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**MANILA BULLETIN:**

# Mayor Belmonte leads price monitoring at QC market

BY [ALLYSA NIEVERA](#)

Feb 12, 2025 01:47 PM

Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte, together with Department of Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel and Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Secretary Ma. Cristina Roque, led a monitoring of prices of basic commodities, particularly rice, that are being sold at the Commonwealth market on Wednesday, Feb. 12.



Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte together with Department of Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, and Department of Trade and Industry Secretary Ma. Cristina Roque inspect prices of rice at the Commonwealth Market in Quezon City on Wednesday, Feb. 12. (Santi San Juan)

The joint market inspection aims to safeguard consumer welfare, ensure fair prices, promote transparent business practices, and maintain a stable market environment.

The officials inspected the prices of rice, vegetables, and poultry products to make sure that they are compliant with the Maximum Suggested Retail Price (MSRP).

During the inspection trip, Belmonte also discussed with the market vendors their concerns.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/2/12/mayor-belmonte-leads-price-monitoring-at-qc-market>

**MANILA BULLETIN:**

# Philippines bans German animal goods amid foot-and-mouth cases

BY [DEXTER BARRO II](#)

Feb 12, 2025 12:43 PM

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## AT A GLANCE

- The Department of Agriculture (DA) issued a temporary ban on the importation of animal commodities from Germany following a recent outbreak of the highly contagious foot-and-mouth disease (FMD).
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The Department of Agriculture (DA) has issued a temporary ban on the importation of animal commodities from Germany following a recent outbreak of the highly contagious foot-and-mouth disease (FMD).

Under the DA's Memorandum Order (MO) No. 8, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel emphasized the urgent need in preventing the entry of the FMD virus to protect the health of the country's cloven-hoofed livestock population.

The order came after Germany notified the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) of confirmed FMD cases on a water buffalo farm in the state of Brandenburg.

In a Feb. 5 report by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), it is not yet confirmed whether this is an isolated case or if other herds have already been infected.

FMD is a highly contagious viral disease that primarily affects livestock such as cattle, pigs, sheep, goats, and buffaloes. It poses a high mortality rate, particularly among young animals.

Laurel said the import ban will be in effect until Germany regains its FMD-free status issued by the WOAH. The DA chief also ordered a suspension on processing and issuance of sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) import clearances for Germany's animal products.

Under MO 8, certain products are exempt from the ban, such as ultra-high temperature milk and derivatives, heat-treated meat products in hermetically sealed containers, protein meal and gelatin, and in vivo-derived bovine embryos.

These also includes limed hides, pickled pelts, and semi-processed leather, which is still subject to the Philippines' import terms and conditions.

The entry of products that are already in transit, loaded, or arrived at local ports may be allowed, provided that they were slaughtered or produced before Dec. 26, 2024, and tested negative for FMD virus.

Based on DA data, the Philippines imported 3,177.5 metric tons (MT) of beef from Germany. This accounts for approximately 0.5 percent of the country's total beef imports.

The import ban on Germany's animal goods closely followed an earlier ban on poultry products from two new US states, namely Maryland and Missouri.

The prohibition of American poultry products stemmed from the rapid spread of H5N1 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in the US.

The DA earlier imposed a ban on imports coming from South Dakota.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/2/12/philippines-bans-german-animal-goods-amid-foot-and-mouth-cases>

**MANILA BULLETIN:**

# White House fires USAID inspector general after warning about funding oversight, officials say

BY ASSOCIATED PRESS

Feb 12, 2025 10:34 AM



Flowers and a sign are placed outside the headquarters of the U.S. Agency for International Development, or USAID, Friday, Feb. 7, 2025, in Washington. (AP Photo/Jose Luis Magana)

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House fired the inspector general for the U.S. Agency for International Development on Tuesday, U.S. officials said, a day after his office warned that the Trump administration's dismantling of USAID had made it [all but impossible to monitor \\$8.2 billion](#) in unspent humanitarian funds. The White House gave no reason for the firing of Inspector General Paul Martin, one of the officials said. The officials were familiar with the dismissal but not authorized to comment publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Inspectors general are typically independently funded watchdogs attached to government agencies and tasked with rooting out waste, fraud and abuse. The Trump administration earlier purged [more than a dozen inspectors general](#).

On Monday, Martin's office issued a flash report warning that the Trump administration's [freeze on all foreign assistance](#) and [moves to cut USAID staff](#) had left oversight of the humanitarian aid "largely nonoperational."

That includes the agency's ability to ensure none of the funding falls into the hands of violent extremist groups or goes astray in conflict zones, the watchdog said.

The dismissal, which was first reported by CNN, is the latest action by the Trump administration affecting the aid agency, including efforts to pull all but a fraction of its staffers worldwide off the job. Trump and ally [Elon Musk](#) say its work is out of line with the president's agenda.

## *American businesses partnering with USAID sue*

A lawsuit filed Tuesday alleged that the unraveling of USAID is stifling American businesses on hundreds of millions of dollars in unpaid bills for work that has already been done.

The administration's abrupt foreign aid freeze also is [forcing mass layoffs by U.S. suppliers](#) and contractors for USAID, including 750 furloughs at one company, Washington-based Chemonics International, the lawsuit says.

"One cannot overstate the impact of that unlawful course of conduct: on businesses large and small forced to shut down their programs and let employees go; on [hungry children across the globe](#) who will go without;

on populations around the world facing deadly disease; and on our constitutional order,” the U.S. businesses and organizations said.

An organization representing 170 small U.S. businesses, major suppliers, the American Jewish group HIAS that aids displaced people abroad, the American Bar Association and others joined the legal challenge.

It was filed in U.S. District Court in Washington against President [Donald Trump](#), Secretary of State [Marco Rubio](#), acting USAID Deputy Administrator Peter Marocco, a Trump appointee who has been a central figure in [hollowing out the agency](#), and Russell Vought, Trump’s head of the Office of Management and Budget.

It is at least the third lawsuit over the administration's targeting of USAID and its programs worldwide. A lawsuit brought by federal employees associations has temporarily blocked the administration from pulling thousands of USAID staffers off the job.

The funding freeze and other measures have persisted, including the agency losing the lease on its Washington headquarters.

The new administration terminated contracts without the required 30-day notice and without back payments for work that was already done, according to a U.S. official, a businessperson with a USAID contract and an email seen by The Associated Press. They spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisal by the Trump administration.

For Chemonics, one of the larger of the USAID partners, the funding freeze has meant \$103 million in unpaid invoices and almost \$500 million in USAID-ordered medication, food and other goods stalled in the supply chain or ports, the lawsuit says.

For the health commodities alone, not delivering them “on time could potentially lead to as many as 566,000 deaths from HIV/AIDS, malaria, and unmet reproductive health needs, including 215,000 pediatric deaths,” the lawsuit says.

The filing asserts that the administration has no authority to block programs and funding mandated by Congress without approval.

Marocco defended the funding cutoff and push to put [thousands of USAID staffers](#) on leave in an affidavit filed late Monday in the lawsuit brought by the workers’ groups.

“Insubordination” and “noncompliance” by USAID staffers made it necessary to stop funding and operations by the agency to allow the administration to carry out a program-by-program review to decide what U.S. aid programs could resume overseas, he wrote.

USAID workers deny insubordination, and call the accusation a pretext to dismantle the agency.

### ***[GOP lawmakers aim to save food aid program](#)***

Seven Republican lawmakers from farm states introduced legislation to safeguard a long-running \$1.8 billion food-aid program run by USAID, aiming to move the Food for Peace program under the Department of Agriculture.

Farmers, a politically important bloc for the Trump administration, have been affected by the administration's funding freeze as well.

Kansas Republican Sen. Jerry Moran, who announced the legislation, over the weekend thanked Rubio for interceding to allow delivery of \$560 million in U.S.-grown commodities intended for hunger programs worldwide that had been stuck in ports because of the administration's abrupt cutoff of foreign assistance spending.

**<https://mb.com.ph/2025/2/12/white-house-fires-usaid-inspector-general-after-warning-about-funding-oversight-officials-say>**

**MANILA BULLETIN:**

# 'Ideal situation': Romualdez wants fair income for farmers as NFA targets P35-kilo rice

BY [ELLSON QUISMORIO](#)

Feb 12, 2025 10:13 AM

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## AT A GLANCE

- House Speaker Martin Romualdez has underscored the need to keep farmers happy with their earnings amid the National Food Authority's (NFA) plan to sell rice price at P35 per kilo.



House Speaker Martin Romualdez (Speaker's office)

House Speaker Martin Romualdez has underscored the need to keep farmers happy with their earnings amid the National Food Authority's (NFA) plan to sell rice price at P35 per kilo.

“Ensuring that rice remains affordable is crucial for our consumers. However, we must also ensure that our farmers receive fair compensation for their hard work,” the leader of the 300-plus-strong House of Representatives said in a statement Wednesday morning, Feb. 12.

Romualdez--known as "Mr. Rice"--welcomed the NFA's initiative as this would undoubtedly benefit Filipinos.

But he said the government must also guarantee fair income for farmers in order to sustain local production of the staple grain.

“Ang ideal na sitwasyon ay mapanatili ang mataas na farm gate price na nagbibigay ng tamang kita para sa ating mga magsasaka habang sinisiguro na ang presyo ng bigas sa merkado ay abot-kaya para sa mga mamimili,” he said.

(The ideal situation is to maintain high farm gate price since this gives the correct compensation for our farmers while ensuring that the price of rice in the market remains affordable for consumers.)

Romualdez, Leyte's 1st district congressman, assured the public that Congress will monitor the implementation of this pricing strategy.

“We will closely observe how this policy unfolds and determine if additional government interventions are necessary to sustain it,” he noted.

He noted the potential role of subsidies and government support programs on the matter.

“Nakahanda ang Mababang Kapulungan na pag-aralan ang posibleng subsidiya o targeted assistance programs para matiyak na hindi malulugi ang ating mga magsasaka habang nananatiling abot-kaya ang bigas para sa publiko,” he said.

(The lower chamber is ready to study the potential subsidies or targeted assistance programs to ensure that our farmers won't be on the losing end of keeping rice affordable for the public.)

The Speaker also called for strong coordination between the DA (Department of Agriculture) and NFA with lawmakers to ensure that the policy does not negatively impact local rice farmers.

“I urge the [DA] and the [NFA] to work closely with Congress to ensure that this policy does not unintentionally discourage local rice production,” he said.

“The end goal is food security – one that benefits both farmers and consumers,” Romualdez said.

“Alam natin na hindi madali ang pagsabayin ang interes ng mga magsasaka at mamimili, ngunit ito ay mahalaga para sa ating ekonomiya at seguridad sa pagkain,” he noted.

(We know that it's not easy to simultaneously consider the interests of farmers and consumers, but this is important for our economy and food security.)

He also pointed out the need to continuously assess the policy's impact.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/2/12/romualdez-wants-fair-income-for-farmers-as-nfa-targets-p35-kilo-rice>



**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

# **BOC chief : Smuggling a ‘national security concern’**

**Ghio Ong - The Philippine Star**

**February 13, 2025 | 12:00am**

MANILA, Philippines — Smuggling is a national security concern that undermines government revenues and threatens local industries, public safety and food security, according to the Bureau of Customs.

“The BOC will (intensify) our crackdown on illicit trade to protect local industries, ensure food security and promote a level playing field for businesses,” Customs Commissioner Bienvenido Rubio said yesterday.

“By leveraging intelligence, enforcement and inter-agency collaboration, the BOC remains steadfast in its mission to secure our borders and uphold economic stability,” he noted.

The agency said it will sustain its fuel marking program, which ensured that nearly 20 billion liters of fuel – a five percent increase from the previous year – were marked.

Fuel marking has generated over P242 billion in tax revenue while curbing fuel smuggling that distorts fair market competition, the BOC said.

About P85.167 billion worth of illegally imported goods, including counterfeit products, illegal drugs, smuggled tobacco and vape goods, as well as agricultural products were seized by the BOC in 2024.

The BOC also canceled the accreditation of 56 importers and customs brokers who violated regulations. The agency filed criminal cases against 45 entities involved in smuggling.

## **Fair income for farmers**

Speaker Martin Romualdez yesterday welcomed the Department of Agriculture (DA)’s initiative to set the National Food Authority (NFA) rice price at P35 per kilo.

Fair income for farmers, however, must be guaranteed by the government to sustain local rice production, Romualdez noted.

## **P20/kilo rice out of reach**

President Marcos’ campaign promise to bring rice prices to P20 per kilo is not yet attainable despite declining global prices of the staple, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said.

“Possibly around mid-P30s,” Tiu Laurel said.

Prices under the DA’s Rice-for-All program were reduced by as much as P3 per kilo to reflect the downward trend in the global market and an increase in domestic supply.

Based on the DA’s latest monitoring of Metro Manila markets the retail price of special rice ranged between P51 and P62. It was higher compared to the prevailing retail price of P60 a week ago.

The maximum SRP of P55 per kilo on imported grains took effect on Feb. 5. – **Catherine Talavera, Brix Lelis, Jose Rodel Clapano, Bella Cariaso**

**<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2025/02/13/2421222/boc-chief-smuggling-national-security-concern>**

**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:**

# Romualdez: Cheap rice okay, but farmers should get fair income

By: [Gabriel Pabico Lalu](#) - Reporter / [@GabrielLaluINQ](#)  
[INQUIRER.net](#) / 09:01 AM February 12, 2025



LAOAG, Ilocos Norte, Philippines — While he welcomes the decision to sell National Food Authority (NFA) rice at P35 per kilogram, House of Representatives Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez reminded the government to guarantee a fair income for farmers to sustain local production.

Romualdez on Wednesday said that the Department of Agriculture (DA) initiative, setting a specific NFA rice price amid a food security emergency declaration, will help ensure that Filipinos can afford the country's staple food.

But the House leader noted that there has to be a balancing act.

“Ensuring that rice remains affordable is crucial for our consumers. However, we must also ensure that our farmers receive fair compensation for their hard work,” Romualdez said.

“Ang ideal na sitwasyon ay mapanatili ang mataas na farmgate price na nagbibigay ng tamang kita para sa ating mga magsasaka habang sinisiguro na ang presyo ng bigas sa merkado ay abot-kaya para sa mga mamimili,” he added.

(The ideal situation is to maintain the high farmgate price that gives our farmers the correct income, while ensuring that the price of rice on our markets can be afforded by consumers.)

According to Romualdez, the House will continue to monitor the implementation of the NFA rice price cap.

“We will closely observe how this policy unfolds and determine if additional government interventions are necessary to sustain it,” he noted.

“Nakahanda ang Mababang Kapulungan na pag-aralan ang posibleng subsidiya o targeted assistance programs para matiyak na hindi malulugi ang ating mga magsasaka habang nananatiling abot-kaya ang bigas para sa publiko,” he added.

(The lower House is ready to study a possible subsidy or a targeted assistance program to ensure that our farmers would not be short-changed while we strive to bring down rice prices for the public.)

The rise in food prices, particularly rice, was the main issue investigated by the House quinta committee, led by committee on ways and means chairperson and Albay 2nd District Rep. Joey Salceda. During the past hearings, lawmakers pressed the DA for solutions, particularly regarding the overdue declaration of a food security emergency.

Last January 15, the National Price Coordinating Council (NPCC) said they were looking at possible measures that would allow the DA to declare a food security emergency and eventually mitigate rising prices of basic commodities.

But when the order was still not released by January 28, Salceda and Marikina 2nd District Rep. Stella Quimbo pressed the government agencies to make the order immediately, as Filipinos struggled to cope with expensive rice varieties.

Romualdez, meanwhile, urged the DA and the NFA to coordinate with Congress to ensure that the food price cap is implemented and at the same time, does not discourage local production.

“I urge the Department of Agriculture and the National Food Authority to work closely with Congress to ensure that this policy does not unintentionally discourage local rice production,” he said.

“The end goal is food security—one that benefits both farmers and consumers. Alam natin na hindi madali ang pagsabayin ang interes ng mga magsasaka at mamimili, ngunit ito ay mahalaga para sa ating ekonomiya at seguridad sa pagkain,” he added.

(We know that it is not easy to uphold the interests of farmers and consumers side by side, but this is important for our economy and food security.)

Romualdez said the House will also continuously assess this policy’s impact.

“Patuloy nating susuriin ang epekto ng patakarang ito upang masiguro na walang sektor ang napapabayaang,” he said.

(We will continue to assess the effects of this policy to ensure that no sector will be left behind.)

“It’s essential that all parties involved communicate openly to address any issues that may arise,” he added.

“Kung kinakailangan ng mga pagbabago sa polisiya, handa kaming magbigay ng suporta upang matiyak na ang bawat Pilipino, lalo na ang mga magsasaka, ay makikinabang sa repormang ito.

(If a policy change is needed, we are ready to support that to ensure that each Filipino, especially the farmers, would also benefit from these reforms.)

<https://business.inquirer.net/506148/romualdez-cheap-rice-okay-but-fair-income-for-farmers-must-be-assured-too>

**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:**

# **DA bans foot-and-mouth disease susceptible animals from Germany**

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

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 11:34 AM February 12, 2025



Germany map. INQUIRER FILES/STOCK IMAGE

MANILA, Philippines — The Department of Agriculture (DA) has suspended the importation of animals susceptible to foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) from Germany to prevent the virus from entering the Philippines.

The DA imposed the temporary import ban by issuing Memorandum Order No. 8 after the European country reported FMD cases last month.

“There is a need to prevent the entry of the FMD virus to protect the health of the FMD- susceptible animal population,” the memo read.

The DA promulgated the memo even if the Philippines is FMD-free without vaccination, which the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) recognized in 2014.

Following the issuance of this order, the DA immediately suspended the processing, evaluation and issuance of sanitary and phytosanitary import clearance for the commodities mentioned above.

Local authorities will allow the entry of shipments from Germany that are in transit, loaded or accepted unto port before the official communication of the DA order to German authorities, provided these were

slaughtered or produced on or before Dec. 26, 2024 and tested negative for FMD upon arrival at the port of entry.

The import ban covers skeletal muscle meat, casings, tallow, hooves and horns as well as live swine, bovines, and water buffaloes (family Suidae, family Bovidae, family Cervidae), including semen.

Ultra-high temperature (UHT) milk and derivatives thereof, and heat-treated meat products in a hermetically sealed container with a F0 value of 3 or above are exempt from temporary restrictions, subject to the country's import terms and conditions.

Also excluded are protein meal, gelatine, in vivo-derived bovine embryos, limed hides, pickled pelts and semi-processed leather.

The agency issued the directive as Germany informed the WOA of cases of FMD virus in Hoppegarten, a municipality in the district Markisch-Oderland in Brandenburg in domestic buffaloes.

According to the WOA, FMD is a severe, highly contagious viral disease with a significant impact on one's economy. While the virus is rarely fatal in adult animals, it often causes high mortality in young animals due to myocarditis or, when the dam is infected by the disease, lack of milk.

Germany is among the exporters of meat to the archipelago, with exports totaling 3.15 million kg as of November last year, all beef, data from the Bureau of Animal Industry showed.

<https://business.inquirer.net/506179/da-bans-foot-and-mouth-disease-susceptible-animals-from-germany>

**BUSINESS WORLD:**

# Pork MSRP could be imposed in March

February 12, 2025 | 9:09 pm



PHILIPPINE STAR/ RYAN BALDEMOR

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said on Wednesday that it may set a maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) for pork in March, pending results of a market study.

Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, Jr. said the DA was due to evaluate the initial findings of an ongoing study of pork prices within the day.

“The earliest (date to impose a price cap) will be in March,” Mr. Laurel said on the sidelines of price monitoring inspection at Commonwealth Market in Quezon City.

He said the DA wants to set a price that is “fair” for all members of the hog industry.

Fresh *liempo* (pork belly) currently sells for between P380 and P480 per kilo while *kasim* (shoulder) averages P350 to P420, according to DA price monitors.

Frozen *kasim* fetches an average of P253.56 per kilo, with frozen *liempo* at P311.33.

Mr. Laurel have been blaming middlemen for high prices, as well as high gasoline prices, slaughterhouse fees, and the cost to acquire hogs from farms.

“We will study the entire value chain to analyze it well,” he said.

Mr. Laurel said that the full MSRP study expected to be completed by the end of the month. — **Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2025/02/12/653009/pork-msrp-could-be-imposed-in-march/>

**MANILA STANDARD:**

# Agri chief eyes lower pork prices

News



**DOWN, DOWN, DOWN.** Trade and Industry Secretary Ma. Cristina Roque, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, and Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte (left to right) hold price tags for commercial rice being sold yesterday at the Commonwealth Market during their market inspection activity. Manny Palmero  
By Othel V. Campos & Maricel Cruz

February 13, 2025, 12:45 am

After bringing down the price of rice, the Department of Agriculture (DA) is aiming to arrest the price of pork.

A market monitoring effort led by DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, Trade and Industry Secretary Maria Cristina Aldeguer-Roque and Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte found that pork prices remain high.

Data showed that pork belly prices range from P380 to P480 per kilogram, while pork ham goes for around P350 to P420.

“They say they are not the reason for the high prices,” Tiu Laurel said, referring to vendors. “They explain that there are agents, gasoline, labor, slaughtering costs and farmgate prices. We in the DA will study the entire value chain to analyze it carefully.”

Tiu Laurel said the agency is collecting more data to determine why pork prices remain high, but it would come up with a maximum suggested retail price.

“The earliest would probably be March, but that depends on whether we are comfortable with our data or information,” Tiu Laurel said.

Meanwhile, Speaker Martin Romualdez yesterday welcomed the DA’s initiative to set the National Food Authority (NFA) rice price at P35 per kilo, saying it will help ensure food security for Filipinos.

However, alongside this positive development, Romualdez stressed the government must also guarantee fair income for farmers to sustain local rice production.

“Ensuring that rice remains affordable is crucial for our consumers. However, we must also ensure that our farmers receive fair compensation for their hard work,” the Speaker said.

Romualdez highlighted the importance of balancing consumer needs with the welfare of farmers, saying that this is very important for the benefit of all stakeholders.

“The ideal situation is to maintain a high farmgate price that provides the right income for our farmers while ensuring that the price of rice in the market is affordable for consumers,” he said in Tagalog.

Romualdez assured the public that Congress will monitor the implementation of this pricing strategy.

“We will closely observe how this policy unfolds and determine if additional government interventions are necessary to sustain it,” he noted.

Romualdez also called for strong coordination between the DA and NFA with lawmakers to ensure that the policy does not negatively impact local rice farmers.

“I urge the Department of Agriculture and the National Food Authority to work closely with Congress to ensure that this policy does not unintentionally discourage local rice production,” he said. “The end goal is food security – one that benefits both farmers and consumers.”

Despite the elevated prices, the Department of Agriculture assured the public that the country’s pork supply remains sufficient.

The department earlier imposed a maximum suggested retail price for imported rice. Beginning Feb. 15, the price will be lowered to P52 per kilogram from P55. This will be reduced further to P49 by March 1.

This gradual approach aims to mitigate potential market disruptions, Tiu Laurel said.

Tiu Laurel also consulted the Philippine Rice Industry Stakeholders Movement on the proposed labeling for both imported and locally produced rice.

The Feb. 10 meeting focused on key labeling requirements, including milling date, rice variety, broken percentage and other essential details to enhance transparency and help consumers make informed choices.

The government also reduced rice prices under the KADIWA ng Pangulo’s Rice-for-All program on Feb. 12. The price reduction reflects both a drop in global rice prices and an increase in domestic supply as the local harvest season gets underway.

Tiu Laurel said the Rice-for-All prices would be lowered by up to P3 per kilogram. RFA5 rice will be priced at P43 per kg., RFA25 at P35 and RFA100 at P33.

Tiu Laurel told local farmers that the National Food Authority would procure palay from local farms at a price of P21 to P23 per kg., ensuring fair compensation for their harvests.

He said 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.

<https://manilastandard.net/news/314557179/agri-chief-eyes-lower-pork-prices.html>



**MANILA STANDARD:**

# Romualdez hopes P35/kilo NFA rice will not put farmers at a disadvantage

NewsNational



House Speaker Martin Romualdez (Courtesy: House of Representatives)



By Maricel Cruz

February 12, 2025, 1:51 pm

Speaker Martin Romualdez welcomed on Wednesday the Department of Agriculture's (DA) initiative to set the National Food Authority (NFA) rice price at P35 per kilo, saying it will help ensure food security for Filipinos.

However, alongside this positive development, Romualdez stressed the government must also guarantee fair income for farmers to sustain local rice production.

"Ensuring that rice remains affordable is crucial for our consumers. However, we must also ensure that our farmers receive fair compensation for their hard work," the Speaker said.

Romualdez highlighted the importance of balancing consumer needs with the welfare of farmers, saying that this is very important for the benefit of all stakeholders.

"The ideal situation is to maintain a high farmgate price that provides the right income for our farmers while ensuring that the price of rice in the market is affordable for consumers," he said in Tagalog.

Romualdez assured the public that Congress will monitor the implementation of this pricing strategy.

"We will closely observe how this policy unfolds and determine if additional government interventions are necessary to sustain it," he noted.

He emphasized the potential role of subsidies and government support programs, saying, "the Lower House is ready to study the possible subsidy or targeted assistance programs to ensure that our farmers do not

suffer losses while rice remains affordable for the public.”

Romualdez also called for strong coordination between the DA and NFA with lawmakers to ensure that the policy does not negatively impact local rice farmers.

“I urge the Department of Agriculture and the National Food Authority to work closely with Congress to ensure that this policy does not unintentionally discourage local rice production,” he said. “The end goal is food security – one that benefits both farmers and consumers.”

Romualdez also pointed out the need to continuously assess the policy’s impact. He encouraged open dialogue among stakeholders in the agriculture sector. The lawmaker further emphasized that Congress is ready to step in if adjustments are needed.

“We are committed to finding solutions that uphold the welfare of our farmers while ensuring that every Filipino has access to affordable rice,” Romualdez said.

<https://manilastandard.net/news/314556846/romualdez-hopes-p35-kilo-nfa-rice-will-not-put-farmers-at-a-disadvantage.html>

**THE MANILA TIMES:**

## **PIDS study: Organic farming viable**

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

This, as 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 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.

The cost of urea fertilizer, the most commonly used chemical fertilizer, surged to nearly P3,000 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 P1,500 to P1,600 per sack, the subsidy program remains in place, with P9.6 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, a government initiative that promotes organic farming and sustainable agricultural practices. One key recommendation is to expand the use of Participatory Guarantee Systems, 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.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/02/13/business/agribusiness/pids-study-organic-farming-viable/2054601>

**THE MANILA TIMES:**

## **PHilMech highlights advanced milling tech**



**By Conrad M. Cariño**

**February 13, 2025**

ENGINEERS from Japan-based Otake Corp. visited the headquarters of the Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (PHilMech) in Muñoz, Nueva Ecija, to assess the country's rice milling capabilities and explore potential advancements in local brown rice production.

Raymund Joseph Macaranas, chief of the agency's Agricultural Mechanization Division, led the discussions, highlighting PHilMech's advanced rice milling technologies and projects.

**"The visitors showed great interest in the impeller hulling machine for brown rice and the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund program as they studied the state of the Philippine rice industry and possible improvements," PHilMech said.**



**The Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (PhilMech) has developed its own rice-milling technologies that recently impressed engineers from Japan-based Otake Corp. PHILMECH PHOTO**

During their tour of the agency's Agricultural Machinery Design and Prototyping Center, the Japanese engineers were particularly impressed by PHilMech's advanced machines, especially the brown rice micro-mill. They explored various technological innovations and saw great potential for enhancing rice milling processes.

Makoto Hoki, a retired professor from Miyazaki University who was also part of the group from Otake, highlighted the importance of improving rice milling efficiency. "Technology plays a crucial role in ensuring high-quality rice production. It is impressive to see the innovations being developed here, which can greatly benefit farmers and consumers alike," he said.

Also present was Reynaldo Lantin, a former professor at the University of the Philippines Los Baños, who contributed to discussions on advancing rice milling technologies in the country. <https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/02/13/business/agribusiness/philmech-highlights-advanced-milling-tech/2054599>

**THE MANILA TIMES:**

## Region 2 farmers get P10-M agri equipment



**By Leander C. Domingo**

**February 13, 2025**

THROUGH the High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP), the Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office 2 (DA-RFO2) has turned over agricultural equipment worth more than P10.3 million to various farmers, and fishers cooperatives and associations (FCAs) across Cagayan, Nueva Vizcaya and Quirino provinces.

A significant move to empower farmers and fisherfolk in the Cagayan Valley region (Region 2), the turnover ceremony on Feb. 3 at the Southern Cagayan Valley Research Center Annex in Maguirig, Solana in Cagayan province also marked a major milestone in the region's agricultural development.

Paul Buenavista of the DA-RFO2 information office said the event was attended by representatives from five FCAs.



Photo shows the hauling trucks turned over to farmers in Region 2. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE PHOTO

These were the Tapao Agriculture Coop., Sanguit Upland Farmers MultiPurpose Coop., Aritao Irrigators Multi-Purpose Coop., Women's Garlic Onion Growers Association Inc. and Paraiso United Farmers Association.

Buenavista said the key highlights was the turnover of four-wheel drive tractor worth P1.6 million; four hauling trucks worth more than P2.1 million; and agricultural inputs all aimed at boosting the region's agricultural sector.

The DA-RFO2 HVCDP funded the assistance.

Buenavista said the turnover ceremony demonstrated the commitment of the DA-RFO2 to advancing agricultural productivity in the region while fostering collaboration and shared responsibility among stakeholders.

Representing Regional Executive Director Rose Mary Aquino during the turnover, DA-RFO2 Technical Director Kay Olivas encouraged the cooperatives to make good use of the agricultural equipment provided to them.

"We hope that you see this not as something imposed upon you but as what you truly need. Many others are in need, and you are fortunate to be chosen," Olivas said.

Expressing hope that the equipment and farm inputs given to the farmers are the things they really need, Olivas urged them to "treat these provisions as personal belongings and ensure that they are well-maintained."

She also emphasized the importance of accountability, urging the recipients to "treat the equipment as their own and ensure its proper care and maintenance. You should treat these as your own, and stick to what is stipulated in the memorandum of agreement."

For her part, Carol Albay, HVCDP program chief, highlighted the significance of the directives from Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. focusing on yield, productivity and income generation.

Albay also pointed out the importance of inclusivity, particularly for women cooperative members, in utilizing the equipment.

"If women members are willing and capable of operating the machines, they should be given access," she said, highlighting the need for inclusivity, particularly in giving cooperative women-members access to the equipment.

Nagtipunan Mayor Noel Lim expressed his commitment to supporting farmers not only in his municipality but across the region. "These hauling trucks are not mere giveaways; they are provided with a purpose. Take good care of them."

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/02/13/business/agribusiness/region-2-farmers-get-p10-m-agri-equipment/2054598>

**THE MANILA TIMES:**

# Edible garden project launched in Calauan



**By Leander C. Domingo**

**February 13, 2025**

THE Philippine government hosted Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (Searca) joined with the Department of Education (DepEd)-Calauan Sub-office and the Calauan local government to launch the Project OSEL, or Oplan School Edible Landscaping.

Searca Director Glenn Gregorio said this initiative aims to strengthen schools in Calauan, Laguna, by promoting sustainable practices such as establishing edible gardens.

Gregorio said the project seeks to enhance environmental awareness, promote sustainable agriculture and contribute to food security within the educational community by integrating edible landscaping.

During the opening program for the project held last January, Mylene Gutierrez, principal of Calauan Central Elementary School, conveyed her excitement about the project, emphasizing the strengthened collaboration among stakeholders and expressing optimism on replicating the exceptional success achieved by the DepEd-Santa Cruz Sub-office in pioneering school gardens.

In his message, Luis Germina, public schools district supervisor (PSDS) of the Calauan Sub-office, shared his enthusiasm for the launch of the school's edible landscaping project and highlighted his vision of establishing a sustainable garden like that of DepEd-Santa Cruz.

Germina highlighted the garden's significant potential to enhance students' health and nutrition while noting its broader benefits, such as generating income and positively impacting the surrounding community.

Representing the mayor of Calauan, Erwin Sacluti extended a message of support, reiterating the municipal government's full commitment to establishing school gardens across all primary and secondary schools in the locality. Sacluti also said that the municipal government had procured organic fertilizers to be distributed to schools, ensuring the success of these gardens.

He said they are planning to organize a study visit for all Gulayan sa Paaralan Program coordinators that will allow them to observe and adopt best practices from pilot schools that have successfully implemented and benefited from school gardens.

This initiative aims to refine the edible landscaping program and ensure its long-term sustainability, thereby contributing to the holistic development of students and the wider community, Sacluti added.

Anna Gale Vallez, Searca Research and Thought Leadership Department program specialist, introduced the center's School-plus-Home Gardens Project or S+HGP, providing a comprehensive overview of the project's milestones and its successful collaboration with schools in Laguna that have effectively implemented sustainable school gardens.

In her presentation, she encouraged participants to view school gardens not merely as a project but as a holistic and innovative approach to education, environmental stewardship and community development.

Soledad Villanueva, PSDS of Los Baños, presented the opportunities and challenges encountered in implementing school gardens, highlighting their essential role in promoting environmental sustainability and improving student nutrition, and highlighted how the school gardens' impact extends beyond the local community by contributing to personal and professional development.

**<https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/02/13/business/agribusiness/edible-garden-project-launched-in-calauan/2054593>**



## BUSINESS MIRROR:

# China seen hiking rice imports as prices fall

- Ada Pelonia
- February 13, 2025



(Photo by Nonie Reyes)

China will secure larger rice shipments this year following the decline in quotations from Thailand and Vietnam—the Philippines’s top sources of the food staple.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) revised upward its projection for China’s rice imports this year to 2.2 million metric tons (MMT) as exporter quotes tumbled below domestic prices.

This was higher than its previous forecast of 2 MMT, owing to expected bolstered demand spurred by lower global rice prices, the agency said.

The USDA noted that India’s return to the export market continued to put downward pressure on world prices, prompting an acceleration of China’s total rice imports in the final quarter of 2024.

The East Asian nation imported around 1.6 MMT of rice last year, the lowest since 2011.

China saw a sharp decline in foreign rice demand after India placed trade restrictions on milled rice exports last 2023, the agency said.

“As global prices shot sharply higher, imported prices became uncompetitive relative to domestic rice, and Chinese buyers were noticeably absent from the market,” the USDA said.

India, however, eased restrictions after lifting its ban on non-basmati rice shipments last year. The South Asian nation is the world’s largest rice exporter.

“After India lifted its restrictions in September 2024, all major Asian exporter prices declined, and China’s imports grew exponentially,” the USDA said in its latest report.

“Major suppliers Thailand and Vietnam are expected to have increased sales to China [in 2024],” it added.

The USDA said that last month, global export quotations registered declines, with Vietnamese prices decreasing by \$55 to \$394 per metric ton (MT) while Thai prices dropped by \$57 to \$437 per MT with fewer sales to Indonesia.

“Pakistani quotes decreased \$52 to \$400 per MT and Indian quotes fell \$34 to \$410 per MT as India’s return to the export market continues to create downward pressure on global prices.”

It added that United States prices dropped \$30 to \$697 per MT due to weaker sales to Latin America while Uruguayan prices fell \$32 to \$668 per MT as buyers wait for the harvest of the new crop.

Meanwhile, the international agency said global rice production remained high despite a reduction this month for Sri Lanka while global consumption was raised following upward revisions for China and Indonesia.

“Imports are forecast up based on increases for China. Exports are also forecast higher driven by India,” the USDA said.

Image credits: [Nonie Reyes](#)

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/13/china-seen-hiking-rice-imports-as-prices-fall/>

## **BUSINESS MIRROR:**

# **‘Cheap rice scheme must also benefit planters’**

- **Jovee Marie N. de la Cruz and Butch Fernandez**
- **February 12, 2025**

The leadership of the House of Representatives on Wednesday called for strong coordination between government agencies and Congress to ensure that the Department of Agriculture’s (DA) rice policy will not discourage local rice production.

While supporting the DA’s initiative to set the National Food Authority (NFA) rice price at P35 per kilo, House Speaker Martin G. Romualdez stressed the critical need to ensure fair income for farmers to sustain local rice production.

“Ensuring that rice remains affordable is crucial for our consumers. However, we must also ensure that our farmers receive fair compensation for their hard work.”

Romualdez assured the public that Congress will closely monitor the implementation of this pricing strategy.

“We will closely observe how this policy unfolds and determine if additional government interventions are necessary to sustain it,” he said.

“I urge the DA and the NFA to work closely with Congress to ensure that this policy does not unintentionally discourage local rice production.”

He emphasized the potential role of subsidies and government support programs to ensure farmers are not negatively impacted while keeping rice affordable for the public.

Romualdez reiterated the ultimate goal of these efforts: food security that benefits both farmers and consumers. “We know that balancing the interests of farmers and consumers is not easy, but it is essential for our economy and food security.”

He also emphasized the need for continuous assessment of the policy’s impact and encouraged open dialogue among stakeholders in the agriculture sector.

Romualdez affirmed Congress’s readiness to provide support if policy adjustments are needed.

“If changes to the policy are necessary, we are ready to provide support to ensure that every Filipino, especially farmers, benefits from this reform,” he said. “We are committed to finding solutions that uphold the welfare of our farmers while ensuring that every Filipino has access to affordable rice.”

### **Cheaper food**

Meanwhile, former Senator Kiko Pangilinan said political will and sustained cooperation of the Executive branch and Congress can bring down prices of basic food items, especially rice and animal meat, to ease the burden of millions.

In a speech at the opening salvo of his senatorial campaign in Cavite on Tuesday, the former presidential food security adviser listed three key measures to make this possible, recalling that he had been able to do the same in 2014 when he was adviser to then President Noynoy Aquino.

“Can we bring down the prices of rice and basic food items? Pangilinan asked, promptly supplying his own reply: “My answer: Yes, it can be done if the Executive and Congress work together. Why do I say this? Because we were able to bring down rice prices when we were Food Security Secretary during the time of former President Aquino.”

He recalled, speaking in Filipino, that “in year 2014, if you had a thousand pesos, you could buy a lot.”

Today, he lamented, “Your one thousand pesos can hardly buy anything. But when we were Food Security Secretary, in just a span of one year, we were able to bring down rice prices to as low as P3 a kilo through three measures.”

Pangilinan signaled he will again focus on farm issues and food security, among others, should he be lucky in his bid to make a Senate comeback.

The first of three measures he focused on in 2014, according to Pangilinan, was preventing traders, smugglers, and their government cohorts—officials of the DA and NFA—from resorting to profiteering practices.

“We filed cases in six regions. We raided warehouses of traders who were deliberately delaying the release of stocks to the market; we revoked their permits and put them on a blacklist. We confiscated over half a billion pesos worth of smuggled rice.”

The second of three measures they focused on, Pangilinan recalled, was that for the first time in the 42-year history of NFA, “we rejected the high prices tendered by Thailand and Vietnam. We told them four times, ‘that’s too expensive, bring it down.’ And four times, they brought it down.”

Because of that, he added, the government “saved P7 billion in just one year.”

The last measure they did, according to the former senator, is they poured into the market an ample volume of cheap NFA rice, at prices of P27 and P32. “The result: after one year, rice prices went down to as much as P3 a kilo in September 2015; and because rice prices were low, we posted the lowest inflation rate in 20 years.”

Because of this, he recalled, “your P1,000 could buy a lot of things.”

“Rice was at P36 to P40. Pork was at P260. A kilo of chicken was P120. We were able to do this then, that’s why I’m sure we can stop the increase in the prices of rice and other food items.”

Hunger, he stressed, “has no color. We are ready to cooperate with the President and the Department of Agriculture in order to bring down prices.”

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/12/cheap-rice-scheme-must-also-benefit-planters/>

## **BUSINESS MIRROR:**

# **Go meets with a thousand farmers in Marawi, reaffirms support for agricultural development**

- **BusinessMirror**
- **February 12, 2025**

Senator Christopher “Bong” Go met with local farmers in Marawi City, underscoring his commitment to agricultural development and rural livelihoods. The gathering, held at the Lanao del Sur Provincial Gymnasium, provided an opportunity for the senator to listen to the concerns of farmers and reinforce his advocacy for inclusive economic recovery February 10 the official campaign period,

“Alam ko pong hindi madaling buhay magsasaka, lalo na sa mga panahon ng mataas na presyo ng bilingin at iba pang hamon sa sektor ng agrikultura,” Go said. “Pero nandito po kami para siguraduhin na kayo ay patuloy na nabibigyan ng suporta upang mas mapalakas pa ang inyong kabuhayan.”

Sen. Go and his Malasakit Team actively engaged with a total of 1,000 farmers and the community, listening to their needs and ensuring that government programs reach those who needed these most.

Meanwhile, through the collaborative efforts of Go and the local officials of Marawi City, qualified beneficiaries received support from the local government.

During his visit, Go emphasized several initiatives aimed at supporting farmers and strengthening rural economies. He reaffirmed his push for more sustainable livelihood programs and infrastructure projects that benefit agrarian communities.

“Lagi kong isinusulong ang mga programang makakatulong sa kabuhayan ninyo, lalo na ang pagpapatayo ng imprastraktura na magpapadali ng pagdadala ng produkto mula sa mga sakahan patungo sa mga pamilihan,” he said.

His legislative efforts have focused on reinforcing agricultural support systems to ensure that the backbone of the country’s food supply remains strong and resilient.

Among his significant legislative contributions is co-authoring Republic Act No. 11901, also known as the Agriculture, Fisheries, and Rural Development Financing Enhancement Act of 2022. This law enhances financial mechanisms and support systems for the agricultural sector, allowing farmers and fisherfolk better access to necessary resources.

Furthermore, Senator Go has co-sponsored and co-authored RA 11953, the New Agrarian Emancipation Act, which alleviates the financial burdens of agrarian reform beneficiaries. This measure condones loans, including interest, penalties, and surcharges, giving farmers a fresh start toward economic stability.

As part of his continued advocacy for agricultural development, Senator Go introduced Senate Bill No. 2117, which seeks to provide comprehensive crop insurance protection for agrarian reform beneficiaries. Additionally, he has filed SBN 2118, which aims to expand insurance coverage and services for farmers if enacted into law.

Beyond agriculture, Senator Go has supported various infrastructure projects in Lanao del Sur, including the construction of multi-purpose buildings in Marawi City.

As part of his healthcare advocacy, Go also announced the launch of a new Malasakit Center at the Lanao del Sur Provincial Hospital in Tamparan town. This marks the second Malasakit Center in the province, following the one established at Amai Pakpak Medical Center in Marawi City in 2020.

Go is the principal author and sponsor of RA 11463, or the Malasakit Centers Act of 2019, which institutionalized the Malasakit Centers program. As of now, 167 Malasakit Centers are operational across the country, poised to assist with patients’ medical expenses. The DOH reports that the Malasakit Center program has already provided aid to more than 15 million Filipinos.

The Malasakit Center serves as a one-stop shop where Filipinos can access medical assistance from various government agencies, ensuring that healthcare remains within reach for those in need.

Senator Go expressed his gratitude to local leaders who helped facilitate the gathering. Among those present were Lanao del Sur Governor Datu Mamintal Adiong, Vice Governor Mohammad Khalid Adiong, Marawi City Mayor Majul Gandamra, and Vice Mayor Anouar Abdulrauf.

Before concluding the event, Go reiterated his dedication to serving Filipinos if given a fresh mandate, particularly those in marginalized communities.

“Patuloy kaming magseserbisyo sa inyo dahil bisyo ko ang magserbisyo at ako ay naniniwala na ang serbisyo sa tao ay serbisyo ‘yan sa Panginoon, serbisyo ‘yan kay Allah,” he stated.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/12/go-meets-with-a-thousand-farmers-in-marawi-reaffirms-support-for-agricultural-development/>

## BUSINESS MIRROR:

# Coffee falls most in two months but remains above \$4/pound

- BusinessMirror
- February 12, 2025



Coffee futures fell by the most in two months after earlier marking a fresh all-time high, with supply concerns still the dominant theme in the market.

The most-active arabica contract in New York jumped as much as 2.1 percent to reach a record of \$4.2995 a pound on Tuesday, before heading lower by as much as 4.8 percent. That's the biggest dip since December 2. Still, prices remain above \$4 a pound, a milestone the premium bean reached last week.

Prices for the variety have doubled in the past year, with the market driven higher by worries over shortfalls from top producer Brazil and concerns over the quality of next season's harvest. But "the possibility of sharp pullback remains given the volatility of the market," Sucden Financial broker Harry Howard said in a note.

Adverse weather continues to pose a threat to Brazilian crops, with its biggest arabica coffee growing region receiving below-normal rainfall last week. Limited rains and low soil moisture, unfavorable for cherry growth, are expected to persist over the next week, according to forecaster Maxar Technologies Inc.

New buyer interest above \$4 "should be reduced somewhat as long as there are no bullish inputs," but that's unlikely given concerns over US tariffs, according to a Tuesday note from Sucafina SA.

Still, a recent uptick in arabica inventories in exchange-monitored warehouses may provide some relief to the market.

### **Voluntary recall**

Tri-Union Seafoods issued a voluntary recall of canned tuna products sold at national retailers including Trader Joe's, Walmart Inc., Costco Wholesale Corp. and Harris Teeter Supermarkets in dozens of states across the US.

The seafood was recalled due to a defect on the pull tab of the can that may cause the can to leak or be contaminated with *Clostridium botulinum*, a potentially fatal form of food poisoning, the California-based manufacturer said in a statement on the US Food and Drug Administration website.

*Clostridium botulinum* can cause botulism, a serious illness that attacks the body's nerves and can cause paralysis or death, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The company said that customers should return recalled products to stores for a full refund, throw the product away or contact Tri-Union Seafoods directly for a replacement. No illnesses associated with the recalled products have been reported, the company said.

No issues have been reported with the products, according to a statement from Trader Joe's. A Walmart spokesperson said the company is working to remove the product from all impacted stores. Costco and Harris Teeter didn't immediately respond to requests for comment. *Bloomberg News*

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/12/coffee-falls-most-in-two-months-but-remains-above-4-pound/>



## **BUSINESS MIRROR:**

# **Slow shift to organic agri due to high cost, supply constraints—study**

- **Ada Pelonia**
- **February 12, 2025**

Limited access and supply concerns discourage local farmers from going organic, according to a study conducted by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (Pids).

The study from the government think tank titled “Prospects for Widespread Adoption of Organic-Based Fertilizers in the Philippines: A Rapid Appraisal” explored the challenges related to fertilizer use and its impact on Philippine agriculture.

In particular, PIDS Research Fellow Roehlano Briones, former Supervising Research Specialist Ivory Myka Galang, and Project Technical Assistant Helena Luz Pastolero raised concerns about balancing sustainability, food security, and supply constraints.

The cost of urea fertilizer surged to nearly P3,000 per sack in May 2022, almost triple its price from January 2021, which spurred a “renewed interest” in organic alternatives.

However, the study’s authors noted that while organic-based fertilizers offer significant long-term benefits for soil health, insufficient domestic supply halts farmers from completely replacing inorganic fertilizers.

They also said that organic methods often require a higher initial investment and are not always readily available in some regions.

Small-scale farmers, particularly those living in rural areas, face additional hurdles, 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 said.

“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.”

### **Tweaks**

The study proposed several recommendations to address concerns regarding fertilizer use, such as a gradual shift in government policy, including strengthening the National Organic Agriculture Program (NOAP), an initiative that promotes organic farming and sustainable agricultural practices.

It also pushed for the expansion in the use of Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS), an affordable, community-based certification system for organic products and suggested a coordinated effort to promote organic labeling for packaged goods, encouraging retailers to adopt these labels.

Furthermore, it advocated for a phased repurposing of fertilizer subsidies, which would gradually redirect funds from inorganic fertilizers to organic fertilizers and biofertilizers.

The study noted the Department of Agriculture’s fertilizer subsidies, which primarily focus on inorganic fertilizer. This was the agency’s response to the drastic increase in fertilizer costs.

“Subsidies for organic-based fertilizers should encourage widespread adoption of Balanced Fertilization Strategies [or, in some cases, full organic farming],” the authors said, with the goal of phasing out the subsidies once farmers have sustainably adopted new practices.

The study also urged for the establishment of a value chain program that would develop the biofertilizer and organic fertilizer industries, which are vital for long-term agricultural sustainability.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/12/slow-shift-to-organic-agri-due-to-high-cost-supply-constraints-study/>

**ABANTE TONITE:**

## **P30 kada kilong bigas namumuro**

ABANTE TONITE

- **February 12, 2025**



Naniniwala si Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. na maaari pang bumaba ang presyo ng bigas sa mga palengke ng P30 hanggang P40 per kilo sa ilalim ng administrasyon ni Pangulong Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr.

Ito ang sagot ng kalihim matapos tanungin kung posible pang mangyari ang P20 per kilong bigas.

“Hindi pa rin siguro P20, possible siguro nasa, mid-P30s,” sabi ni Laurel sa panayam ng media sa kanya habang nagsasagawa ng joint market inspection kasama ang mga opisyal ng Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) sa Commonwealth Market sa Quezon City nitong Miyerkoles, Pebrero 12.

Samantala, na-monitor na umano nila ang pagbaba ng presyo ng bigas sa mga palengke matapos na ibaba pa sa P55 per kilo ang maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) mula sa P58 per kilo.

Babawiin aniya ang idineklarang food security emergency kapag bumaba pa ang presyo ng bigas sa mga palengke. (PNA)

<https://tonite.abante.com.ph/2025/02/12/p30-kada-kilong-bigas-namumuro/>

**REMATE:**

## **4 naaresto sa nilusob na bodega ng bigas sa Bulacan, sinampahan ng reklamo sa DOJ**

February 12, 2025 17:20



MANILA, Philippines -Ipinagharap na ng National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) ng patung-patong na reklamo sa Department of Justice (DOJ) ang apat na indibidwal na naaresto sa isang bodega ng bigas sa Bocaue, Bulacan.

Ayon sa NBI, kabilng ang isang manager, dalawang cashier, at isang inventory officer ang ipinagharap ng reklamong hoarding, adulteration, profiteering, untruthful labeling, at economic sabotage, dahil tumangging pangalanan kung sino ang may-ari ng Rice Milling at Rice Retailing sa Golden City, Taal, Bocaue.

Nitong Miyerkules ng umaga, Pebrero 12, nagtungo sa tanggapan ng Department of Justice ang NBI para sa paghahain ng reklamo.

Ayon kay NBI Director Jaime Santiago, lumabas sa kanilang ginawang pagsisiyasat na pinaghahalo ng naturang bodega ang lumang bigas sa bago saka ibinibenta sa merkado sa mas mataas na presyo.

Ang nasabing bodega ay sinalakay ng NBI at Department of Agriculture (DA) kung saan nadiskubreng ilegal na nag-iimbak ng mga tone-toneladang bigas. *Jocelyn Tabangcura-Domenden*

<https://remate.ph/4-naaresto-sa-nilusob-na-bodega-ng-bigas-sa-bulacan-sinampahan-ng-reklamo-sa-doj/>