the legitimate from the illegitimate importers,” the source added.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr., who chairs the SRA board, has been briefed about the recent developments, sources said. They noted that the instruction of Tiu Laurel was to resolve the concerns of the industry so that the policy measure could be implemented.

The SRA will rescind the earlier issued SO 6 to reflect the agreements made with the industry stakeholders, another source said. The SRA board will then be expected to issue a new sugar order.

SO 6 outlined the imposition of import clearance fees on sugar alternatives and sugar-based items under tariff headings 1701 (sucrose, flavored syrup), 1702 (lactose, glucose, maltose, honey, etc.) and 1704 (chewing gum and white chocolate not containing cocoa).

The measure is intended to capture the volume of imported sugar alternatives and sugar-based products that enter the country after various quarters clamored for such regulatory policy as they claimed that these items displaced the use of locally produced sugar.

The issuance of the new policy stemmed from complaints from some quarters of the sugarcane industry, especially planters, that demand for raw sugar has dropped and has been replaced by the use of imported alternatives and other sugars by industry users and manufacturers.

The SRA deferred the Feb. 1 implementation of SO 6 after certain quarters led by candy and beverage makers opposed the measure for its detrimental effects such as red tape and possible price spike.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2025/02/11/2420614/import-clearance-fee-sugar-alternatives-push-through>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

NFA expected to release rice stocks next week – DA chief

By: [Luisa Cabato](#) - Reporter / [@luisacabatoINQ](#)
INQUIRER.net / 01:29 PM February 10, 2025



Workers stack rice at a warehouse of the National Food Authority in Visayas Avenue in Quezon City on January 15, 2020. INQUIRER PHOTO / GRIG C. MONTEGRANDE

MANILA, Philippines — The National Food Authority (NFA) may release rice stocks next week following the declaration of a food security emergency, according to Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.

In a Palace briefing on Monday, Laurel said more than 50 local government units from Regions 4, 5, 6, 8, and Metro Manila already signified intent to procure rice from the NFA.

“As of now, many LGUs have signified their intent, but based on the procedure, there is documentation that needs to be done,” he said in Filipino.

“Hopefully, we will complete all the documentation between FTI (Food Terminal Inc.) and NFA [and] FTI to LGU, and by next week that will be hopefully rolled out,” he added.



The food security emergency was declared last February 4 due to the “extraordinary increase in rice prices,” despite efforts to lower them.

Under the declaration, LGUs and Kadiwa Centers may procure rice stocks from NFA warehouses and sell them at the minimum price of P35 per kilo.

The measure was also taken to create space in NFA warehouses for this February’s upcoming harvest.

[https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2033294/nfa-expected-to-release-rice-stocks-next-week-da-chief?utm_source=\(direct\)&utm_medium=gallery](https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2033294/nfa-expected-to-release-rice-stocks-next-week-da-chief?utm_source=(direct)&utm_medium=gallery)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Rice stocks up, but corn cache down

By: [Jordeene B. Lagare](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)
[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 02:08 AM February 11, 2025

MANILA, Philippines — The country's rice stockpile increased by 6.4 percent as of Jan. 1 from the past year due to the more aggressive buying policy of the government, while corn inventory declined by 45 percent as farmers shifted to tobacco planting.

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), the country's overall rice inventory totaled 2.16 million metric tons (MT) as of Jan. 1, higher than 2.03 million MT a year ago.

The total rice stocks estimated by the statistics agency, however, were 15.7 percent lower than the 2.56 million MT recorded in December.

During the reporting period, the PSA said households and National Food Authority (NFA) depositories registered increases while the commercial sector reduced inventory.

Households accounted for 48.9 percent of total stocks, 5.4 percent higher than the year prior.

Although NFA depositories held a share of only 13.2 percent, its inventory surged by 485.1 percent to 284,810 MT.

NFA administrator Larry Lacson said the agency's stockpile was expected to increase further due to its "flexible" pricing scheme and the upcoming harvest season.

"Our stocks will increase towards the end of February and onwards because the harvest season will start from February, March and April until May. Sometimes there are still harvests beyond that [period]," Lacson said in a phone interview on Monday.

Lacson attributed the improved buffer stock to the NFA's "flexible pricing scheme" implemented last year that "allowed us a good chance of buying palay from the farmers."

He is referring to the NFA's Price Range Scheme that sets the buying price of palay at a more competitive price level. Adjusted weekly, buying price ranges between P23 and P25 per kilogram.

The commercial sector held 816,510 MT, declining by 16.5 percent. It is equivalent to a share of 37.9 percent. Meanwhile, the PSA said last month's local corn stockpile stood at 328,400 MT, down by 45 percent from a year ago. It was also 40.1 percent lower than the level in December.

About 83.1 percent of total corn inventory was from the commercial sector, while the remaining 16.9 percent was from the households.

Philippine Tobacco Growers Association president Saturnino Distor said farmers who previously cultivated corn have shifted to tobacco because of the persistent presence of the fall armyworm, a pest capable of causing significant damage to various crops, including corn. INQ

[https://business.inquirer.net/505891/rice-stocks-up-but-corn-cache-down?utm_source=\(direct\)&utm_medium=gallery](https://business.inquirer.net/505891/rice-stocks-up-but-corn-cache-down?utm_source=(direct)&utm_medium=gallery)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

DA chief defends onion importation

By: [Melvin Gascon](#) - Reporter / [@melvingasconINQ](#)
[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:45 AM February 11, 2025



MANILA, Philippines — Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu-Laurel on Monday shrugged off criticisms of the agency’s decision to import up to 4,000 metric tons (MT) of onions amid complaints from Filipino farmers that the government’s importation is killing the local onion industry.

At a press briefing in Malacañang, Tiu-Laurel defended the importation, calling it a “strategic move” to address the looming shortage for onions this month.

“What we did is very tactical—limited volume, limited quantity, limited time. So, it should address any spikes,” he said.

“The only question is the volume of onion that would be imported, because as to the question of whether to import or not in February, it is really necessary,” he added.

Lesson not learned

Tiu-Laurel made the statement in response to farmers’ groups who criticized the decision of the Department of Agriculture (DA) to increase onion imports ahead of harvest season.

Jayson Cainglet, executive director of the Samahang Industry ng Agriculture (Sinag), said the DA announcement has raised fears among farmers who have been forced to harvest their onions prematurely in anticipation of the deluge of imported bulbs that would pull down prices.

Danilo Ramos, chair of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, also said in a statement that “the government is repeating its past mistakes. It allows imports to flood the market at the worst possible time—when local farmers are harvesting.”

The group noted that last year, prices of red onions dropped to as low as P10 per kilo in Dagupan City due to oversupply, while farmers in Nueva Ecija had to throw away their produce as cold storage facilities overflowed and traders preferred buying imported onions.

But the DA chief said he was standing by his decision, adding: “I’m here to manage. I am not a farmer; I am not an importer. I am the DA secretary and [I am] here to manage the situation.”

Tiu-Laurel cited data from the Bureau of Plant Industry that for February, the country faces a looming shortage of 7,000 MT of onions.

“What we are opening up [with the importation] is for only 4,000 tons—1,000 tons for white; 3,000 tons for red,” he said.

“So, it’s not even enough to fill in the perceived gap or estimated gap, so there’s nothing to worry [about],” he said.

The DA chief said he cannot be idle and wait for the situation to develop until the local farmers have harvested their crops.

“I just received [word] this morning after another survey that I had conducted yesterday in Nueva Ecija, specifically the large-scale onion producers in Bongabon, Rizal, San Jose City, are saying that their full harvest will still be on the third week of March and even up to April 2025,” he said.

The price of red onion may spike to P110 and white onion to P170 if the DA would not do anything, Tiu-Laurel said.

“Do I have to wait [for local farmers to harvest] before making a decision? I have to think of the consumers also, not just the farmers,” he stressed. —*with a report from Gillian Villanueva*

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2033414/da-chief-defends-onion-importation>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Agri chief defends importation of onions

By: [Luisa Cabato](#) - Reporter / [@luisacabatoINQ](#)
INQUIRER.net / 03:58 PM February 10, 2025



MANILA, Philippines — Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said on Monday that farmers need not worry about the [importation of 4,000 metric tons of onions](#), as the volume is less than the actual onion deficit in the country.

In a Palace briefing, Laurel was asked to comment on criticisms against importation as it might affect farmers' profit during harvest season.

“Everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but I’m here to manage. I am not a farmer. I am not an importer. I am the DA [Department of Agriculture] Secretary and am here to manage the situation,” he responded.

“May deficit talaga for February of 7,000 tons. And actually, in-open up lang natin iyong market for only 4,000 tons—1,000 tons for white; 3,000 tons for red. So, it’s not even enough to fill in the perceived gap or estimated gap, so there’s nothing to worry about,” he explained.

Laurel added that the harvest season for large-scale onion producers in Nueva Ecija is from the third week of March up to April.

“So, if I don’t take any action now regarding this estimated gap and prices in Balintawak continue to rise—red onions have already gone up from 110 to 170—should I wait any longer to make a decision? I have to think of the consumers also, not just the farmers,” he said.

“But ang ginawa natin is very tactical—limited volume, limited quantity, limited time. So, it should address any spikes. At sana tama iyong aking—ang question nga naman ay gaano karami ang dapat i-import, eh? Question of whether to import or not for February, kailangan talaga.”

(But what we did was very tactical—limited volume, quantity, and time. This should help address any price spikes. The question is, how much should we import? The decision to import for February was necessary.)

In the same briefing, Laurel said four companies have been charged for the alleged smuggling of agricultural products into the country.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2033323/agri-chief-defends-importation-of-onions>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Sugar substitute importation rules coming soon



BY JORDEENE B. LAGARE
FEBRUARY 11, 2025



The Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) is finalizing the rules for importing sugar alternatives after reaching an agreement with industry groups to streamline the sourcing process and ensure smooth trade flow.

According to an industry source, some of the points tackled during the meeting between the SRA and industry players include allowing advanced application and payment, and approving an import clearance within five working days of payment.

A sales invoice or delivery receipt from the supplier will be accepted to start the application process and payment, the source disclosed.

Although the fee for importing other types of sugar will be unchanged, the source said the SRA would require a soft copy of the bill of lading, or the contract between a carrier and a shipper detailing the shipped items, to issue the final import clearance.

An online portal or “green lane” will be established for importers to ease the application process, the source disclosed.

The SRA and concerned stakeholders also agreed to mandate spot inspections of goods while inter-island shipping permits would no longer be required.

Additionally, all imports will be classified as “B” or for the domestic market.

“We already had a dialogue last week and we are preparing the process and date of implementation,” SRA administrator Pablo Luis Azcona said.

This came after the SRA had deferred last month the implementation of Sugar Order No. 6, which outlined the permits and fees need to bring in sugar substitutes.

The SRA board arrived at this decision following calls from various industry groups to reconsider the implementation of this sugar order, citing potential trade disruptions and increased consumer prices.

The enforcement of SO No. 6 is postponed, pending further dialogues with industry representatives.

Concerns about processing delays and the associated costs of complying with the SRA order were the two key issues that emerged during the consultation, according to the SRA.

<https://plus.inquirer.net/business/sugar-substitute-importation-rules-coming-soon/>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Tolentino turns over fiberglass boats to fishing communities in Cavite

By: [Jan Escosio](#) - Reporter / [@JEPOI04](#)
[INQUIRER.net](#) / 06:37 PM February 10, 2025



“They work hard to bring food onto our tables, but our fisherfolk are among the most marginalized, and they deserve the government’s full support.” Thus said Senate Majority Leader Francis “TOL” Tolentino, as he led the turnover of motorized fiberglass boats each to fisherfolk associations in Naic, Tanza, Rosario, and Cavite City.

MANILA, Philippines – Fulfilling his pledge to assist Cavite’s fishing communities which were devastated by a massive oil spill last year, Senate Majority Leader Francis “TOL” Tolentino today led the turnover of motorized fiberglass reinforced boats to fisherfolk associations and cooperatives in several localities.

“They work hard daily to bring food onto our tables, but our fisherfolk are among the most marginalized, and they deserve the government’s full support,” said Tolentino, as he led the turnover of fiberglass boats each in Naic, Tanza, Rosario, and Cavite City.

In partnership with the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) under the Department of Agriculture (DA), the distribution of fiberglass boats seeks to help uplift the economic conditions of Cavite’s fishing communities.

“Last year, when the massive oil spill from Bataan spread out to neighboring provinces, especially Cavite, their source of income was wiped out because of the ban on fishing and selling of fish and other marine products,” the senator recalled, in reference to the massive oil spill from the ill-fated MT Terranova, which sank in the waters off Limay, Bataan on July 25 due to bad weather.

“Today we are back to fulfill our pledge to assist our fishing communities, and to help improve their livelihood,” he added.

To recall, it was Tolentino who filed Senate Resolution No. 1084, which prompted the Senate to investigate the oil spill’s impact on fishing communities and the coastal ecosystem.

In August, Tolentino joined President Ferdinand ‘Bongbong’ Marcos Jr. in providing financial assistance to thousands of Cavite fisherfolk.

The senator himself led relief operations for the affected communities.

Aside from the boats provided in the four local government units, Tolentino also facilitated the awarding of Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) assistance to fisherfolk organizations in Talisay, Batangas last February 5, in partnership with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DWSD).

A similar program initiated by the senator will benefit fisherfolk groups in Balayan, Batangas on Monday, February 10.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2033347/tolentino-turns-over-fiberglass-boats-to-fishing-communities-in-cavite>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Farm-to-market road to benefit over 2,000 rubber farmers in Bayugan City

By: [Alexander Lopez](#) - [@inquireidotnet](#)

Philippine News Agency / 06:42 AM February 11, 2025



(Photo courtesy of DA-13)

BUTUAN CITY — Village leaders in Bayugan City, Agusan del Sur hailed the completion of a new farm-to-market road (FMR) that will connect their barangays to the province’s market centers, benefiting over 2,800 rubber farmers.

The 4.7-km. Bucac-Marcelina FMR, with a budget of P59 million, was officially handed over to barangays San Isidro, Burac and Marcelina on Feb. 7.

Implemented by the Department of Agriculture in Caraga Region (DA-13) under the Philippine Rural Development Project, the road will ease travel difficulties and improve market access for villagers.

“This completed project symbolizes progress and hope for our village,” said Barangay Captain Therese Baslan of San Isidro in a statement on Monday.

She emphasized that the FMR will primarily benefit rubber farmers by facilitating the transport of their products to market centers.

Niño Cagampang, village chief of Marcelina, said the FMR will eliminate past hardships and open new market opportunities for farmers.

Both officials thanked the government for realizing the long-standing dream of residents.

DA-13 Executive Director Arlan Mangelen acknowledged the support of local government units, the World Bank and the European Union in completing the project.

“The mandate of the DA is to ensure regional food security. We want to achieve these goals with our stakeholders,” Mangelen said in a statement.

The FMR is expected to serve 2,872 farmers from the three barangays, enhancing their livelihoods and boosting the local economy.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2033500/farm-to-market-road-to-benefit-over-2000-rubber-farmers-in-bayugan-city>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

DA: 4 firms linked to smuggling charged

By: [Luisa Cabato](#) - Reporter / [@luisacabatoINQ](#)
INQUIRER.net / 03:51 PM February 10, 2025



MANILA, Philippines — Four companies have been charged with alleged [smuggling of agricultural products](#) in the Philippines, according to Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.

In a Palace briefing on Monday, Laurel said that out of 10 alleged smugglers that have been blacklisted, “four have been charged.”

He, however, did not identify the companies.

Last December, Laurel announced that the following companies were blacklisted for importing vegetables, fruits, and other food products without proper clearances:

- **Kysse Lishh Consumer Goods Trading**
- **LVM Grains Enterprises**
- **JRA and Pearl Enterprises Inc.**
- **Betron Consumer Goods Trading**
- **RCNN Non-Specialized Wholesale Trading**
- **Golden Rays Consumer Goods Trading**
- **Chastity Consumer Goods Trading**

Kysse Lishh, RCNN, and Chastity Consumer Goods Trading and Golden Rays did not even have licenses to import.

The licenses of the blacklisted firms were revoked, and those without licenses were banned.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2033320/da-4-firms-linked-to-smuggling-charged>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Rice inventory up 6.4% in January

February 10, 2025 | 8:43 pm



PHILSTAR FILE PHOTO

THE national rice inventory rose to 2.16 million metric tons (MMT) in January, up 6.4% year on year, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) said on Monday.

Month on month, the rice inventory declined 15.7% from 2.56 MMT in December, the PSA said in a statement.

Year on year, rice held by National Food Authority (NFA) depositories rose 485.1% while grain held by households rose 5.4%.

ADVERTISING

Month on month, NFA holdings rose 97.7% while stock held by households rose 17.4%.

Rice held by commercial entities fell 16.55% year on year and 46.1% month on month, the PSA said.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) said last month that it is expecting the harvest of palay (unmilled rice) this year to exceed 20 million MT.

If realized, this would represent a 6% increase from the 19.3 MMT estimate for 2024 production and a 1.9% rise from the record 20.06 MMT posted in 2023.

The DA last month declared a food-security emergency for rice, citing an “extraordinary” spike in the prices of the grain despite lower tariffs for imports.

The PSA, meanwhile, said corn stocks fell 45.0% year on year to 328,40 MT and fell 40.1% month on month.

— **Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2025/02/10/652443/rice-inventory-up-6-4-in-january/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Cambodia cites rice as possible avenue for expanding economic ties with PHL

February 10, 2025 | 8:43 pm



REUTERS

CAMBODIA has proposed that rice form the core of expanded economic ties with the Philippines, alongside tourism.

Cambodia Prime Minister Samdech Moha Borvor Thipadei Hun Manet made the proposal at the Philippine-Cambodia Business Forum on Monday.

“In today’s rapidly evolving global landscape, we encounter geopolitical and geoeconomic shifts, trade realignments, and emerging challenges,” he said. “Therefore, enhancing bilateral and multilateral economic partnerships has become more critical than ever before,” he added.

According to the prime minister, one opportunity lies in Cambodia’s rice, adding that collaboration is also possible in skills development.

Trade Undersecretary Ceferino S. Rodolfo noted that the two countries’ export and manufacturing products are strongly complementary, particularly in agriculture and electronics.

“In terms of the overall composition of our economy, the Philippines is mainly a services-driven economy. For Cambodia, I know that you are very strong in terms of agriculture,” he said.

“Rice is a very strong export product of Cambodia. And then also in terms of manufacturing, you are a world powerhouse when it comes to garments and textiles, as well as an emerging global leader also in electronics,” he added.

The Philippines’ top source markets for rice are Vietnam, Thailand and Pakistan, with Cambodia currently the seventh-largest overseas supplier. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2025/02/10/652442/cambodia-cites-rice-as-possible-avenue-for-expanding-economic-ties-with-phl/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Fisheries output decline seen heralding food security crisis

February 10, 2025 | 8:43 pm



PHILIPPINE STAR/MICHAEL VARCAS

AN OCEANA conservation group said the 5% decline in fisheries output could lead to a food security crisis.

Oceana said the “disturbing” decline means production levels have fallen to the “lowest in two decades.”

It was citing output data issued by the Philippine Statistics Authority.

It said marine municipal fisheries production dropped 8.8% to 802.77 thousand metric tons (MT) in 2024 — the lowest since 2002.

“This further reduces the share of small-scale fishers in total fisheries production to only 19.8%,” Oceana said in a statement, flagging the potential consequences of a Supreme Court decision allowing commercial fishing in municipal waters.

Oceana said commercial fisheries production, which accounted for 21.2% of total production, rose 4.2% to 857.33 thousand MT in 2024.

“This downturn in fishery output will continue and will jeopardize the livelihoods of millions who depend on marine resources if illegal commercial fishing is legitimized within the 15-kilometer municipal waters zone,”

Oceana Vice-President Gloria Estenzo Ramos said.

“Commercial fishing inside municipal waters and overfishing have long plagued Philippine waters, depleting fish stocks and degrading marine ecosystems. These practices threaten biodiversity and can trigger the collapse of essential fish populations,” she added.

The Supreme Court upheld a decision by a Malabon City court that invalidated the definition of municipal waters in the Fisheries Code, allowing commercial scale operators to fish in these waters.

In response, Cagayan de Oro City Rep. Rufus B. Rodriguez has filed a bill to make the municipal waters exclusive for the use of small-scale fisherfolk.

Kabataan Party-list, GABRIELA Women’s Party-list and ACT Teachers Party-list, meanwhile, filed a House resolution directing the Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources to investigate the impact of the high court’s decision.

The 1987 Constitution and the Local Government Code and the Fisheries Code recognize the need to grant preferential access for artisanal and municipal fisherfolk to municipal waters.

Citing data from the General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans, Oceana said the court's ruling will open up more than 90% of the municipal waters for 533 out of 884 coastal municipalities to commercial fishing vessels.

"Legitimizing illegal commercial fishing in the reserved 15-kilometer zone for artisanal fisherfolk poses grave consequences for artisanal fishers, who will unfairly compete with technologically advanced and more efficient commercial fishing vessels," it said.

"The daily catch of municipal fisherfolk, which sustains their families and local markets, is at risk of significant reduction, pushing many into economic hardship and hunger," it added. — **Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2025/02/10/652441/fisheries-output-decline-seen-heralding-food-security-crisis/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Poultry imports banned from 2 US states

February 10, 2025 | 8:43 pm



REUTERS

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) has ordered a ban on poultry meat imports from the US states of Maryland and Missouri, following bird flu outbreaks there.

Memorandum Order No. 07 dated Feb. 4 covered domestic and wild birds and their products such as poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs and semen.

In the order, the DA said the rapid spread of H5N Highly Pathogenicity Inspection Avian Influenza (HPAI) necessitates broader trade restrictions to prevent the entry of the virus and protect domestic producers.

The DA said all shipments coming from the two states that are in transit, loaded, or accepted at port before the communication of the order to US authorities will be allowed “provided that products were slaughtered/produced 14 days before the Jan. 14 outbreak in Caroline County in Maryland and in Newton County in Missouri. — **Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2025/02/10/652440/poultry-imports-banned-from-2-us-states/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

DA: High pork prices may be due to profiteering

February 11, 2025 | 12:33 am



A vendor sells pork products at a market in Pasay City. — PHILIPPINE STAR/RYAN BALDEMOR

THE DEPARTMENT of Agriculture (DA) is looking at imposing a maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) for pork as prices remain elevated amid reports of profiteering.

The price of pork is almost double the farmgate price, suggesting a potential abuse of prices in markets, Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. said at a Palace briefing, after discussing the issue with President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr.

He cited a gap of about P100 between the farmgate prices of P240 and P250 per kilo and the market prices of P380 to P420 per kilo.

“We’re currently studying that and digging deep into the whole value chain of pork, and finding out whether or not there is profiteering,” Mr. Laurel said.

“If we have identified that there’s profiteering, then definitely we will be doing an MSRP also for pork.”

The DA has resorted to the MSRP scheme for imported rice in a bid to curb prices. The MSRP was set at P55 per kilo of imported rice with broken grain content of 5%, which will take effect nationwide starting Feb. 15.

Mr. Laurel said pork prices above P400 per kilo is “unreasonable.”

DA data last week showed that pork prices have risen to as much as P480 per kilo. The price of pork belly ranges from P380 to P480 per kilo, while pork ham or *kasim* ranged from P340 to P420 per kilo.

“Farmgate price remains between P220 and P240 per kilo for the past weeks, which means retail prices should not exceed P380 per kilo,” Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura Executive Director Jayson H. Cainglet said.

“Selling beyond P400 per kilo is not reflective of the actual pork prices,” he said in a Viber message.

Former Agriculture Secretary William D. Dar attributed the surge in pork prices to the spread of African Swine Fever (ASF), which has lowered supply.

“The government must step up efforts and vigorously put up biosafety measures to stem the spread of ASF,” he said in a Viber message.

As of Jan. 31, 15 provinces in nine regions have active ASF cases, according to the Bureau of Animal Industry. “Where is the much-promoted vaccine against ASF as espoused by the DA and the private sector? If such a vaccine is really working, then why not a massive nationwide vaccination of pigs be done,” Mr. Dar added. The government began the controlled rollout of Vietnam-made ASF vaccines in late August 2024, with a focus on hogs in Lobo, Batangas, one of the hotspots for the disease that has severely impacted the sector since 2019. “The piggeries, both backyard and big one, have to elevate their biosafety interventions,” Mr. Dar said. Mr. Dar said the DA should strengthen coordination with local government units (LGUs) to ensure that quarantine measures are properly followed. Leonardo A. Lanzona, who teaches economics at the Ateneo de Manila University, said higher pork prices indicate “further supply-side constraints” that are also faced by other food commodities such as rice and tomatoes. “It therefore cannot be attributed to profiteering of individual traders but a systemic or aggregate failure in the country’s agricultural sector,” he said in a Facebook Messenger chat. Meanwhile, Mr. Laurel said Mr. Marcos was briefed on the food situation in the country during Monday’s meeting attended by representatives from the National Economic and Development Authority and the Department of Labor and Employment. The meeting was held just days after the DA declared a national rice emergency for rice amid an “extraordinary” spike in the prices of the staple grain despite lower tariffs for imports. Mr. Laurel said the agency is set to release National Food Authority rice buffer stock by next week, with over 50 LGUs expressing interest in purchasing the rice stocks. Meanwhile, Mr. Laurel said the DA has already blacklisted 16 companies as it combats illegal trade practices. The companies, four of which were already charged for illegal trade practices, were involved in importation of vegetables and fish. — **K.A.T. Atienza**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/top-stories/2025/02/11/652461/da-high-pork-prices-may-be-due-to-profiteering/>

REMATE:

Regulasyon sa pag-angkat ng sibuyas, ipinangako ng DA chief

February 10, 2025 17:59



MANILA, Philippines – NANGAKO at tiniyak ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. sa mga lokal na magsasaka na aayusin nito ang importasyon ng sibuyas.

Binigyang diin ang kanyang commitment na epektibong pangasiwaan ang situwasyon.

”Everyone is entitled to their own opinion. But I’m here to manage, I’m not a farmer, I’m not an importer, I’m the DA Secretary and here to manage the situation,” ang sinabi ni Tiu Laurel sa press briefing sa Malakanyang.

Pinawi naman ng Kalihim ang pag-aalala ng mga magsasaka sabay sabing ‘Mahirap naman na wala akong gawin, hayaan na lang maghintay ako ng sitwasyon na kung kelan ba talaga magha-harvest ng farmers.,’

Sa kabilang dako, sinabi ni Tiu Laurel na kapos ng 7,000 tonelada ang suplay ng sibuyas ngayong buwan ng Pebrero at ang importasyon ay isang “tactical move”, pagtiyak na ang pamahalaan ay maaari lamang umangkat ng limitadong dami para mapunan ang puwang.

Samantala, binigyang diin naman ng Department of Agriculture (DA) na ang mga inangkat ay nakatakdang dumating bago ang 'peak harvest' para mabawasan ang kanilang epekto sa lokal na magsasaka.

Gayunman, iginiit naman ni Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura (SINAG) Executive Director Jayson Cainglet na bagama't hindi nila kinontra ang importasyon, iyon ay dahil hindi ito ang tamang panahon.

Tinuran nito na may ilang magsasaka ang nagsimula nang mag-ani nang wala sa panahon, nangangamba ng pagbaba sa farm gate prices sa oras na pumasok na sa merkado ang imported na sibuyas. *Kris Jose*

<https://remate.ph/regulasyon-sa-pag-angkat-ng-sibuyas-ipinangako-ng-da-chief/>

REMATE:

16 kompanya, blacklisted sa illegal trade acts – DA

February 10, 2025 17:46



MANILA, Philippines – UMABOT na sa 16 na kompanya na sangkot sa illegal trade practices ang nasa blacklist ng Department of Agriculture (DA).

Kinumpirma ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel ang hakbang na ito sa press briefing sa Malakanyang sabay sabing kabilang sa listahan ang mga kompanyang sangkot sa imporasyon ng gulay at isda.

“Ang actual blacklisted ngayon is 10. But ang list namin is actually 16. Iniisa-isa na ‘yan,”ang sinabi ni Tiu Laurel.

Sa mga nasabing kompanya, apat ang kinasuhan ng iba’t ibang illegal trade practices.

Samantala, ang mga kompanyang nasa blacklist ay ang Thousand Sunny Enterprises; R2H Trading; Gingarnion Agri Trading; Lavalay Aggregates Trading; Flevo Trading; Saturnus Corporation; LVM Grains Enterprises; Kysse Lishh Consumer Goods Trading; JRA and Pearl Enterprises Inc.; Betron Consumer Goods Trading; Golden Rays Consumer Goods Trading; La Reina Fresh Vegetables and Young Indoor Plants Inc.; Vegefru Producing Store; Yem Trading Corporation; at RCNN Non-Specialized Wholesale Trading. *Kris Jose*

<https://remate.ph/16-kompanya-blacklisted-sa-illegal-trade-acts-da/>

REMATE:

Rollout ng bigas sa ilalim ng food security emergency, kasado na susunod na linggo -DA

February 10, 2025 16:28



Ibinababa na ng rice retailers sa Kamuning Market sa Quezon City ang mga bagong hatid na P38 Kadiwa ng Pangulo rice sa kanilang mga stall. Ito ay kasunod ng anunsyo ng Department of Agriculture ng pagpapatupad ng Food Security Emergency sa bigas. DANNY QUERUBIN

MANILA, Philippines – IKAKASA na ng Department of Agriculture (DA) sa susunod na linggo ang pagpapalabas ng rice stocks sa local government units (LGUs) kasunod ng deklarasyon ng food security emergency.

”Sa ngayon, maraming LGUs ang nagsignify ng intent but lumalabas kasi sa procedure, may documentation na kailangang gawin. Hopefully matapos lahat ng documentation between FTI, NFA to FTI, FTI to LGU and by next week maro-roll out na hopefully ‘yan,” ang sinabi ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. sa press briefing sa Malakanyang.

At nang tanungin naman kung ilang lokalidad ang nasa listahan, sinabi ni Tiu Laurel na ang bilang ay mahigit sa 50 LGUs.

”It’s all over the country, of course all NCR, ang maguumpisa dito sa Metro Manila, San Juan then Navotas, Iloilo is on the list,” ang sinabi ng Kalihim.

Matatandaang, idineklara ni Tiu Laurel ang food security emergency sa bigas base sa rekomendasyon mula sa National Price Coordinating Council.

Sa pamamagitan ng emergency declaration, pahihintulutan nito ang pagpapalabas ng rice buffer stocks na isinagawa ng National Food Authority (NFA) para maging matatag ang presyo at tiyakin na ang bigas, isang pangunahing pagkain, mananatiling accessible sa mga consumers

Ang stocks ay ipalalabas sa pamamagitan ng Food Terminal Inc. (FTI), at ipagbibili sa publiko sa presyong P35 per kilo, kasama sa 'cheapest available' habang hangad naman ng pamahalaan na mas ibaba ang presyo ng bigas sa antas na nakita bago pa ang pagsirit na naitala noong Hunyo at Hulyo 2023. *Kris Jose*

<https://remate.ph/rollout-ng-bigas-sa-ilalim-ng-food-security-emergency-kasado-na-susunod-na-linggo-da/>

REMATE:

Pakataran ng DA dudurog sa lokal na ani ng sibuyas – KMP

February 10, 2025 15:23



MANILA, Philippines – Sinabi ng Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) na hinihimok nito ang gobyerno na itigil na ang hindi tamang panahon na pag-aangkat ng agricultural product dahil nagiging result ito ng krisis sa sektor ng agrikultura at pagbagsak ng mga local product.

Ayon sa KMP, ang pinakahuling pag-apruba ng Department of Agriculture (DA) sa 4,000 metrikong tonelada ng pag-aangkat ng sibuyas—sa bisperas ng lokal na panahon ng pag-aani—ay isa pang patunay ng kawalan ng pakiramdam ng administrasyong Marcos Jr. sa kalagayan ng mga Pilipinong magsasaka.

Sa press statement nabatid pa sa grupo ng mga magsasaka na ang importasyon na ito, sa halip na patatagin ang mga presyo ay magpapalala lamang sa patuloy na krisis sa sektor ng agrikultura, ayon sa grupong magsasaka na KMP.

Kaugnay nito, nanawagan ang KMP sa gobyerno na itigil ang pag-aangkat ng agricultural product at unahin ang mga tunay na reporma sa agrikultura.

“Hindi na dapat pahirapan muli ang mga magsasaka dahil sa mga bigong patakaran ng gobyerno at mga maling priyoridad.” ayon pa sa KMP.

“Muli, ipinakita ng DA kung saan nakasalalay ang katapatan nito—hindi sa ating nahihirapang magsasaka kundi sa malalaking mangangalakal at importer na nakikinabang sa mga patakarang ito. Ang pag-aangkat ng sibuyas sa panahong ito ay magtutulak sa mga farm gate prices, na mag-iiwan sa ating mga magsasaka

sa mas malalim na utang at pagkalugi,” ani KMP chairperson at Makabayan senatorial candidate Danilo Ramos.

Kaugnay nito ang pahayag ng DA na ang pag-aangkat ay kinakailangan upang maiwasan ang pagtaas ng presyo at kakulangan ng suplay ay nakaliligaw.

Makikita mismo sa datos ng Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) na nasa 8,500 metric tons ang red onion stocks noong kalagitnaan ng Enero, habang nasa 1,628 metric tons ang stocks ng white onion.

Ang produksyon ng domestic sibuyas ay nasa record-high na 264,323 metric tons noong nakaraang taon—ang pinakamataas mula noong 2019—na nagpapatunay na hindi lokal na supply ang isyu.

Nagsimula na ang mga magsasaka sa pag-aani, na may tinatayang 33,000 metrikong tonelada ng sibuyas na inaasahan sa Marso.

“Ang pag-aangkat ng sibuyas ng gobyerno sa kalagitnaan ng panahon ng pag-aani ay sinasadyang sabotaha sa ekonomiya na magpapababa lamang sa kita ng mga magsasaka habang nakikinabang sa ilang importer,” tugon pa ni Ramos. *Santi Celario*

<https://remate.ph/pakataran-ng-da-dudurog-sa-lokal-na-ani-ng-sibuyas-kmp/>

ABANTE:

MSRP sa karne ng baboy iniumang

Abante News

• **February 10, 2025**



Pag-aaralan ng Department of Agriculture (DA) ang posibilidad na magtakda ng maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) sa karne ng baboy dahil sa mataas na presyo nito sa mga pamilihan.

Sa press briefing sa Malacañang, sinabi ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. na ikukunsulta niya ang plano sa mga stakeholder partikular sa mga nag-alaga ng baboy at retail-ers dahil masyadong mataas ang presyo ngayon katulad ng pork belly na umaabot sa P380-P480 kada kilo.

Sinabi ni Laurel na sa pulong na ipinatawag ni Pangulong Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. sa Malacañang nitong Lunes, iprinisinta nito ang presyo ng mga bilingin at napagtuunan ang presyo ng karne ng baboy at itlog na mataas sa mga pamilihan.

“Yung pork at itlog medyo na-mention and the President took particular interest. Kung makita natin na may profiteering ‘yan, then definitely we will be doing an MSRP also for pork,” ani Laurel.

Sinabi ng kalihim na ang farmgate sa presyo ng baboy sa ngayon ay P240-P250 kaya nakapagtataakang uma-bot ng P380- P480 ang presyo sa mga palengke na sobra-sobra aniya, lalo na at P100 ang diperensiya.

(Aileen Taliping)

<https://www.abante.com.ph/2025/02/10/msrp-sa-karne-ng-baboy-iniumang/>

ABANTE:

16 agri importer inekis ni Laurel

Abante News

- **February 10, 2025**



Umaabot na sa 16 kompanya ang blacklisted sa Department of Agriculture (DA) matapos madagdagan ng anim na nahuling nagpupuslit ng produktong agrikultura.

Sa isang press briefing sa Malacañang, sinabi ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel na ang mga kompanyang ito ay sangkot sa pag-angkat ng mga gulay at isda.

“Ang actual blacklisted ngayon is 10. But ang list namin is actually 16. Iniisa-isa na ‘yan,” wika ni Tiu Laurel.

Sa mga kompanyang ito, apat ang kinasuhan ng smuggling sa produktong agrikultura.

Ang mga blacklisted na kompanya ay ang Thousand Sunny Enterprises; R2H Trading; Gingarnion Agri Trading; Lavalley Aggregates Trading; Flevo Trading; Saturnus Corporation; LVM Grains Enterprises; Kysse Lishh Consumer Goods Trading; JRA and Pearl Enterprises Inc.; Betron Consumer Goods Trading; Golden Rays Consumer Goods Trading; La Reina Fresh Vegetables and Young Indoor Plants Inc.; Vegefru Producing Store; Yem Trading Corporation; at RCNN Non-Specialized Wholesale Trading.

Ang hakbang na ito ay bahagi ng kampanya ng administrasyong Marcos laban sa agricultural smuggling, profiteering, hoarding, at cartel na siyang nagpapasipa sa presyo ng pagkain.

Naunang sinabi ni Tiu Laurel na dahil sa pagsasabatas ng Anti-Agricultural Smuggling Act, mas handa na ngayon ang gobyerno na labanan ang mga lumalabag sa batas. (PNA)

<https://www.abante.com.ph/2025/02/10/16-agri-importer-inekis-ni-laurel/>

MANILA STANDARD:

Imee criticizes DA plan to import onions

By Ram Superable

February 10, 2025, 11:10 pm

Senator Imee Marcos criticized the Department of Agriculture's (DA) plan to import 4,000 metric tons of onions during the harvest season.

She questioned the timing of the importation, warning that it would cause prices to drop and hurt local farmers.

"Our farmers have already started harvesting, yet here comes another round of importation. Haven't we learned our lesson? Every harvest season, prices drop," she said.

She argued that importation has historically led to oversupply and financial losses for local producers.

The senator also blamed hoarding as a major factor behind price spikes in previous years. She urged the government to crack down on cold storage hoarders instead of relying on imports to stabilize prices.

According to the DA, the imports include 3,000 metric tons of red onions and 1,000 metric tons of white onions. Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. justified the move, saying it aims to maintain stable stocks and prevent sudden price hikes.

<https://manilastandard.net/news/314556198/imee-criticizes-da-plan-to-import-onions.html>

MANILA STANDARD:

DA steps up drive vs. malpractices; bares list of blacklisted companies



By Manila Standard

February 10, 2025, 10:55 pm

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) shifts to high gear its drive against malpractices in the agriculture business industry by blacklisting six more erring companies, bringing to 16 the total number of banned firms.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu-Laurel disclosed this in a press briefing at Malacañang on Monday, saying the blacklist included companies involved in importation of vegetables and fish.

“The actual blacklisted companies are 10. But in our list, we actually have 16. We went through them one by one,” Laurel said.

Four of these companies have been charged for various illegal trade practices, he added.

Laurel identified the blacklisted firms as Thousand Sunny Enterprises, R2H Trading, Gingarnion Agri Trading, Lavalay Aggregates Trading, Flevo Trading, Saturnus Corp., LVM Grains Enterprises, Kysse Lishh Consumer Goods Trading, JRA and Pearl Enterprises Inc., Betron Consumer Goods Trading, Golden Rays Consumer Goods Trading, La Reina Fresh Vegetables and Young Indoor Plants Inc., Vegefru Producing Store, Yem Trading Corp., and RCNN Non-Specialized Wholesale Trading.

<https://manilastandard.net/news/314556189/da-steps-up-drive-vs-malpractices-bares-list-of-blacklisted-companies.html>

Prices of food items: Up, up and away!

By The Editorial Board
February 11, 2025

LAST Feb. 6, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) released a new suggested retail price (SRP) list for basic necessities and prime commodities. Seventy-seven out of 191 stock-keeping units (SKUs) registered price increases. The SKU is a technical term used by stores to identify and categorize specific inventories by brand, product type and weight.

Among them are seven SKUs of canned sardines, five of coffee refills, four of 3-in-1 coffee, two of bread, three of instant noodles, five of candles, four of corned beef, three of beef loaves, six of salt, five of bottled water, 15 of condiments, six of toilet soap, six of detergent and laundry soap, and one each of condensed milk, evaporated milk, powdered milk, luncheon meat, meatloaves and batteries.

The response was swift.

A manufacturer said that while discussions were held on reducing the SRP list, the discussions stopped because of the musical chairs in the DTI leadership. "It comes as a surprise that the latest SRP list was released without informing the industry of the status of those discussions. We look forward to hearing their future direction on these initiatives," the manufacturer said.

On the other hand, the watchdog Bantay Bigas criticized the Department of Agriculture (DA) for not cracking the whip on retailers who do not follow the P55 maximum SRP on imported rice. Bantay Bigas spokesperson Cathy Estavillo said: "The government should go after importers, millers and traders as the retail price of imported rice remains high despite the 15 percent tariff on imported rice."

She added that the authorities should penalize traders who are involved in hoarding, smuggling and price manipulation.

The Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) wanted to know the formula used to justify the declaration of a food security emergency under Republic Act 12078 or the Agricultural Tariffication Act. FFF national manager Raul Montemayor noted that Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu-Laurel used a formula by the National Price Coordinating Council for declaring food security that says "an emergency exists" when "the rice inflation has exceeded the upper bound target for food inflation and reached double digits."

But despite withering criticism, Laurel said they would implement Executive Order 62, which took effect in July 2024 and lowered the tariff on imported rice from 35 percent to 15 percent. The secretary had to implement the maximum SRP on rice as the retail price of imported rice remained high — despite the implementation of the executive order. Laurel said they will continue implementing EO 62 until they achieve the target of P49 per kilogram maximum SRP on imported rice by March 1.

A recent Social Weather Station (SWS) survey also brings bad news for the government. The majority of Filipinos said that of the food items they bought in the last quarter of 2024, rice posted the steepest increase. They also said the government did not do enough to control inflation.

The survey, done from Jan. 17 to 20, was commissioned by the Stratbase Institute. It showed that 59 percent of the respondents said that rice was the food item they bought from October to December 2024 that had the highest price.

On the other hand, 25 percent said the price of meat products like chicken, pork and beef rose, while 11 percent cited vegetables. Four percent noted the price increase in seafood. Moreover, 58 percent said that the solutions offered by the government to curb inflation were "insufficient."

Only 16 percent said they were sufficient, while 19 percent said they were neither sufficient nor insufficient. As in the self-rated survey on hunger that we discussed in this space last week, dissatisfaction was highest in Mindanao, followed by Metro Manila with 60 percent. The SWS survey involved 1,800 respondents and had a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percent.

Stratbase Institute president Dindo Manhit said this should be a "wake-up call to our leaders. These numbers are why the public's trust toward the government is declining."

The Marcos administration projects meant to mitigate this include Kadiwa stores, the rollout of job fairs for the unemployed, and the controversial series of dole-outs targeted at the very poor.

But we also need a moratorium on the conversion of farmlands to subdivisions, the building of more farm-to-market roads, a massive irrigation program, cold storage facilities, and the planting of crops on idle government land.

The specter of hunger looms larger every day, as shown by these SRPS and surveys, like nightmares that refuse to go away.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/02/11/opinion/editorial/prices-of-food-items-up-up-and-away/2053113>

THE MANILA TIMES:

DA chief defends onion imports against criticism

By Kristina Maralit and Bernadette E. Tamayo

February 11, 2025

AGRICULTURE Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. on Monday justified importing onions amid criticism that doing so would hurt farmers.

Tiu Laurel said he understands the sentiments of onion producers but said his decision merely sought to address the dwindling supply.

"Everyone is entitled to their own opinion. But I'm here to manage; I'm not a farmer, I'm not an importer, I'm the DA (Department of Agriculture) secretary and here to manage the situation," Laurel said at a briefing in Malacañang as he allayed farmers' fears.

"It's hard for me not to do anything. I can't just sit and wait until they harvest," he added in Filipino.

The official said data from the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) showed a 7,000-ton deficit in onion supply for this month, and importation as a means to fill the gap is a "tactical move."

"There really is a deficit for February of 7,000 tons. And actually, we will open up the market for only 4,000 tons — 1,000 tons for white, 3,000 tons for red. So, it's not even enough to fill in the perceived gap or estimated gap, so there's nothing to worry about," Tiu Laurel said.

He further noted that large-scale onion producers — specifically the municipalities of Bongabon and Rizal and San Jose City in Nueva Vizcaya, are only expected to yield a full harvest of onions by the third week of March and even up to April 2025, which is why he pushed for the importation.

"I have to think of the consumers also, not just the farmers," Laurel said.

But Sen. Imee Marcos slammed the DA plan to import 4,000 MT of onions as "senseless" since farmers have started their harvest.

The senator on Monday criticized the lack of action against hoarders manipulating onion prices just as they did in 2022.

She said the imported onions are set to arrive by Feb. 20.

"Harvest season has begun, yet here we go again with another round of imports! Haven't we learned our lesson?" Marcos said in a statement.

"Prices drop during harvest time. Why bring in imports now when we know this would mean losses for our farmers?" she asked.

Marcos added, "We keep importing, but what's being done about those stockpiling onions in cold storage?"

"Even if we have enough supply, prices will still skyrocket if hoarders are in control," she said.

"Before bringing in imports, make sure you're not burying our farmers' livelihood in the process," she said.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/02/11/news/national/da-chief-defends-onion-imports-against-criticism/2053173>

THE MANILA TIMES:

Pork price levels set by month's end

By Kristina Maralit

February 11, 2025

AGRICULTURE Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said on Monday the study on the possible implementation of a maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) for pork is expected to be concluded by the end of the month.

"Two weeks from now, probably, or by the end of February should be enough time," Tiu Laurel said at a press briefing in Malacañang. "We're currently studying that and digging deep into the value chain of pork so that we could determine whether or not there is profiteering."

"If we have identified there is profiteering, then definitely we will be doing an MSRP also for pork," he added. Tiu Laurel said President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has directed the DA to also review the prices of other agricultural products, among them eggs which he said the president "took particular interest in."

The DA launched a study on implementing MSRP levels for pork since prices have been consistently high — around P480 per kilogram for belly or liempo and P420 for leg or pigue.

Prices for frozen pork liempo and pork shoulder or kasim are lower, ranging from P280 to P350 per kilo and P230 to P280 per kilo, respectively.

The DA previously attributed the increase in pork prices to the impact of African swine fever (ASF) and the huge demand for the commodity during the last holiday season.

"Anything above 400, I think, is unreasonable. Three eighty, maybe, but I'm not yet sure; we really are doing a deep dive into that for us to see if the pricing is correct. Profit should be reasonable for every stage; that's why we are studying it carefully," Tiu Laurel said.

Despite the high prices, he assured there was a sufficient supply of pork in the market.

In the same briefing, Tiu Laurel said four companies have been charged for alleged involvement in the smuggling of agricultural products.

The four are among the 10 firms the DA has blacklisted for smuggling.

Tiu Laurel did not disclose the names of the other companies that are on the list.

Last December, the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) blacklisted 10 importers for allegedly bringing in vegetables, fruits, and other food products without the proper clearances. They are Kysse Lishh Consumer Goods Trading, LVM Grains Enterprises, JRA and Pearl Enterprises Inc., Betron Consumer Goods Trading, RCNN Non-Specialized Wholesale Trading, Golden Rays Consumer Goods Trading, Chastity Consumer Goods Trading.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has signed Republic Act 12022, or the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage (AGES) Act, a measure that classifies smuggling, hoarding, and cartel operations involving agricultural products as economic sabotage.

The law imposes a penalty of life imprisonment and a fine of up to five times the value of the products involved in the crime.

It also grants rewards of up to P20 million and other incentives to people who will provide information that would lead to the investigation, arrest, prosecution and conviction of smugglers and hoarders.

Agricultural products covered by AGES are rice, corn, beef and other ruminants, pork, poultry, garlic, onions, carrots, garlic, other vegetables, fruit, fish, salt and other aquatic products in their raw state.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/02/11/news/national/pork-price-levels-set-by-months-end/2053165>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

DA files case vs importers for illegal trade acts

Samuel P. Medenilla

February 10, 2025



Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) announced last Monday it already filed cases against four importers for illegal trade activities.

DA Secretary Francisco Tiu-Laurel, Jr. confirmed those who were charged were among the 16 vegetable and fish importers, which they blacklisted for misdeclarations and anti-competitive practices.

“Out of the 16, four were charged,” Laurel said in a press conference in Malacañang last Monday. Seven of the importers were blacklisted from 2021 to 2023 before the Marcos administration, while the nine other importers were included in the list last year as part of the anti-smuggling efforts of the government. As of press time, the DA has yet to disclose which of the 16 have been charged.

The government has intensified its campaign against smuggling after President Ferdinand Marcos signed Republic No. 12022 or the Anti-Agricultural Sabotage Act in 2024.

Under RA 12022, agriculture smuggling, which is considered economic sabotage, is committed if the value of smuggled agricultural and fishery products is worth at least P10 million.

Those who commit such a crime will be imprisoned and face fines.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/10/da-files-case-vs-importers-for-illegal-trade-acts/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

SRA holds new sugar purchase program to maintain supply, stabilize prices

Ada Pelonia

February 10, 2025

The Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) is undertaking another voluntary purchase program covering 500,000 metric tons (MT) of raw sugar to prop up farmgate prices of the sweetener ahead of harvest.

Under sugar order (SO) 2 for crop year 2024-2025, a copy of which was obtained by BusinessMirror, the program would involve the purchase of 500,000 MT of raw sugar at a premium on a first come, first served basis.

The SRA said it deemed it necessary to adopt a second round of its voluntary purchase program “to maintain an optimum supply of sugar available for domestic consumption while ensuring reasonable and stable prices.”

The agency noted taking into consideration all data on sugar and in anticipation of the peak sugar production in the next three months.

Meanwhile, in return for purchasing raw sugar at a premium, eligible participants would be prioritized in the government’s future import programs.

This would be done based on the raw sugar volume purchased by traders, at a ratio of 2 (locally produced raw sugar purchased): 1 (imported sugar).

The regulatory agency noted that sugar bought under the program would be classified as “C” (reserved sugar) for a period of not more than 90 days.

SRA Administrator Pablo Luis Azcona had floated the idea of implementing another round of the program as part of efforts to arrest the slide in millgate prices of the commodity.

“We’re studying what we did last year and finding ways to improve it. [We want to] make sure that anybody can participate in the program as long as they have a domestic trading license,” he told reporters in a previous interview.

Azcona said the program would “make the playing field a lot more level and fair.”

Farmgate price of raw sugar stood at P2,816 per 50-kilo bag as of January 19, higher than the P2,685 recorded price in the previous week, based on SRA data.

The prevailing raw sugar prices in Metro Manila markets ranged from P70 to P80 per kilo in January, SRA data showed.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/10/sra-holds-new-sugar-purchase-program-to-maintain-supply-stabilize-prices/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

DA to recommend adjusting rice tariff if prices hit P42-P45/kilo

Ada Pelonia
February 10, 2025



Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) would recommend adjusting rice tariffs when retail prices hit P42 to P45 per kilo.

“Siguro [kapag umabot ng] P42 to P45 per kilo, somewhere there, then pwede nang i-review at i-recommend,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. told reporters during a Palace briefing on Monday.

“It can be from 15 [percent] to 20 or 15 to 25 or full 35 depende na sa sitwasyon, depende sa consultations with everybody,” he added.

The Executive Order (EO) 62, which slashed rice tariffs to 15 percent until 2028, provides that the tariff scheme be subjected to a periodic review every four months from its effectivity.

The National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) is set to review the comprehensive and/or specific MFN (Most Favored Nation) tariff rates listed under EO 62 again by March.

LGUs sell NFA rice

Meanwhile, Laurel said that local government units (LGUs) could begin selling rice from the National Food Authority (NFA) by next week, noting that over 50 have signified their intent.

“Sa ngayon, marami nang LGUs nag-signify ng intent but [...] lumalabas kasi na sa procedure, may documentation na kailangan gawin,” Laurel said.

“So, hopefully matapos lahat ng documentations between NFA to FTI [Food Terminal Incorporated], FTI to LGUs and by next week maro-rollout na hopefully yan,” he added.

The DA recently declared a food security emergency on rice, allowing it to release rice buffer stocks held by the grains agency.

The NFA would release these stocks at P33 per kilo and sold by the DA through the FTI to LGUs, Kadiwa stores, and government entities, where consumers would purchase them at P35 per kilo.

The grains agency plans to release 150,000 metric tons (MT) of rice in six months, which is 50 percent of its current 300,000 MT buffer stock stored in warehouses.

According to NFA Administrator Larry Lacson, the allocation would depend on the NFA stocks in warehouses near the respective LGUs and the area with the highest recorded retail rice prices.

“First consideration is the stocks in the NFA warehouse na malapit sa kanila or nakakasakop sa kanila. So, kung ano yung volume na pwede dun paghahati-hatiin namin sila,” Lacson told reporters via phone call on Monday.

“Kapag kunwari, 10 LGU ‘yan in one nasasakupan na region, kung saan yung pinakamataas, doon namin bibigyan ng mas maraming allocation kesa sa iba,” he added.

Retail prices of imported rice in Metro Manila markets range from P44 to P45 per kilo for well-milled and P38 to P46 per kilo for regular milled, based on based on the latest government price monitoring report.

Local rice ranged between P40 and P53 per kilo for well-milled while P38 and P45 per kilo for regular milled, DA’s monitoring report showed.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/10/da-to-recommend-adjusting-rice-tariff-if-prices-hit-p42-p45-kilo/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

BusinessMirror Editorial

February 11, 2025



Grain deal at a Kadiwa ng Pangulo stall in Las Piñas: NFA rice is now available at P36 per kilo—well below earlier estimates—as the Department of Agriculture intensifies measures amid a declared food security emergency. A recent survey by Social Weather Stations and Stratbase Group revealed that 59 percent of Filipinos experienced the steepest price hike for rice in the last three months of 2024, compared to 25 percent for meat, 11 percent for vegetables, and 4 percent for seafood.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/11/editorial-cartoon-february-11-2025/>

ABANTE TONITE:

Agri chief Laurel: Taripa ng bigas babaguhin `pag pumatak sa P42/kilo

February 10, 2025



Posibleng magkaroon ng pagbabago o adjustment sa taripa ng bigas kapag umabot ito sa target price ng gobyerno, ayon kay Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.

Inihayag ito ng kalihim sa kanyang pagharap sa Malacañang press briefing nitong Lunes, Pebrero hinggil sa isyu ng presyo ng bigas sa bansa.

Sabi ni Laurel, ang target price ng gobyerno para magkaroon ng adjustment sa taripa ng bigas ay kailangang umabot ito sa P42 at P45 per kilo.

“Puwede ng i-review at i-recommend for restoration or maybe not a full restoration, it can be from 15 to 20 or 15 to 25 or full 35 (percent). Depende na sa sitwasyon. Depende sa consultations with everybody,” paliwanag ni Laurel.

Hunyo 2024 pinirmahan ni Pangulong Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. ang Executive Order No. 62 kung saan mula sa 35% ay ibinaba sa 15% ang taripa ng imported na bigas.

Ngunit pinuna ito ng mga kritiko dahil hindi naman bumaba ang presyo ng bigas sa mga pamilihan.

<https://tonite.abante.com.ph/2025/02/10/agri-chief-laurel-taripa-ng-bigas-babaguhin-pag-pumatak-sa-p42-kilo/>

ABANTE TONITE:

Malacañang windang sa taas-presyo ng pork

February 10, 2025

Pag-aaralan ng Department of Agriculture ang posibilidad na magtakda ng maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) sa karne ng baboy dahil sa mataas na presyo nito sa mga pamilihan.

Sa press briefing sa Malacañang, sinabi ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. na ikokonsulta niya ang plano sa mga stakeholder partikular sa mga nag-alaga ng baboy at retailers dahil masyadong mataas ang presyo ngayon katulad ng pork belly na umaabot sa P380 hanggang P480 kada kilo.

Sinabi ni Laurel na sa pulong na ipinatawag ni Pangulong Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. sa Malacañang nitong Lunes, Pebrero 10, iprenesenta nito ang presyo ng mga bilihan at napagtuunan ang presyo ng karne ng baboy at itlog na mataas sa mga pamilihan.

Sinabi ng kalihim na ang farmgate sa presyo ng baboy sa ngayon ay P240 hanggang P250 kaya nakapagtata kang umabot ng P380-P480 ang presyo sa mga palengke na sobra-sobra aniya, lalo na at P100 ang diperensiya.

Pag-aaralan aniya ng DA ang pagtatakda ng MSRP at inaasahang matatapos ito sa loob ng dalawang linggo bago pagpasyahan kung magtatakda ng MSRP sa karne ng baboy.

Binigyang-diin ng kalihim na dapat walang profiteering sa mga pangunahing bilihan kaya pag-aaralan itong mabuti upang hindi mahirapan ang mga mamimili, lalo na ang mga naghihigpit sa kanilang badyet sa pagkain. (Aileen Taliping)

<https://tonite.abante.com.ph/2025/02/10/malacanang-windang-sa-taas-presyo-ng-pork/>