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MANILA BULLETIN:

New trade partnerships: Manila seeks to expand agri-fishery exports in Middle East

BY [DEXTER BARRO II](#)

Feb 11, 2025 03:21 PM

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Department of Agriculture (DA) is teaming up for a trade mission to the Middle East to help promote the Philippines' agricultural and fisheries exports.

Launched this month, the country's delegation aims to boost market access of Philippine goods while strengthening trade partnerships with Qatar, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The trade mission marks as the first major initiative between the DA and DTI after signing a memorandum of agreement (MOA) on Agriculture and Fisheries Export Development and Promotion last year.

This agreement, formalized during the 2024 National Export Congress, seeks to strengthen the global competitiveness of the country's agriculture and fisheries sector.

In a statement, the DTI said these efforts are aligned with the objectives of the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028 and the Philippine Export Development Plan 2023-2028.

"This will be achieved by streamlining value chains, promoting value-added processing, and ensuring compliance with international standards," the agency stated.

The trade mission will feature 26 Philippine exporters.

Sourcing opportunities will be available for these exporter by means of store visits, supplier meetings, and business matching activities.

The DTI noted that this will help them gain direct access to buyers, distributors, and industry leaders across the Middle East.

The agency said the exporters will also meet with the Qatar Ministry of Public Health, the Saudi Food and Drug Authority, and other regulatory bodies to address market entry requirements and compliance issues.

The trade mission will also feature a visit to Gulfood 2025—one of the world's biggest food and hospitality event—to help showcase Philippine exports to an even bigger audience.

Following business-to-business session in Qatar and Jordan, the trade mission will visit Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on Wednesday and Dubai, UAE on Friday.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/2/11/da-dti-launches-trade-mission-to-promote-filipino-goods-in-middle-east>

MANILA BULLETIN:

DA set to reduce rice prices at Kadiwa by up to ₱3

BY [DEXTER BARRO II](#)

Feb 11, 2025 02:14 PM

The Department of Agriculture (DA) is set to reduce rice prices under the Rice-for-All (RFA) program, available at Kadiwa ng Pangulo (KNP) stores, effective on Wednesday, Feb. 12.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said on Tuesday that the RFA prices will be lowered by as much as ₱3 per kilo.

Currently, RFA5 or the rice with no more than 5 percent broken grain is priced at ₱45 per kilo; RFA 25 or the 25 percent broken at ₱38; and RFA 100 or the 100 percent broken at ₱36.

Starting Wednesday, Laurel said RFA5 rice will be priced at ₱43 per kilo, RFA25 at ₱35, and RFA100 at ₱33.

“The price reduction reflects both a drop in global rice prices and an increase in domestic supply as the local harvest season gets underway,” the DA chief said.

The KNP program shall continue to provide rice at ₱29 per kilo, which will only be available for the country’s vulnerable sectors.

The P29 rice, which comes from aging stocks of the National Food Authority (NFA), was initially piloted last year.

Laurel noted that while international rice prices have eased, the NFA will still procure palay (unmilled rice) from local farmers at a price of ₱21 to ₱23 per kilo to ensure fair compensation.

He said the agency has sufficient funding to support farmers and uphold its mandated rice buffer stock of 15 days.

The NFA’s stocks is set to face greater consumption, as the agency is set to release approximately 150,000 metric tons (MT) of rice based on the recent declaration of a good security emergency on rice.

These stocks are expected to start disbursements as early as next week, with at least 50 local government units (LGUs) already signifying intention to purchase and sell the rice.

The DA’s move to trim down RFA prices is in line with Executive Order (EO) No. 62 of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. last year, cutting rice tariffs from 35 percent to 15 percent.

Laurel said the country’s economic managers will soon review the order to determine whether rice tariff needs to be adjusted.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/2/11/da-to-lower-rice-prices-in-kadiwa-stores>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Cambodian PM assures PH of support in food security

BY [RAYMUND ANTONIO](#)

Feb 11, 2025 03:12 PM

Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Moha Borvor Thipadei Hun Manet on Tuesday, Feb. 11, promised to support the Philippines' food security by supplying rice and other food products.



President Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr. welcomes Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Moha Borvor Thipadei Hun Manet at the Malacañang Palace on Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2025. (Ryan Baldemor/PPA Pool)

The prime minister, who said this is his first ever official visit to the Philippines, met with President Marcos in Malacañan.

He assured the President of Cambodia's readiness to contribute in the government's goal of food security for all.

"We are identifying new opportunities to boost trade and investment flows in agriculture. Cambodia stands ready to contribute to the Philippine food security through rice supply as well as many other food products," he said in a joint press conference with the President.

While largely dependent on agricultural economy, the Philippines is among the world's largest rice importers.

Last week, it declared a food security emergency to bring down the cost of rice, which it said stayed elevated despite lower global prices and a reduction in rice tariffs a year before.

The declaration will allow the government to release buffer stocks, which will help bring down the prices of the country's staple food.

Meanwhile, admitting that there are "untapped potentials" in the trade and business ties between the Philippines and Cambodia, Hun Manet vowed to take this relationship to "new heights" as he engaged with

the public and private sector in his visit to Manila.

“Mr. Marcos and I just concluded productive discussions and witnessed the exchange of eight arrangements and MOUs (memorandum of understandings) serving as a concrete arrangement to increase our interactions,” he shared.

“On bilateral front, we are committed to taking our cooperations to new heights,” the prime minister added.

The Cambodian leader also acknowledged the “crucial role” of the private sectors in driving economic growth.

“Cambodia encourage the stronger engagements through trade missions, business fora and trade fairs. At the Cambodia-Philippines business forum yesterday, I underscored the untapped potentials and investments opportunities for Filipino investors and entrepreneurs,” he stated.

Recognizing the people-to-people ties of both countries, he noted how the Filipino community in Cambodia played a role in the country’s socio-economic developments and underscored the importance of unity among member-countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

“As the Philippines assumes ASEAN chairmanship in 2026, I assured President Marcos of Cambodia's full support,” he said as he extended an invitation to the President to visit Cambodia soon.

The Philippines and Cambodia are celebrating the 68th anniversary of their diplomatic relations this year.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/2/11/cambodian-pm-assures-ph-of-support-in-food-security>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

NBI raid uncovers alleged rice repacking scam

Mark Ernest Villeza - The Philippine Star

February 12, 2025 | 12:00am



National Bureau of Investigation Director Jaime Santiago inspects a warehouse raided by the NBI for allegedly mixing old rice and repacking it into new sacks for a higher price.

MANILA, Philippines — The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) is set to file charges against several people arrested in a raid on a warehouse in Bocaue, Bulacan for allegedly repacking old rice with imported rice and selling it as new.

NBI Director Jaime Santiago said the suspects would undergo inquest proceedings as authorities finalize the charges, which may include economic sabotage.

“We have already conducted an inspection and this all leads to economic sabotage,” Santiago said in Filipino over radio dZRH.

“We are just waiting for the Department of Agriculture to determine the price and volume of the rice found in the warehouse,” he added.

According to Santiago, the operation was launched after months of surveillance.

Authorities apprehended the warehouse manager, two casers and an inventory officer.

However, the true owner of the warehouse has yet to be identified, as the arrested individuals have refused to cooperate with the investigation.

“They are not talking yet about who really owns the warehouse. We still don’t know if it’s a foreigner or a Filipino,” Santiago said.

The NBI had been monitoring the facility since December and launched the operation when the opportunity arose. — **Cecille Suerte Felipe, Christine Boton**

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2025/02/12/2420975/nbi-raid-uncovers-alleged-rice-repacking-scam>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

President Marcos thanks Cambodian king for pardoning 13 Pinay surrogates

[Helen Flores](#) - The Philippine Star

February 12, 2025 | 12:00am



President Marcos and First Lady Liza Marcos welcome Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet and First Lady Pich Chanmony at Malacañang yesterday. Hun Manet, on his first official visit to the Philippines, was accorded arrival honors before meeting the Philippine delegation and signing the guest book.

MANILA, Philippines — President Marcos personally conveyed his gratitude to the Cambodian government for granting royal pardon to 13 Filipino surrogates, during his meeting with Prime Minister Hun Manet at Malacañang yesterday.

The Cambodian leader and his delegation arrived in the country on Monday for a two-day official visit.

“Finally, let me take this opportunity to once again express my gratitude to His Majesty King Norodom Sihamoni for the grant of royal pardon to 13 Filipino surrogates, and to your government for the assistance given to them during their time in Cambodia,” Marcos said during a bilateral meeting with the Prime Minister.

“We will never forget this act of magnanimity from His Majesty, a testament to the strong relations between our two countries,” Marcos said.

He said the Philippines would continue to work with Cambodia in the fight against transnational crimes.

The Filipino women were convicted on Dec. 2 by a Cambodian court for violating the country’s law on the Suppression of Human Trafficking and were sentenced to four years in prison. They returned to the country on Dec. 26.

“We thank the Cambodian government for ensuring their safety and their well-being,” Marcos said during a joint press conference with Hun Manet.

Marcos and the Prime Minister also witnessed the presentation of signed agreements, including one on preventing double taxation.

Under the agreement, both countries agree to mitigate the burden of double taxation on individuals and businesses operating across borders, which may contribute to the elimination of barriers to trade and investment and encourage cross-border economic activities.

The deal encompasses taxation of income earned by citizens and residents of the Philippines and Cambodia. The two countries also signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on the Implementation of Competition Law to boost inbound investments and promote a business-friendly environment.

An MOU on Agricultural and Agribusiness Cooperation was also inked between the two Southeast Asian nations, covering agricultural planning and further enhancing international trade and agribusiness investments between the two countries.

Also signed was a deal on cooperation in the field of technical-vocational education and training and agreed on the Implementation Program for Tourism for 2024-2028.

The two countries also entered into a formal collaboration on Information and Communications Technology and government digital transformation through exchanges of expertise and training.

Manila and Phnom Penh also signed an MOU on Prevention of Looting and Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Properties.

Deepening ties

Marcos said he discussed with his Cambodian counterpart ways to maximize the countries' cooperation and explore new opportunities to deepen their bilateral ties.

They also exchanged views on matters relating to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and "other regional issues."

"We also discussed comprehensively our determined efforts to combat transnational crimes and protect our communities from unscrupulous individuals who take advantage of the industrious nature and strong sense of family of our peoples," Marcos said.

Marcos said he is "pleased" with the growing partnership between the two nations' militaries and uniformed services.

"I anticipate the continued exchange of best practices and knowledge to support our mutual aspiration for regional peace and security and our collaborative efforts in enhancing our resiliency," he said.

In his remarks, Hun said Cambodia and the Philippines "are committed to taking our cooperations to new heights."

"We are identifying new opportunities to boost trade and investment flows in agriculture. Cambodia stands ready to contribute to the Philippine food security through rice supply as well as many other food products," he said.

"Tourism and connectivity are crucial for promoting people-to-people exchange. I invited through President Marcos the Philippine carriers to explore additional routes to support these initiatives," he said.

On Monday, the Prime Minister spoke at the Philippines-Cambodia Business Forum in Manila.

"I am confident that through this engagement, we will see more Filipinos investing in Cambodia, and more Cambodians investing in the Philippines," Marcos said at the joint press conference.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2025/02/12/2420973/president-marcos-thanks-cambodian-king-pardoning-13-pinay-surrogates>

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>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

DA further cuts rice retail prices by P2-P3

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

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 05:30 AM February 12, 2025



MORE AFFORDABLE The drop in the retail prices of rice was due to a decrease in rice prices worldwide and an increase in local rice stocks with the start of the harvest season. —Inquirer file photo

MANILA, Philippines — The prices of different types of rice sold under the Rice-for-All program of the Department of Agriculture (DA) will drop by P2 to P3 starting on Feb. 12.

According to the DA, the price cuts will apply to broken rice or rice grains that are broken or fragmented during processing such as milling.

Effective on Wednesday, five percent broken rice will be sold at P43 per kilogram (from the previous P45/kg) while 25 percent broken rice will retail for P35/kg (from P38/kg), and 100 percent broken rice at P33 per kg (from P36/kg).

At the same time, the DA said on Tuesday that the maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) for imported rice, now implemented nationwide instead of just in Metro Manila, would be lowered to P52 per kg beginning Feb. 15. By March 1, the price would dip down further to P49 per kg.

“The price reduction reflects both a drop in global rice prices and an increase in domestic supply as the local harvest season gets underway,” it added.

The DA also attributed the lower prices to the government’s move to slash rice tariffs from 35 percent to 15 percent until 2028 under Executive Order (EO) No. 62 issued in July.

With EO No. 62 up for review soon, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said he was inclined only to recommend adjusting the import duty on rice once retail prices range between P42 and P45 per kg.

But based on the DA's monitoring as of Monday, locally produced regular milled rice was priced at P38 to P45 per kg, lower than last year's P50 to P53/kg.

Local well-milled rice, on the other hand, was sold from P42 to P52/kg compared with P49 to P56 per kg in 2024.

As for imported regular milled rice, it was priced between P38 to P46 per kg in Metro Manila markets while imported well-milled rice retailed from P44 to P45 per kg, also lower than last year's P50 to P58 per kg.

DA assurance

Despite the easing of international prices, Tiu Laurel reassured farmers that the National Food Authority (NFA) would continue purchasing locally produced palay from them for P21 to P23 a kilo to build its buffer stock.

“The NFA has sufficient funding to support farmers and uphold its mandated rice buffer stock, now equivalent to 15 days of national consumption under the revised Rice Tariffication Law,” he said.

Under the amended law, the NFA is mandated to maintain an optimal level of rice inventory to sustain the government's disaster relief programs during natural or man-made calamities and to address food security emergency situations on rice. Its stocks, however, should be sourced solely from local farmers.

Excessive gap

At the same time, Tiu Laurel said the DA was still mulling over whether or not to implement an MSRP on pork to address the “excessive” gap between farm-gate, or the price of selling the produce from farmers to traders, and retail prices.

He described the current retail pork price of P400 per kilo or higher as “unreasonable.”

“We are conducting a thorough analysis of the pork value chain,” he said. “If evidence of profiteering emerges, we will not hesitate to institute an MSRP for pork.”

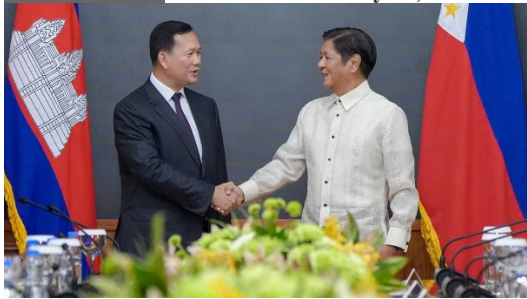
As of Monday, pork belly retailed from P380 to P480, while frozen kasim was sold from P230 to P290 per kg. For frozen liempo, the retail price was between P290 and P350 per kg.

[https://business.inquirer.net/506132/da-further-cuts-rice-retail-prices-by-p2-p3?utm_source=\(direct\)&utm_medium=gallery](https://business.inquirer.net/506132/da-further-cuts-rice-retail-prices-by-p2-p3?utm_source=(direct)&utm_medium=gallery)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

PH, Cambodia ink pacts on taxation, agri, tourism, culture

By: [John Eric Mendoza](#) - Reporter / [@JEMendozaINQ](#)
INQUIRER.net / 06:08 PM February 11, 2025



(From left): Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Moha Borvor Thipadei Hun Manet and President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. Photo from the Presidential Communications Office

MANILA, Philippines — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and his Cambodian counterpart on Tuesday signed a pact in a bid to remove double taxation on income tax, along with other key agreements on sectors of agriculture and tourism.

These developments were made as Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Moha Borvor Thipadei Hun Manet visited Marcos at Malacañang Palace to highlight his two-day stay in the country.

“On trade and investment, we welcome our formal cooperation on the avoidance of double taxation,” Marcos said in a joint press conference.

The double taxation agreement (DTA) was signed by Department of Finance (DOF) chief Ralph Recto and his Cambodian counterpart, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Minister Prak Sokhonn.

The DTA was supposed to be signed in October 2024, but DOF said it was postponed upon the request of Phnom Penh officials.

Negotiations on the DTA began in 2018 in Manila, and was followed through in 2019 in Siem Reap, Cambodia, the DOF said.

The DOF previously said the country is planning to renegotiate its DTAs with Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore.

Marcos then said moves like the DTA “will see more Filipinos investing in Cambodia, and more Cambodians investing in the Philippines.”

Currently, over 7,000 Filipinos reside and work in the Southeast Asian country, and Hun Manet said they play a crucial role in the socio-economic development of his country.

“We remain committed to ensuring we maintain a supportive environment to our Filipino friends,” he said.

Aside from the pact against double taxation, Manila and Phnom Penh also signed seven more memorandum of agreements (MOU).

Hun Manet said: “Mr. Marcos and I just concluded productive discussions and witnessed the exchange of eight arrangements and MOUs serving as a concrete arrangement to increase our interactions.”

Both countries have also signed MOUs on agriculture sector and tourism.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel and Cambodian counterpart Minister Dith Tina signed the MOU on Agricultural and Agribusiness Cooperation between both nations.

Hun Manet said: “We are identifying new opportunities to boost trade and investment flows in agriculture.”

“We also see Cambodia as an important partner in ensuring food security,” Marcos said.

“I am pleased that we have come to an agreement to pursue stronger collaboration in agriculture and in agribusiness.”

Marcos enjoined Filipinos and Cambodians in the agricultural sector to “actively participate in various programs under this agreement.”

Hun Manet also said Phnom Penh is ready to become a supplier of rice to Manila.

“Cambodia stands ready to contribute to the Philippine food security through rice supply as well as many other food products,” he said.

Manila also signed key MOUs on tourism and cultural affairs with Phnom Penh, a nation renowned for its rich cultural heritage and monuments like the Angkor Wat.

Tourism Secretary Ma. Esperanza Christina Garcia Frasco and Cambodian counterpart Minister Hout Hak signed an MOU on tourism cooperation between two nations for the period 2024-2028.

Likewise, National Commission for Culture and the Arts Chairperson Victorino Mapa Manalo and Cambodian counterpart Minister Phoeurng Sackona renewed the MOU on Prevention of Looting and Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Properties.

“We have renewed our agreement on the prevention of looting and trafficking of cultural properties, which reaffirms our commitment to safeguard our highly-regarded cultural items, to facilitate expert exchanges, and to promote collaboration that can enable future generations to appreciate the remarkable representation of our history and our identity,” Marcos said.

<https://globalnation.inquirer.net/263963/fwd-2-marcos-cambodian-pm-ink-pact-to-eliminate-double-taxation-other-key-mous>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

DA bans poultry from Maryland, Missouri due to bird flu

By: [Jordeene B. Lagare @jordeenelagare](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)
Philippine Daily Inquirer / 01:54 PM February 11, 2025

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) temporarily barred the entry of imported poultry originating from Maryland and Missouri in the United States due to bird flu outbreaks reported last month.

The imposed ban is effective immediately via Memorandum Order No. 07 covering domestic and wild birds and their products, including poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs and semen from two American states.

Following the ban, the agency immediately suspended the processing, evaluation and issuance of sanitary and phytosanitary import clearance to poultry imports from Maryland and Missouri.

All veterinary quarantine officers/inspectors will stop and confiscate all deliveries into the country.

The import restriction, however, excludes all shipments that are either in transit, loaded or accepted unto port before local authorities transmitted the DA order to US authorities as long as they were slaughtered or produced 14 days before the first outbreak.

American authorities recorded the first outbreak in Caroline County in Maryland and Newton County in Missouri on Jan. 14.

The DA implemented the import ban after the US reported several outbreaks of H5N1 High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (HPAI) in Maryland and Missouri affecting domestic birds.

The rapid spread of bird flu in the US in a short period since its first laboratory detection necessitates a wider coverage of trade restriction to avoid the spread of this animal disease and protect the local industry, according to the memo.

The Philippines and the US forged a regionalization agreement in 2016 wherein a state-wide ban will only be imposed if at least three American states are infected with avian influenza.

Citing America's official reports to the World Organisation for Animal Health, both states have three or more counties affected with avian influenza.

The United States is one of the country's leading source of imported meat, exporting 204.2 million kilograms as of end-November, data from the Bureau of Animal Industry showed.

The volume represents 15.3 percent of the 1.33 billion kg of meat sourced from abroad in the January to November period.

The Philippines still has areas that are infected with bird flu, although the BAI has not recorded positive cases from Feb. 1 to 7.

<https://business.inquirer.net/506009/da-bans-poultry-from-maryland-missouri-due-to-bird-flu>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Lawmaker advocates expanded tech-based farming programs

By: [Dale Arasa](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

INQUIRER.net / 09:16 AM February 11, 2025



Free stock photo from Pexels

MANILA, Philippines — The chairperson of the House committee on information and communication technology (ICT) recommends expanding technology-driven farming programs.

In a news release, Navotas Rep. Toby Tiangco said the government must equip farmers with the latest tools and skills to maximize productivity and income potential.

“Embracing technology-driven farming methods is key to strengthening our agricultural sector,” Tiangco said. He cited small water impounding systems, fertigation techniques and drip irrigation in Hermosa and Dinalupihan, Bataan, which boosted crop yields.

“According to the agriculture department, these technologies can cut fertilizer use by up to 70% and reduce water consumption by 30%,” he added.

Moreover, the lawmaker said the national expansion of these farming programs will help farmers optimize resources and decrease production costs.

“We need to replicate these programs nationwide. Expanding their reach will help farmers optimize resources and lower production costs.”

Tiangco called on the Department of Agriculture (DA) to explore additional private-sector partnerships to boost farmer welfare.

Also, he highlighted the DA-Agricultural Training Institute’s Digital Farmers Program (DFP).

It provides farmers with tablets, smartphones and internet access to enhance agricultural productivity.

“The lack of access to smartphones and internet is a major barrier to technology adoption among rice farmers,” the lawmaker stated.

He says connecting agricultural services online will provide farmers with valuable data and easier access to government assistance.

“The government must invest in programs that give farmers access to digital tools,” Tiangco said.

Fortunately, the Philippines has promising AI farming programs, such as Agriconnect.

It alerts farmers to potential risks via mobile app so they can safeguard their crops immediately.

Learn more about the award-winning Agriconnect [here](#).

<https://technology.inquirer.net/140565/lawmaker-advocates-expanded-tech-based-farming-programs>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

NFA rice stock up 485% in Jan., to further surge in Feb.

By: [Stephanie Sevillano](#) -

Philippine News Agency / 01:30 PM February 11, 2025



Workers stack rice at a warehouse of the National Food Authority (NFA) on Visayas Avenue in Quezon City in this file photo taken on January 15, 2020. The NFA rice stock inventory shows supply rose by 485.1 percent in January compared to the same period last year. INQUIRER FILE PHOTO / GRIG C. MONTEGRANDE

MANILA, Philippines – The rice stock inventory of the National Food Authority (NFA) rose by 485.1 percent in January compared to the same period last year, recent Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) data show. The NFA depositories logged 284,810 metric tons (MT), significantly higher than the 48,680 MT of rice stocks in January 2024.

In a phone interview on Monday, NFA Administrator Larry Lacson said the surge in the national rice buffer stock was due to the higher buying price scheme for local palay (unhusked rice), which is set at P23/kg. to P30/kg. for dry palay, and P17/kg. to P23/kg. for fresh or wet palay.

“That allowed us a good chance of buying palay from the farmers kasi dati, hindi tayo nakakapamilya sa mga farmers dahil ang presyo ng trader ay let’s say P25, tayo nakapako sa P19 hanggang (because before, we cannot buy from farmers because the trader’s price is, let’s say P25, we are locked from P19 to) P23,” he said. He said the NFA rice stocks may further increase with the “flexible” buying scheme in place.

“Dadami pa iyong stocks natin (Our stocks will increase further) towards the end of February and onwards kasi magha-harvest na iyong sa (because there will be harvest in) February, March, April, hanggang Mayo (until May),” Lacson said.

To date, he said the NFA has started palay procurement in Negros Occidental and Misamis Oriental at around P23/kg to P24/kg range under the flexible procurement scheme.

In terms of aging stocks, Lacson said the NFA has around 80,000 MT to be released.

At the same time, the Department of Agriculture aims to release 150,000 MT of NFA rice stocks to local government units, government agencies, and government-owned and controlled corporations for the next six months under the food security emergency declaration to help free NFA warehouse spaces and give way for palay procurement during the harvest season.

The recorded overall rice stocks, meanwhile, also rose to 2.16 million MT in January, which is 6.4 percent higher from 2.03 million MT for the same period in 2024, based on the PSA data.

Besides increment in NFA stocks, rice inventory from households also incurred a 5.4 percent annual increase equivalent to 1.1 million MT, higher than last year's 1 million.

The commercial sector, however, logged a 16.5 percent annual decrease, equivalent to 816,510 MT, lower than January 2024's 978,000 MT.

For corn, the PSA reported a 45 percent annual decrease in inventory at 328,400 MT in January, down from 597,620 MT for the same period last year.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2033586/nfa-rice-stock-up-485-in-jan-to-further-surge-in-feb>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Kadiwa rice prices cut by P2-P3

February 11, 2025 | 8:26 pm



PHILIPPINE STAR/NOEL B. PABALATE

RICE PRICES at government-subsidized food markets will drop by as much as P3 starting on Wednesday, according to the Department of Agriculture (DA).

The DA said it will decrease the price of Rice for All (RFA) goods in Kadiwa markets — which are farm-to-market stores supported by the government — P2 to P3, in line with declining global rice prices and the upcoming peak of the rice harvest season.

Starting Feb. 12, the price of RFA5 — rice with no more than 5% broken-grain content — will be reduced to P43 per kilo from P45 per kilo, the DA said in a statement.

RFA25 will be priced at P35/kg, down from P38 and RFA100 — white rice consisting of 100% broken grains — will sell for P33/kg, down from P36, it added.

“The KADIWA ng Pangulo program will continue to provide rice at P29 per kilo for vulnerable groups such as senior citizens, persons with disabilities, solo parents, and indigent individuals,” the DA said.

As of Monday, imported premium rice sold for P48 to P58/kg in Metro Manila markets, according to DA price monitors.

It said imported well-milled rice sold for P44 to P45/kg while imported regular-milled rice fetched P38 to P46/kg. Domestically grown premium rice sold for P46 to P58/kg, with well-milled at P42 to P52/kg. The range for domestic regular-milled rice was P38 to P45/kg.

The DA said the National Food Authority (NFA) “has sufficient funding to support farmers and uphold its mandated rice buffer stock, now equivalent to 15 days of national consumption under the revised Rice Tariffication Law.”

The DA said starting Feb. 15, the maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) for imported rice will be lowered to P52 per kilo from P55, and reduced further to P49 by March 1, to “mitigate potential market disruptions.”

The DA has declared a national emergency for rice, citing an “extraordinary” spike in the prices of the staple grain despite lower import tariffs.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu-Laurel, Jr. said on Monday that the DA is set to release NFA rice onto the market by next week, with over 50 local government units expressing interest in purchasing the low-cost rice stocks.

Under Republic Act No. 12708 or the Agricultural Tariffication Act, the Secretary of Agriculture can declare a food security emergency in case of supply shortages or extraordinary price spikes.

The DA added that economic managers will soon review Executive Order No. 62 to assess whether rice tariffs need to be adjusted.

It said Mr. Laurel is “only inclined to recommend a revision of the current tariff level if retail prices of imported rice ease to the P42-P45 per kilo range.”

The DA said it is also eyeing an MSRP on pork to address an excessive gap between farmgate and retail prices, describing retail pork prices of P400 per kilo or higher as “unreasonable.”

A decision regarding the possible MSRP for pork is expected by the end of February, “with the aim of curbing profiteering,” the DA said.

“We are conducting a thorough analysis of the pork value chain,” Mr. Laurel said. “If evidence of profiteering emerges, we will not hesitate to institute an MSRP for pork.”

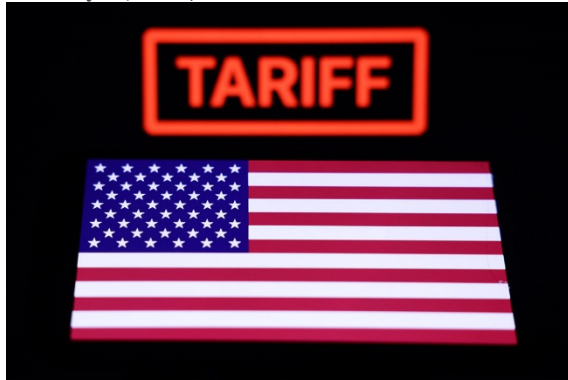
The farmgate price of hogs was at P240–P250 per kilo. — **Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2025/02/11/652665/kadiwa-rice-prices-cut-by-p2-p3/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

PHL faces risks from Trump tariff threat

February 12, 2025 | 12:34 am



A “tariff” sign is displayed on a laptop screen and an American flag displayed on a phone screen are seen in this illustration photo taken in Krakow, Poland on Feb. 1, 2025. — JAKUB PORZYCKI/NURPHOTO VIA REUTERS CONNECT

THE PHILIPPINES is among the economies in Asia that may be at risk from spillover effects of US President Donald J. Trump’s plan to impose reciprocal tariffs on trade partners, analysts said.

Nomura Global Markets report noted that emerging Asian economies have higher tariff rates on US exports, “thus at risk of higher reciprocal tariffs.”

“Over 90% of the exports of India, the Philippines, Thailand and China (destined for the US) have higher relative tariff rates and are therefore most at risk of higher reciprocal tariffs,” Nomura Global Markets Research said in a report.

Data from Nomura showed that 100% of Philippine exports to the US could be subject to higher tariffs, representing 2.6% of gross domestic product (GDP).

Mr. Trump on Monday said he would announce plans to impose reciprocal tariffs on other countries over the next two days, Reuters reported.

Mr. Trump made the statement after signing two proclamations ending all exclusions on steel and aluminum tariffs first imposed during his first term and raising duties on both metals to 25%. (*Read related story “[In latest trade war salvo, Trump raises tariffs on aluminum, steel imports](#)”.*)

Mr. Trump said he was also looking at tariffs on cars, semiconductor chips and pharmaceuticals.

Reciprocal tariffs would mean the US will impose the same tariff rate on imports from other countries as other countries impose on US exports.

Leonardo A. Lanzona, an economics professor at the Ateneo de Manila University, said “tit-for-tat” policies can “trigger disruptions in the global supply chains, thereby resulting in higher prices for all traded goods and services.”

“Since China is a major supplier of intermediate goods and consumer products for the Philippines, any disruption or increase in prices due to tariffs or retaliatory policies could lead to higher production costs for Philippine businesses,” he said in an e-mail.

“This, in turn, may contribute to inflation or force companies to look for alternative (and possibly more expensive) suppliers,” he added.

China is usually the Philippines’ biggest source of imports, while the United States is the country’s top destination for exports.

“In addition, the United States is a key market for Philippine exports. If trade tensions between the US and China slow down the US economy or lead to broader global economic uncertainty, demand in the US could weaken,” Mr. Lanzona said.

“This would negatively affect Philippine exporters, especially in sectors like electronics, garments and agricultural products,” he added.

Nomura said it is unclear whether Mr. Trump would slap higher reciprocal tariffs per sector or across the board. “If Trump takes a sectoral approach, then even countries with lower weighted average tariff rates could be subject to higher tariffs in specific sectors,” Nomura said.

“We expect Asian economies to step up their negotiations with Mr. Trump,” it added.

Nomura data showed the Philippines had a 3.3% weighted average effective tariff on US exports to the Philippines versus the 1.4% tariff rate on Philippine exports to the US.

The bulk of Philippine exports to the US are machinery and electronics, accounting for 67% of total exports.

Nomura noted that most developing Asian economies impose higher tariffs on agricultural products and transportation.

However, Philippine exports of agricultural and transport products to the US are much lower than its neighbors, accounting for 0.2% and 0.1% of gross domestic product (GDP), respectively.

Nomura noted sectors with higher relative tariff rates include plastic and rubber for the Philippines and footwear and miscellaneous manufacturing for Thailand.

It said Thailand is seen to be the “biggest loser” in Southeast Asia amid its high exposure to agriculture and transport.

“Thailand’s exports of agricultural products to the US comprise 0.8% of Thai GDP and transport products comprise another 0.5%.”

Meanwhile, Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam are seen to be in the “middle of the pack,” while the least exposed economies in the region are Singapore and South Korea.

Mr. Lanzona said the government needs to adopt strategies to cushion the economy from shocks stemming from the tariff regime, such as negotiating trade agreements, providing support for affected industries or investing in domestic production.

“More importantly, by promoting products that can be produced locally, the country may lessen its reliance on imported inputs — particularly from nations like China — thereby reducing exposure to external trade disruptions,” he said.

“Strengthening domestic production can help create more robust, locally controlled supply chains that are less susceptible to international tariff disputes or global market fluctuations.”

FX

PRESSURES

Meanwhile, ANZ Research in a separate report flagged the impact of tariff policies on currencies in Asia.

“Barring any near-term relief rally in Asia’s local markets, the risk of trade tariffs will continue to hang over Asian economies,” it said.

“Market stress is visible in increased demand for FX (foreign exchange) hedges and safe-haven assets. Asia FX will remain the vulnerable link in an environment of rising trade tension and weakening domestic growth impulse,” it added.

ANZ said currencies are the “main transmission channel to watch” as currencies in the region are vulnerable to a China-US trade war.

“The resulting risk-off tone from increased trade tension would also be supportive of safe-haven demand for the US dollar. In our view, no Asia FX markets would be meaningfully spared in a US-China trade war,” it added.

The peso closed at P57.845 against the dollar at end-2024, depreciating by P2.475 or 4.28% from its end-2023 finish of P55.37. — **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Jocson**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/top-stories/2025/02/12/652705/phl-faces-risks-from-trump-tariff-threat/>

REMATE:

Bodega ng kwestyunableng ‘Pandan Rice’ nilusob ng NBI

February 11, 2025 16:28



MANILA, Philippines – Sinalakay ng sanib puwersa ng National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) at Department of Agriculture (DA) ang isang bodega ng bigas sa Bocaue, Bulacan.

Sa report, sinalakay ng NBI katuwang ang mga tauhan ng Department of Agriculture ang malaking bodega sa Golden City nitong Martes, Pebrero 11 sa Brgy. Wakas.

Sa nasabing operasyon, tumambad sa NBI at DA ang tone-toneladang sako ng bigas na hindi pa batid ang kabuuang halaga.

Nabatid na natuklasan ng mga awtoridad na ang mga lumang imported na bigas na nasa sakong may nakasulat na 2024 ay hinahalo sa lokal na bigas at inilalagay sa bagong sako para tumaas ang presyo sa merkado.

Natuklasan din na nilalagyan pa ng pabango ang pinaghalo-halong imported na lumang bigas sa lokal na bigas para mag-amoy bago at pandan na umano’y kalat na sa pamilihan.

Ang rehistradong nagmamay-ari ng bodega ng Rice Milling at Rice Retailing sa Golden City, Taal, Bocaue, Bulacan ay si Elizabeth Pineda base sa nakuha ng NBI at DA na sanitary permit at certification of annual inspection na inisyu ng munisipalidad ng Bocaue.

Ayon sa report, isang manager, dalawang cashier at inventory officer ng naturang bodega ang hawak na ng NBI. *Jocelyn Tabangcura-Domenden*

<https://remate.ph/bodega-ng-kwestyunableng-pandan-rice-nilusob-ng-nbi/>

REMATE:

Presyo ng ‘Rice-for-All’ muling itinapyasan ng DA

February 11, 2025 14:18



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 – **MULING** tinapyasan ng Department of Agriculture (DA) ang presyo ng iba’t ibang uri ng bigas na ipinagbibili sa Rice-for-All (RFA) ng KADIWA ng Pangulo at maging ang maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) ng imported na bigas.

Sinabi ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. na simula sa Pebrero 12, araw ng Miyerkules, ang presyo ng bigas sa ilalim ng RFA ay tatapyasin, sumasalamin sa “both a drop in global rice prices and an increase in domestic supply as the local harvest season gets underway.”

Winika ni Tiu Laurel na ang RFA prices ay maaaring bumaba ng P3 kada kilo.

Dahil dito, mula sa nasabing petsa, Pebrero 12, ang RFA5 rice ay magiging P43 kada kilo, RFA25 ay P35, at RFA100 ay P33. Sa kasalukuyan, ang RFA5—sumasaklaw sa mga bigas na may hindi hihigit sa 5% broken grains—mabibili sa halagang P45 per kilo, RFA25 (25% broken) ay P38 isang kilo, at RFA100 (100% broken) sa halagang P36 kada kilo.

Sinabi ni Tiu Laurel na magpapatuloy ang KADIWA ng Pangulo program na magbigay ng bigas sa halagang P29 per kilo para sa mga vulnerable groups gaya ng senior citizens, persons with disabilities, solo parents, at indibiduwal mula sa indigent sectors.

Muli namang tiniyak ni Tiu Laurel sa mga lokal na magsasaka na ang National Food Authority (NFA) ay bibili ng palay mula sa local farms sa presyong P21–P23 per kilo, pagtiyak na patas ng kompensasyon para sa kanilang ani.

Sinabi nito na ang NFA ay may sapat na pondo para suportahan ang mga magsasaka at panindigan ang mandato nitong rice buffer stock, ngayon ay katumbas ng 15 araw ng ‘national consumption’ sa ilalim ng binagong Rice Tariffication Law.

At upang mas maging matatag ang rice market, sinabi ni Tiu Laurel na ang MSRP para sa imported na bigas at ang saklaw nito na pianalawak sa buong bansa.

Sa kabilang dako, simula sa Pebrero 15, ang MSRP ay ibababa sa P52 per kilo mula sa P55 kada kilo, at mas mababawasan pa hanggang sa maging P49 sa Marso 1.

“This gradual approach aims to mitigate potential market disruptions,” ani Tiu Laurel.

“The price reductions align with global trends in the rice market, as well as President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s decision in July to slash rice tariffs from 35% to 15%,” ang winika nito.

Idinagdag pa ni Tiu Laurel na rerepasuhin ng mga economic managers ni Pangulong Marcos sa lalong madaling panahon ang Executive Order 62 para i-assess kung ang taripa sa bigas ay kailangan na i-adjust.

Aniya, mapipilitan lamang siyang irekumenda ang rebisyon ng kasalukuyang tariff level kung ang retail prices ng mga imported na bigas ay guminhawa sa P42-P45 kada kilo range.

Maliban sa bigas, sinabi ni Tiu Laurel na tinitingnan din ng DA ang pagpapatupad ng MSRP sa karne ng baboy upang tugunan ang ‘excessive gap’ sa pagitan ng farm-gate at retail prices. Inilarawan niya ang retail pork prices na P400 per kilo o mas mataas bilang “unreasonable.”

Aniya, ang desisyon kaugnay sa posibleng pagpapataw ng MSRP para sa karne ng baboy sa pagtatapos ng Pebrero at may layunin na sugpuin ang panghuhuhot.

“We are conducting a thorough analysis of the pork value chain,” ang sinabi ni Tiu Laurel sabay sabing “If evidence of profiteering emerges, we will not hesitate to institute an MSRP for pork.”

Sa ngayon, ang farm-gate price ng mga baboy ay nananatuli sa P240–P250 kada kilogram. *Kris Jose*

<https://remate.ph/presyo-ng-rice-for-all-muling-itinapyasan-ng-da/>

REMATE:

Pag-aaral sa pork MSRP, tatapusin ngayong buwan – DA

February 11, 2025 09:49



MANILA, Philippines – INAASAHAN na makokompleto na bago pa matapos ang buwang kasalukuyan ang pag-aaral hinggil sa pagpapatupad ng maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) para sa karne ng baboy. “Two weeks from now, probably, or by the end of February should be enough time,” ang sinabi ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. sa press briefing sa Malakanyang.

Tinalakay din aniya niya ang usaping ito sa pakikipagpulong niya kay Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos Jr., umaga ng araw ng Lunes, Pebrero 10.

”Among other products ay nagpa-review siya sa—nag-present kami sa kaniya ng situation sa food, ano, and iyong pork nga was... at itlog medyo na-mention, at he took particular interest in,” ang sinabi ni Tiu Laurel.

Winika pa rin niya na iniimbestigahan na ng gobyerno ang profiteering o overcharge sa mataas na presyo ng karne ng baboy.

Samantala, pinag-aaralan na rin ng Department of Agriculture (DA) ang potensyal na MSRP levels, habang ang presyo ng karne ng baboy ay nananatiling mataas, P480 per kilogram para sa liempo at P420 para sa pigue.

Sa kabila ng tumaas na presyo, tiniyak naman ng departamento sa publiko na sapat ang suplay ng karne ng baboy sa bansa. *Kris Jose*

<https://remate.ph/pag-aaral-sa-pork-msrp-tatapusin-ngayong-buwan-da/>

ABANTE:

Bigas sa Kadiwa tinapyasan ng P3 per kilo

Abante News

- **February 11, 2025**



Inanunsiyo ng Department of Agriculture (DA) nitong Martes na ang presyo ng Rice for All (RFA) sa Kadiwa ng Pangulo (KNP) ay babawasan ng P2 hanggang P3 bawat kilo.

Ang hakbang ng DA ay bunga ng patuloy na pagbaba sa presyo ng bigas sa pandaigdigang pamilihan at sa pagdating ng anihan ng palay.

“Starting tomorrow (February 12), RFA5 rice will be priced at P43 per kilogram (/kg), RFA25 at P35/kg, and RFA100 at P33/kg,” saad ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. sa isang statement.

Ang RFA5 o 5% broken rice ay kasalukuyang binebenta ngayon sa P45/kg; habang ang RFA25 o 25% broken rice ay P38/kg; at P36/kg naman sa RFA100 o Sulit rice, na 100% broken pero maputi.

Itutuloy naman ng National Food Authority (NFA), ang kanilang P29 program o pagbebenta ng P29 per kilo ng nalulumang bigas pero nasa mabuting kalidad pa rin sa mga KNP Center para sa mga vulnerable sector kabilang ang mga miyembro ng Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program, senior citizens, persons with disabilities at solo parents. Ang RFA options naman, ay mas magi-ging mababa ang presyo kaysa sa na-monitor na retail price sa Metro Manila noong Lunes, tulad ng imported premium rice na nagkakahalag ang P48 hanggang P58/kg; imported well-milled rice, P44 hanggang P45/kg at imported regular-milled rice na nasa P38 hanggang P46/kg, ayon sa DA Bantay Presyo (price watch).

Ang local premium rice, naman ay naglalaro sa P46 hanggang P58/kg; local well-milled sa P42 hanggang P52/kg; at P38 hanggang P45/kg sa local regular milled rice. (PNA)

<https://www.abante.com.ph/2025/02/11/bbm-nagpasalamat-sa-hari-ng-cambodia/>

MANILA STANDARD:

DA lowers prices of KADIWA rice by up to P3/kilo



INEXPENSIVE RICE. Workers arrange sacks of rice sold at P29 per kilo along with cheaper fish and vegetables in support of local farmers and shoppers at the Kadiwa Store inside the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) in Malate, Manila.

Norman Cruz

By Othel V. Campos

February 12, 2025, 12:40 am

The Department of Agriculture (DA) announced it would further reduce by as much as P3 per kilo the retail prices of rice sold under the KADIWA ng Pangulo’s Rice-for-All (RFA) program.

In a statement on Wednesday, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, Jr. said the price reduction “reflects both a drop in global rice prices and an increase in domestic supply as the local harvest season gets underway.”

- Advertisement -

The DA chief said henceforth, RFA5 rice will be priced at P43 per kilo, RFA25 at P35, and RFA100 at P33.

At present, RFA5—comprising rice with no more than 5% broken grains—is sold at P45 per kilo, while RFA25 is sold at P38 a kilo, and RFA100 retails for P36 per kilo.

Meanwhile, the Agriculture Secretary assured that the KADIWA ng Pangulo program will continue to provide rice at P29 per kilo for vulnerable groups such as senior citizens, persons with disabilities, solo parents, and individuals from indigent sectors.

Additionally, Tiu Laurel said that the National Food Authority (NFA) will continue to procure palay from local farms at a price of P21–P23 per kilo despite the decline of rice prices in the international market.

He explained that the government is willing to pay farmers the premium to ensure “fair compensation for their harvests.”

Tiu Laurel also assured that the NFA has sufficient funding to support farmers and uphold its mandated rice buffer stock, now equivalent to 15 days of national consumption under the revised Rice Tariffication Law.

Furthermore, the DA chief said the maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) of imported rice will be lowered to P52 per kilo from P55 a kilo and reduced further to P49 by March 1.

This gradual approach aims to mitigate potential market disruptions, he explained.

“The price reductions align with global trends in the rice market, as well as President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s decision in July to slash rice tariffs from 35 percent to 15 percent,” he noted.

Tiu Laurel also disclosed that economic managers of the Marcos administration will soon review Executive Order 62 to assess whether current rice tariff rates need to be adjusted again.

He said, however, that he is only inclined to recommend a revision of the current tariff level if retail prices of imported rice ease to the P42-P45 per kilo range.

On Monday, Tiu Laurel the impending arrival of fresh rice imports will further ease supply pressures, paving the way for a reduction in domestic retail prices.

“Hopefully, they have already purchased new stocks from Vietnam, Myanmar, or Cambodia at lower prices... That’s why the MSRP by March 1 is P49,” Tiu Laurel said during a briefing in Malacañang.

<https://manilastandard.net/news/314556760/da-lowers-prices-of-kadiwa-rice-by-up-to-p3-kilo.html>

MANILA STANDARD:

Onions can make people cry



By **Norman Cruz**

February 11, 2025, 10:50 pm

Isn't it amazing that these workers with tons of onions around them do not shed even a teardrop?

<https://manilastandard.net/gallery/314556650/onions-can-make-people-cry.html>

THE MANILA TIMES:

Scholarship for agri students launched

By Moises Cruz

February 12, 2025

THE Northern Samar provincial government aims to implement a new policy that would provide full scholarships to deserving students studying agriculture-related courses.

Northern Samar Gov. Edwin Ongchuan has ordered the Provincial Agriculture Office (PAO), in partnership with other government agencies, to launch campaigns that would encourage more Nortehanons to pursue farming and agri-entrepreneurship courses.

This action comes amid further concerns about the province's decreasing number of students pursuing agriculture-related careers, as well as its aging farmer population.

PAO chief Jose Luis Acompañado said that the agriculture scholarship program would begin with 10 slots this school year and will gradually increase to 30 scholars in years to come.

The provincial government plans to provide P3 million for the scholarship program, with recipients receiving more than P30,000 every semester to cover tuition, other school expenses, stipends, book and uniform allowances.

Those who get selected as scholars under the program would attend the University of Eastern Philippines (UEP), the province's only government-run institution, situated in Catarman.

"There are only 2,939 students from the province who are currently enrolled in agriculture-related courses which include veterinary medicine and fisheries at UEP," Acompañado said.

This program supports Northern Samar's ongoing efforts to ensure food security, promote sustainable farming, and alleviate the shortage of agricultural workers.

"We hope that this scholarship program will encourage our youths to take agriculture-related courses and eventually help meet our food sufficiency," Acompañado said.

"At present, there are more than 32,300 registered farmers across the province, many of them are aging," he added.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/02/12/regions/scholarship-for-agri-students-launched/2053897>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Cambodia ready to export more rice to PHL

Samuel P. Medenilla

February 12, 2025

AS the country grapples with food supply issues, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet has assured President Ferdinand Marcos that Phnom Penh is ready to export more rice and other goods to Manila to ensure the latter's food security.

The Cambodian state leader made the remark during his joint press conference with Marcos in Malacañang on Tuesday after the signing of eight Philippines-Cambodia Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on: taxes, information and communication technology (ICT), competition law, technical vocational education, trafficking of cultural properties, investment promotion, tourism, and agriculture.

“We are identifying new opportunities to boost trade and investment flows in agriculture. Cambodia stands ready to contribute to the Philippine food security through rice supply as well as many other food products,” Manet said at the event.

Important partner

Marcos said he considers Cambodia as an “important partner” in ensuring the country's food security especially after the signing of the MOU on Agricultural and Agribusiness Cooperation.

“I am pleased that we have come to an agreement to pursue stronger collaboration in agriculture and in agribusiness,” Marcos said.

“Accordingly, I expressed my hope for both Filipinos and Cambodians in the agricultural sector to actively participate in various programs under this agreement,” he added.

In 2023, the Philippines imported 2,500 tons of rice from Cambodia. It is the first time the former imported a significant quantity of rice from the latter since the signing of the Rice Tariffication Law in 2019.

During the 50th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean)-Australia Special Summit last year, President Marcos said they are considering signing a rice supply agreement with Phnom Penh.

Despite being a rice-producing country, the Philippines continues to import rice to meet domestic demand.

In January, the Bureau of Plant Industry projected the country will import 4.8 million metric tons (MT) of rice this year.

More trade, people exchanges

Aside from agriculture, Marcos said business exchanges between Manila and Phnom Penh also extend to trade and tourism.

At a business forum on Monday, local businesses met with their Cambodian counterparts to discuss possible collaborations.

To help facilitate such partnerships, the Board of Investments and the Council for the Development of Cambodia on Investment Promotions signed a Memorandum of Intent (MOI).

“I am confident that through this engagement, we will see more Filipinos investing in Cambodia, and more Cambodians investing in the Philippines,” Marcos said.

In anticipation of their increased trade, the Philippines and Cambodia signed MOUs on the Elimination of Double Taxation on Income and the Prevention of Tax Evasion as well as on Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Government Digital Transformation.

When it comes to people-to-people exchange, both countries signed MOUs on Technical Vocational Education and Training and Tourism Cooperation.

Hun Manet said he hopes Marcos can persuade Philippine carriers to open more routes to Cambodia to increase the travel of workers and tourists between the two countries.

“Tourism and connectivity are crucial for promoting people-to-people exchange,” the Cambodian leader said.

Regional security

Marcos said he is also looking forward to a stronger cooperation with Cambodia against crime as well as military capacity-building following his bilateral talks with Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet during the latter’s state visit to the country this week.

“We also comprehensively discussed our determined efforts to combat transnational crimes and protect our communities from unscrupulous individuals who take advantage of the industrious nature and strong sense of family of our peoples,” Marcos said.

The chief executive issued the statement after thanking Cambodian King Norodom Sihamoni for granting Royal Pardon to 13 Filipinas arrested last year for engaging in surrogacy in Cambodia, where the practice is illegal.

The 13 Filipinas were repatriated in December shortly after they were given the Royal Pardon.

Marcos said the Philippines will support Cambodia in fighting such transnational crimes. Both countries already signed an MOU for the Prevention of Looting and Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property in line with the said commitment.

“Rest assured we will continue to stand with you in the fight against transnational crimes and their adverse effects on our peoples and on our communities,” Marcos said.

He said the partnership between the Philippines and Cambodia militaries and uniformed services will also translate to better “regional peace and security.”

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/12/cambodia-ready-to-export-more-rice-to-phl/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

DA slashes rice prices

Ada Pelonia

February 11, 2025

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) cut rice prices sold under its Rice-for-All program starting Wednesday.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said prices under its Rice-for-All program would be lowered by as much as P3 per kilo, with varying costs depending on the variety of the broken grain.

The 5 percent broken rice variety will be priced at P43 per kilo from the current P45 per kilo; 25 percent at P35 per kilo from P38 per kilo; and 100 percent at P33 per kilo from P36 per kilo.

The DA said this price reduction reflects a drop in global prices of the staple grain and an increase in domestic supply amid the local harvest season.

Laurel also noted that the maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) for imported rice will be lowered to P52 per kilo from the present P55 per kilo starting February 15 as part of efforts to further stabilize the rice market.

He added that the MSRP's coverage will also be expanded nationwide from the current Metro Manila reach on the same day while it will be further reduced to P49 per kilo by March 1.

"This gradual approach aims to mitigate potential market disruptions," he said.

The agency noted the price reductions align with global trends in the rice market and the President's decision to slash rice tariffs to 15 percent from 35 percent under the Executive Order (EO) 62.

Despite the easing of rice prices in the world market, Laurel assured farmers that the National Food Authority (NFA) would procure palay from local farmers at a price range of P21 to P23 per kilo to ensure fair compensation for their harvests.

He also noted that the grains agency has sufficient funding to support farmers and uphold its mandate, which should now maintain a buffer stock enough to cover 15 days of national rice consumption from the previous nine-day requirement as stipulated under the amended Rice Tariffication Law (RTL).

Meanwhile, Laurel noted that President Marcos' economic managers will soon review the EO 62 to assess whether rice tariff needs to be adjusted.

He said, however, that he is only inclined to recommend a revision of the current tariff level if retail prices of imported rice ease to the P42 to P45 per kilo range.

Aside from rice, Laurel also said that the DA is looking at implementing an MSRP on pork to curb alleged profiteering, with a prospective decision by end-February.

He noted the "excessive gap" between farmgate and retail prices, adding that a retail price of P400 per kilo or higher is "unreasonable" as current farmgate price stood at P240 to P250 per kilo.

"We are conducting a thorough analysis of the pork value chain. If evidence of profiteering emerges, we will not hesitate to institute an MSRP for pork."

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/11/da-slashes-rice-prices/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Organic alternatives viable amid rising chemical fertilizer costs in PH, but policy reform is crucial

BusinessMirror
February 10, 2025

DECEMBER 2024

DISCUSSION PAPER SERIES NO. 2024-30

Prospects for Widespread Adoption of Organic-Based Fertilizers in the Philippines: A Rapid Appraisal

*Roehlano M. Briones, Helena Luz C. Pastolero,
and Ivory Myka R. Galang*



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Sustainability concerns and the rising cost of chemical fertilizers in the Philippines are sparking renewed interest in organic farming methods with farmers and experts seeking viable alternatives.

Organic-based fertilizers offer significant long-term benefits for soil health and crop productivity, but full or scaled replacement of chemical fertilizers is hindered by technical, cost and supply considerations.

A recent study by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS), titled “Prospects for Widespread Adoption of Organic-Based Fertilizers in the Philippines: A Rapid Appraisal” explores these challenges surrounding fertilizer use and its impact on Philippine agriculture. Authored by PIDS Research Fellow Dr. Roehlano Briones, former Supervising Research Specialist Ivory Myka Galang, and Project Technical Assistant Helena Luz Pastolero, the study raises critical concerns about balancing sustainability, food security, and supply constraints in light of the country’s ongoing fertilizer crisis.

The cost of urea fertilizer, the most commonly used chemical fertilizer, surged to nearly PHP 3,000 per sack in May 2022—almost triple its price from January 2021. This drastic increase in cost has led to a renewed interest in organic alternatives. However, in response, the Department of Agriculture rolled out large fertilizer subsidies, which primarily focus on inorganic fertilizers. Although prices have since dropped to PHP 1,500 to 1,600 per sack, the subsidy program remains in place, with PHP 9.6 billion allocated for rice production subsidies alone in 2024.

Despite the known environmental consequences of excessive inorganic fertilizer use—such as soil degradation and water eutrophication—many farmers continue to rely heavily on them due to the perceived benefits in crop yields. “Farmers perceive that high utilization of inorganic fertilizers can result in high crop yields, which motivates many of them to utilize inorganic fertilizers intensively,” the authors noted. However, the authors also pointed out that the prolonged use of these fertilizers can lead to “nutrient mining,” where essential soil nutrients are not replenished.

Although there is growing awareness of the disadvantages of inorganic fertilizers, transitioning to organic fertilizers presents its own set of challenges. Organic methods, while more sustainable, often require higher initial investment and are not always readily available in some regions. Small-scale farmers, particularly those in rural areas, face additional barriers, such as limited access to markets and resources for sourcing organic fertilizers. “There is considerable supply potential, although a limiting factor is availability of raw materials, namely animal and plant waste, and the cost of collecting these materials,” the authors emphasized.

Nevertheless, the study identifies growing potential for organic-based fertilizers, especially in vegetable farming. “There are favorable prospects for expanding organic-based fertilizer utilization among farmers in the Philippines, as long as difficulties in obtaining adequate raw materials, as well as in marketing of organic-based fertilizers, can be overcome,” the authors suggested.

To address the fertilizer crisis, the study recommends a gradual shift in government policy, including strengthening the National Organic Agriculture Program (NOAP), a government initiative that promotes organic farming and sustainable agricultural practices. One key

recommendation is to expand the use of Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS), an affordable, community-based certification system for organic products. The study also suggests a coordinated effort to promote organic labeling for packaged goods, encouraging retailers to adopt these labels.

Furthermore, the study advocates for a phased repurposing of fertilizer subsidies, gradually redirecting funds from inorganic fertilizers to organic fertilizers and biofertilizers. “Subsidies for organic-based fertilizers should encourage widespread adoption of Balanced Fertilization Strategies (or, in some cases, full organic farming),” the authors stated, with the goal of phasing out the subsidies once farmers have sustainably adopted new practices.

The study also stresses the importance of investing in research and development, particularly in soil mapping and extension services for farmers. It recommends establishing a value chain program to develop the biofertilizer and organic fertilizer industries, which is vital for long-term agricultural sustainability.

Read full study at <https://bit.ly/pidsdp2024-30>.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/10/organic-alternatives-viable-amid-rising-chemical-fertilizer-costs-in-ph-but-policy-reform-is-crucial/>

PILIPINO STAR NGAYON:

Tapyas presyo sa Rice-for-All ng Kadiwa, MSRP ng imported rice ipatutupad

[Ludy Bermudo](#)

February 12, 2025 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Simula ngayong araw, Pebrero 12, ipatutupad ang tapyas presyo sa mga bigas na ibinebenta sa ilalim ng KADIWA Rice-for-All ng Pangulong Bongbong Marcos at pagbaba rin ng maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) ng imported rice.

Asahan na ang nasa P3.00 pagbaba sa presyo ng bawat kilo ng RFA5 na may broken grains sa P43.00 , RFA525 na may 25% broken grains sa P35.00, at RFA100 na 100 broken grains sa P33.00.

Aniya, magpapatuloy naman ang KADIWA ng Pangulo sa pagbebenta sa halagang P29 kada kilo ng bigas para sa mga senior citizen, persons with disabilities, solo parents, at mga indibidwal mula sa indigent sectors.

Tiniyak din ni Tiu Laurel sa mga lokal na magsasaka na ang National Food Authority (NFA) ay bibili ng palay mula sa mga lokal na sakahan sa presyong P21–P23 kada kilo. Simula Pebrero 15, ibababa ang MSRP sa P52 kada kilo mula P55 kada kilo, at ibababa pa sa P49 sa Marso 1.

Bukod sa bigas, sinabi ni Tiu Laurel na hinahanap din ng DA ang pagpapatupad ng MSRP sa baboy upang matugunan ang labis na agwat sa pagitan ng farm-gate at retail prices.

Aniya, ang desisyon hinggil sa posibleng pagpataw ng MSRP para sa baboy ay inaasahan sa katapusan ng Pebrero, na may layuning pigilan ang profiteering.

Sa kasalukuyan, ang farm-gate price ng baboy ay nasa P240–P250 kada kilo.

<https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/metro/2025/02/12/2421005/tapyas-presyo-sa-rice-all-ng-kadiwa-msrp-ng-imported-rice-ipatutupad>

PILIPINO STAR NGAYON:

Bodega sa Bulacan, sinakalay ng NBI at DA

[Ludy Bermudo](#), [Omar Padilla](#)

February 12, 2025 | 12:00am

Luma at bagong bigas, pinaghahalo

MANILA, Philippines — Sinalakay ng mga tauhan ng National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) at Department of Agriculture (DA) ang bodega ng bigas sa Bocaue, Bulacan matapos na mabuking na pinaghahalo ang luma at bagong saka nire-repack.

Ayon kay NBI Director Jaime Santiago nakatanggap sila ng impormasyon na nagsasagawa ng pagre-repack ang mga tauhan ng bodega ng mga pinaghalong luma at bagong bigas.

Nadatnan ng mga awtoridad ang libu-libong mga pinaghalong bigas, mga sako na ibinebenta sa mas mataas na halaga.

“Pagbukas mo ng bigas, iba’t-ibang variety ‘yon, lalagyan ng pabango. Pagbukas mo ang bango, maputi ‘yung rice, then papass-on nila ng mas mahal na presyo,” ani Santiago.

Isasailalim naman ng DA sa evaluation ang halaga ng mga bigas.

Napag-alaman kay Santiago na sinumulan nila ang pagmomonitor sa bodega noong Disyembre 2024 matapos na magkaroon ng pagtaas sa presyo ng bigas.

Nadiskubre na ang nasabing bodega ay isa sa mga nagho-ward ng bigas.

Ang mga naarestong manager, dalawang cashier at isang inventory officer gayundin ang mga may-ari ng warehouse ay kakasuhan ng paglabag sa Republic Act No.12022 para sa Economic Sabotage, profiteering, hoarding, and fraudulent labelling.

<https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/metro/2025/02/12/2421004/bodega-sa-bulacan-sinakalay-ng-nbi-da>