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Malaking bulto ng imported pork, ilalaan ng DA sa meat processors

MANILA
A BULLETIN:

DA chief orders inspection of onion warehouses vs hoarding, price manipulation

BY [DEXTER BARRO II](#)

Feb 24, 2025 03:07 PM

AT A GLANCE

- Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. ordered inspections of onion cold storage facilities across the country to curb potential hoarding and price manipulation.

Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. has ordered inspections of onion cold storage facilities across the country to curb potential hoarding and price manipulation.

Laurel announced on Monday, Feb. 24, that the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) will take charge of these inspections amid reports that newly harvested supplies are being withheld from the market instead of being sold.

Onion harvests were expected to begin in February, which should have provided fresh supplies to ease prices.

Laurel, however, expressed concerns that these harvests might not be reaching the market given that onion prices have not yet stabilized as expected.

He said newly harvested onions should not be kept in storage at this point, noting that they are commonly stored during the latter stage of the harvest season.

“If they are, that’s wrong... This clearly points to price manipulation—it’s hoarding,” said Laurel.

Under Republic Act (RA) No. 12022, or the Anti-Agricultural Economic Sabotage Act, hoarding, profiteering, smuggling, cartel operations, and other crimes involving agricultural and fishery products are classified as economic sabotage.

Violators will face a fine of up to five times the value of the products involved in the crime and a penalty of life imprisonment.

The BPI, an attached agency of the DA, is expected to complete its inspection of warehouses and the accompanying report within four to seven days.

Early this month, Laurel approved the importation of 3,000 metric tons (MT) of red onions and 1,000 MT of white onions to address the projected shortage before the harvest season.

Based on the latest figures from the BPI, red onion stocks in storage stood at 8,500 MT, while white onion stocks were at 1,628 MT.

The agency projected that the harvest this month would significantly increase supply, with an expected combined total of around 33,000 MT by March.

Farmer groups have strongly criticized the move to import onions, accusing the agency of making a “deliberate act of economic sabotage.”

Laurel insisted that the importation is merely a preemptive measure to avoid onion prices surging to levels seen in 2022.

During that time, retail prices of onion reached as high as ₱700 per kilo amid a supply shortage exacerbated by delayed imports.

Based on the latest DA monitoring, onion prices remain stubbornly high.

Red onions are currently priced between ₱140 and ₱240 per kilo, while white onions are around ₱130 to ₱50 per kilo.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/2/24/da-chief-orders-inspection-of-onion-warehouses>

MANILA BULLETIN:

San Juan City starts sale of P33 per kilo NFA rice

BY [PATRICK GARCIA](#)

Feb 24, 2025 01:29 PM



San Juan City Mayor Francis Zamora, together with Department of Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr., leads the sale of NFA rice at P1,650 per sack, equivalent to P33 per kilogram, under the Food Security Emergency Program of the National Government. (Santi San Juan)

The San Juan City government has kicked off on Monday, Feb. 24, the sale of the newly-purchased National Food Authority (NFA) rice worth P33 per kilo to San Juaneños under the Food Security Emergency program of the national government launched to stabilize the skyrocketing prices of rice.

San Juan City Mayor Francis Zamora and Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. spearheaded the event held at the San Juan City Hall where the latter underscored the importance of providing residents with affordable food choices.

"Providing affordable rice to our residents is a priority for the City Government of San Juan. Through this program, we are ensuring that our constituents have access to quality food at a low price, especially in these challenging times," Zamora said.

"To help our constituents even more, San Juan City is shouldering all the costs for hauling, transport, logistics, and other expenses associated with selling the rice. This is our way of assisting our residents and ensuring they have access to affordable food. We got them from the NFA at P1,650 and sell them to our constituents at P1,650 as well so as not to burden our people with additional expenses. The city government will shoulder all of these expenses for them," he added.

The city government has committed to an initial 1,000 sacks, with provisions to order more should the demand increase.

To ensure an orderly process, a registration table set up at the San Juan City Hall lobby on Feb. 20 will be open Mondays to Fridays from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for residents to register and to purchase rice.

The national government declared a Food Security Emergency in response to fluctuating rice prices and supply concerns.

The NFA said it has sold around 300,000 bags of aging rice to local government units (LGUs) in January, followed by another 400,000 bags of aging rice to be sold this month. Both stocks are part of the 700,000 bags of rice in the agency's storage facilities.

"This is nationwide stocks. Pero ang location naman niyan is NCR (National Capital Region) and nearby NCR [areas]," NFA Administrator Larry Lacson said, explaining that the move is in line with Republic Act No. 12078, which amended RA 11203 or the Rice Tariffication Law (RTL), stating that rice stored for more than two months can now be disposed of before further aging.

"Dahil sa amended RTL, dito po nakasaad na pagtungtong po ng dalawang buwan at isang araw ng aming bigas ay pwede na pong i-dispose bago pa po mag-age. Binigyan po kami ng kapangyarihan para i-dispose (Because of the amended RTL, it is stated that once our rice reaches two months and one day, it can already be disposed of before it ages further. We have been given the authority to dispose of it)," he explained.

This program, facilitated by the DA, ensures that staple food remains accessible to Filipino families.



San Juan City Mayor Francis Zamora, together with Department of Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr., leads the sale of NFA rice at P1,650 per sack, equivalent to P33 per kilogram, under the Food Security Emergency Program of the National Government. (Santi San Juan)

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<https://mb.com.ph/2025/2/24/san-juan-city-starts-sale-of-p33-per-kilo-nfa-rice>

MANILA BULLETIN:

DA eyes higher share for meat processors in pork import quota

BY [DEXTER BARRO II](#)

Feb 24, 2025 10:59 AM

The Department of Agriculture (DA) is planning to allocate the majority of the pork imports under the 55,000 metric tons (MT) of the minimum access volume (MAV) quota to meat processors—a move aimed at stabilizing prices of processed meat products.

In a statement, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel said the “general direction” is to allocate 30,000 MT to meat processors although this is still set to be finalized “within the next few weeks.”

Laurel added that a significant portion of the MAV quota will be set aside for agencies attached to the DA as a “strategic reserve” if market intervention is deemed necessary.

Specifically, 15,000 MT will be allotted to state-run corporations Food Terminal Inc. (FTI) and Planters Products Inc. (PPI).

Meanwhile, the remaining 10,000 MT will be equally distributed among pork traders.

The MAV is a trade policy mechanism that allows a specific volume of agricultural imports to enter a country at lower tariff rates.

This quota collects a 15 percent tariff on pork, which is significantly lower than the standard 25 percent.

The MAV allocation is part of the Philippines’ commitment to the World Trade Organization (WTO) to ensure food security and boost market competition.

Philippine Association of Meat Processors Inc. Director Jet Ambalada welcomed the proposed higher allocation, noting that it’s another good step towards lowering pork prices.

“This will help us maintain stable prices. As I’ve mentioned, the price of hotdogs has remained steady for over a decade, and a can of luncheon meat is now even cheaper than a can of sardines of the same size,” Ambalada said.

Based on the latest data from the DA, pork prices have recently surged beyond ₱400 per kilo at public markets.

The agency attributed such prices to the lingering effects of the African swine fever (ASF) outbreak, which significantly impacted the country’s hog population.

The ASF was likewise blamed for the potential profiteering in the industry.

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Laurel recently pointed out that prices are seeing increases as raisers and traders seek to recover their losses. The DA has floated the prospect of imposing a maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) on pork, but this has since been shut down as the pork industry vowed to find ways to lower prices to reasonable levels.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/2/24/da-eyes-higher-share-for-meat-processors-in-pork-import-quota>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Farm tourism and the soil

BY [FLOR G. TARRIELA](#)

Feb 25, 2025 06:38 AM

The 8th Philippine International Farm Tourism Conference kicked off on Feb. 24 and wraps up tomorrow, Feb. 26th, at the KCC Mall General Santos City. The theme, "Stimulating Sustainable Economic Growth in Rural Communities through Farm Tourism," drew around 500 participants, including local and international farm leaders, startups, aspiring farmers, advocates, and enthusiasts. The event is sponsored by the International Sustainable School of Tourism (ISST), led by former Tourism Secretary Mina Gabor, alongside the Department of Tourism, Department of Trade and Industry, Philexport, and others.

The conference boasted a lineup of interesting and relevant topics and speakers, including: Diversified Agriculture and Sustainable Farm Tourism Models (Rex Puentespina of Malagos Farm); Integrated Farming (Michael Caballes of Bukid Amara); Fruits for All Seasons; Tourism and Livestock; Peace and Trust in the Communities; Aquaculture; and Innovations and Technology Adoption for Increasing Farm Productivity and Sustainability.

I was privileged to speak on "The Secret is in the Soil" under the session "Enhancing the Land for Food Security at Home." Other speakers included Capt. James Reamon of Felicidad Orchard (my vermiculture mentor from years ago), Dr. Nur Azura Binti Adam, Deputy Director for Programs of Malaysia, and Dr. Fernando Sanchez, Professor of Landscape Horticulture at the University of the Philippines.

Want healthy, lush plants and a fruitful, productive farm? About 95 percent of our food, directly or indirectly, comes from the soil. The soil is the top layer of the earth's surface where plants grow—it's like the "skin of the earth." Did you know the soil is alive, teeming with billions of microorganisms? Yes, there's a world beneath our feet! The soil supports plant growth by absorbing, retaining, and releasing water and nutrients. The topsoil, only a few inches deep, contains humus, organic matter (decayed plants and animals). However, years of plowing, tilling, slash-and-burn agriculture, livestock overgrazing, and even synthetic fertilizers have severely damaged the topsoil. Soil no longer provides the same nutrients it did decades ago; now, supplementing our diets with vitamins is often recommended.

Do you feed the soil or the plants? Feed the soil, and you get healthy plants! How do you rebuild soil health, supercharge, or regenerate your soil? Here are some organic matter additions to enrich it:

- **Leaf Mold:** A revolutionary soil amendment. Pile up leaves, chop them into pieces for faster decomposition, put them in large plastic bags (punch holes for air), and keep them moist. Don't worry about mold; after six months to a year, the finished product will resemble rich soil.
- **Composting:** Enriches soil and reduces waste (kitchen and yard waste—vegetable and fruit peels, coffee grounds, leaves, grass). It adds organic matter with slow-release nutrients, considered the garden's "black gold."
- **Mulching:** Like a "blanket for the soil," adding 2-4 inches of dried leaves or wood chips preserves soil quality, retains moisture, and moderates temperature. It acts as a slow-release fertilizer as it decomposes.
- **Cover Cropping or "Green Manure":** Protects the soil from the elements, acts as "natural mulch," suppresses weeds, and prevents erosion. Grow a nitrogen-fixing plant like mung beans, cut it before flowering, and incorporate the chopped plant into the soil. It's like a "revitalizing spa treatment" for the soil.
- **Well-Rotted Manure:** Manure from livestock like chickens, pigs, cows, goats, and rabbits enhances the organic matter in the soil.

In addition, natural farming technology nurtures soil microorganisms through concoctions like fermented plant juice, fermented fruit juice, and bone and eggshell fermentation, applied according to plant growth stages.

Did you know soil is also a potential ally against climate change? Carbon in the air is harmful, but plants, through photosynthesis, can sequester carbon, and soil microbes can retain it in the ground, which is beneficial.

The soil is amazing! Healthy soil grows healthy food and leads to healthy people. It can even be the answer to climate change. Let's save the soil and not treat it like dirt, thus saving ourselves and the planet.

The Farm Tourism conference certainly achieved its objective of raising awareness about the benefits of farming with tourism, sharing best practices, networking, and exchanging ideas with like-minded people. Farm Tourism is in!

Ms. Tarriela is a banker and an environmentalist/gardener.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/2/25/farm-tourism-and-the-soil>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DA to inspect onion warehouses as prices soar past P200 per kilo

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

February 24, 2025 | 6:28pm



Undated photo shows a box of red onions.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — The Bureau of Plant Industry is set to inspect all onion warehouses nationwide this week for possible hoarding and price manipulation during peak harvest season.

In a statement on Monday, February 24, the Department of Agriculture (DA) said it directed the BPI to inspect warehouses to determine "whether newly harvested onions are being withheld from the market."

"Last Friday, I directed the BPI and its team to visit all the onion cold storage facilities across the country and inspect whether newly harvested onions are being kept there instead of being sold," Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr said.

If the agency finds stored onions in warehouses, however, Tiu Laurel said it would indicate hoarding to artificially drive up prices by creating the appearance of a supply shortage.

"If they are, that's wrong. Onions are typically stored toward the middle or end of the harvest season, not at the start. This clearly points to price manipulation — it's hoarding," he said.

The BPI is expected to complete the inspection within four to seven days.

Since onions are harvested in February and March, the DA said fresh supplies should reach the market to maintain stable prices.

A BPI report earlier this month showed that onion stocks in warehouses were relatively low, with consumption nearly twice the available supply.

Import to avoid price hikes. In response, the DA decided to import 4,000 metric tons of red and white onions. Tiu Laurel warned that without intervention, prices could spike like in 2022, when they soared to P700 per kilo due to a supply shortage and suspected trader exploitation.

The BPI projects this season's harvest to yield 33,000 metric tons of onions by March, on top of early harvests done by farmers.

The DA also reminded retailers and traders that hoarding and price manipulation are illegal under [Republic Act 12022](#), or the Anti-Agricultural Sabotage Act.

Those found guilty of hoarding, profiteering, smuggling or involvement in a cartel face life imprisonment and a fine five times the value of the agricultural or fishery products involved.

Farmers' woes. Onion farmers have opposed the importation, arguing that locally harvested onions should be sold first before allowing imported stocks into the market.

They suggest that imported onions, which can be stored in cold storage, should only be released once local supplies run out.

Despite already selling at prices two to three times lower than retail rates, farmers fear that imports could further drive down farmgate prices, potentially reducing their earnings.

More than P200 per kilo

As of February 20, the DA's [price monitoring](#) showed that local red onions in Metro Manila markets ranged from P140 to P240 per kilogram, while local white onions were priced at P90 to P150 per kilogram.

Imported white onions, meanwhile, were sold at P100 to P160 per kilogram, making local onions — especially red ones — more expensive.

A month ago, however, local red onions were [priced](#) lower at P110 to P180 per kilogram, about P30 to P60 cheaper than current prices. Local white onions saw slight changes, with prices then ranging from P120 to P140 per kilogram.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/agriculture/2025/02/24/2423895/da-inspect-onion-warehouses-prices-soar-past-p200-kilo>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Onions pricier; DA wants all warehouses checked

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

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 05:30 AM February 25, 2025



Inquirer file photo

MANILA, Philippines — Personnel of the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) have been ordered to conduct an inspection of all onion warehouses nationwide after retail prices surged to more than P200 a kilo.

In a statement on Monday, Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said the directive he gave to the BPI was aimed at determining if newly harvested supplies were being withheld from the market.

“Last Friday, I directed the Bureau of Plant Industry and its team to visit all the onion cold storage facilities across the country and inspect whether newly harvested onions are being kept there instead of being sold,” Tiu Laurel said.

“If they are, that’s wrong. Onions are typically stored toward the middle or end of the harvest season, not at the start. This clearly points to price manipulation—it’s hoarding,” he stressed.

The inspections to be conducted by BPI personnel are estimated to be completed within four to seven days, with a report expected by the end of the week, Tiu Laurel said.

Feb. 20 prices

Based on the price monitoring done by the Department of Agriculture (DA) in Metro Manila markets as of Feb. 20, red onions were being sold per kilogram from a low of

P140 to a high of P240, as opposed to P90 to P120 per kg during the same period a year ago.

On the other hand, white onions were retailing per kg between P90 and P160, up from P60 to P130 previously in 2024.

“A month ago, the quoted prevailing price for red onions was at P140 per kilo, lower than the current P200 per kilo,” the DA noted.

It added that it had expected fresh supplies to come into the market starting this month, which could have helped ease rising retail prices.

Supply still limited

However, Tiu Laurel expressed concern that the newly harvested onions might not be reaching the market as expected.

The BPI had projected that the early harvest would add several metric tons of the produce to the available supply, bringing the total to approximately 33,000 metric tons (MT) by March.

Based on the BPI’s monitoring, red onion stocks stood at 34.87 MT as of Feb. 14 while the supply of yellow onions reached 257.09 MT.

It pegged the national monthly consumption at 17,000 MT for red onions and 4,000 MT for white onions.

Earlier this month, the DA authorized the importation of 3,000 MT of red onions and 1,000 MT of white onions to ensure ample buffer stocks while waiting for the start of the harvest season.

“We will not risk a potential shortage that unscrupulous traders could exploit to drive up prices as we saw in the past. We do not want a repeat of the 2022 crisis,” Tiu Laurel had said.

In 2022, the retail price of onions went up to a record high of P700 per kg due to a supply shortage that was aggravated by the delayed arrival of imports.

<https://business.inquirer.net/508202/onions-pricier-da-wants-all-warehouses-checked>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

‘Tawilis’ fishing ban in Taal Lake set



BY DELFIN T. MALLARI JR.

FEBRUARY 25, 2025



CLOSED SEASON This fisher, in this undated photo, is among those who benefit from the abundance of “tawilis,” a freshwater sardine endemic to Taal Lake, a local delicacy. But the months of March and April are “closed season” for tawilis fishing to ensure its conservation. —LAUREL MUNICIPAL AGRICULTURE OFFICE

LUCENA CITY—The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has announced the annual two-month ban on “tawilis” (*Sardinella tawilis*) fishing in Taal Lake, Batangas province.

In a statement posted on its official Facebook page on Monday, the DENR in Calabarzon (Region 4A) Protected Area Management Office–Taal Volcano Protected Landscape confirmed that the fishing ban will run from March 1 to April 30.

Catching, selling, trading, transporting or engaging in any transactions involving tawilis during this period is strictly prohibited, with violators facing corresponding penalties, the DENR-4A warned.

In 2018, the International Union for Conservation of Nature classified tawilis as an endangered species, prompting the implementation of the two-month “closed season” to protect and preserve the species.

The closed season coincides with the peak spawning period of the tawilis, which is endemic to Taal Lake. A female tawilis can produce up to 18,000 eggs per spawning season, but the fish typically grows to only about 12.7 centimeters (5 inches) in length.

During the fishing season, authorities only allow traditional fishing methods in Taal Lake, such as gill nets, spear guns, and hook and line.

Illegal methods

Illegal fishing methods, including the use of trawls, dredgers, and fine mesh nets, are strictly prohibited. Trawling disrupts the natural lake bed habitat, damaging fish spawning grounds and affecting bottom-dwelling plants and animals. Dredging also destabilizes riverbanks and further destroys the lake’s ecosystem.

Other threats to tawilis survival include environmental pollution caused by the proliferation of fish cages and the excessive use of fish feeds, which eventually decompose and pollute the water.

Tawilis, the world’s only freshwater sardine, is a delicacy once known as the “poor man’s fish” and remains a household staple in communities surrounding Taal Lake.

Its popularity continues to grow, with tawilis commonly served as a crispy, deep-fried dish in roadside eateries and upscale restaurants in Batangas and in Tagaytay City, Cavite, which overlooks Taal Lake. The fish is also sold online as bottled sardines for both local and international markets.

<https://plus.inquirer.net/news/tawilis-fishing-ban-in-taal-lake-set/>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

San Juan City launches NFA rice sale at P33/kg, earns praise from DA chief

By: [Jan Escosio](#) - Reporter / [@JEPOI04](#)
11:31 PM February 24, 2025



San Juan City's P1,650 per sack (P33 per kilogram) NFA rice sale successfully launched on February 24, 2025, at San Juan City Hall, with all 1,000 sacks quickly sold out. The initiative, part of the Food Security Emergency Program of the National Government, was met with overwhelming demand, prompting the city to prepare for a second batch of distribution.

Mayor Francis Zamora expressed his gratitude to the residents for their participation and assured them that the City Government is already preparing for the second batch.

To further assist low-income residents, Mayor Zamora is also considering an alternative selling option: offering 5-kilogram packs of rice for P165 (P33 per kilo) to accommodate those who cannot afford to buy a full sack.



“We understand that not all families have the means to purchase 50 kilograms at once, so we are exploring ways to make this program even more accessible,” he added.

Department of Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr., who attended the launch, commended San Juan’s swift response to the national government’s call to provide affordable rice to the people. He praised San Juan’s execution as an outstanding model for other LGUs, emphasizing the city’s efficiency and dedication in addressing food security.

It can be recalled that San Juan was the first city to purchase rice from the Department of Agriculture to sell it to its constituents.

This initiative is part of the National Government’s broader strategy to stabilize rice prices and ensure food security for Filipino families. As market prices fluctuate, San Juan City remains committed to providing accessible and affordable staple food to its residents.



<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2037727/san-juan-city-launches-nfa-rice-sale-at-p33-kg-earns-praise-from-da-chief>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Arrested for selling smuggled frozen fish



BY GILLIAN N. VILLANUEVA

FEBRUARY 25, 2025



INQUIRER FILE PHOTO

The National Bureau of Investigation said on Monday that it arrested three individuals in Batangas City on Feb. 6 for selling 100 boxes of smuggled frozen fish products.

In a statement, the NBI said its Batangas district office conducted an entrapment operation after receiving information that some people were transporting and selling smuggled frozen fish products in the province. The suspects identified as Alexious Aguilar, Romel Estrada and Jeremie Villa were arrested after delivering the contraband to NBI operatives who paid them with marked money.

Seized from the trio were 100 boxes of assorted smuggled frozen fish products.

Aguilar, Estrada and Villa now face charges for violating Republic Act (RA) No. 10654, which amended RA 8550, also known as the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998, and RA 12022, or the Anti-Agricultural Sabotage Act of 2024, before the Batangas City prosecutor's office.

<https://plus.inquirer.net/news/3-arrested-for-selling-smuggled-frozen-fish/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Inspectors to check for onion hoarding

February 24, 2025 | 8:58 pm



PHILIPPINE STAR/MIGUEL DE GUZMAN

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said on Monday that it ordered the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) to inspect onion warehouses to determine whether the harvest is being withheld from the market.

The DA said the onion harvest is expected to begin this month, with fresh supplies being counted on to ease prices.

The DA said it suspects the harvest might not be reaching the markets.

“Last Friday, I directed the Bureau of Plant Industry and its team to visit all the onion cold storage facilities across the country and inspect whether newly harvested onions are being kept there instead of being sold,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, Jr. said in a statement.

“If they are, that’s wrong. Onions are typically stored toward the middle or end of the harvest season, not at the start. This clearly points to price manipulation — it’s hoarding,” he added.

The BPI is likely to complete its inspection and deliver a report by the end of the week.

Earlier this month, Mr. Laurel authorized imports of 3,000 metric tons of red onions and 1,000 metric tons of white onions to address any shortages that may arise before the harvest.

Onion prices remain high, with DA price monitors reporting red onions selling for between P140 and P240 per kilo, and white onions fetching P130-P150.

A month ago, red onion prices were P140 per kilo.

The BPI has said that the early harvest will add around 33,000 metric tons to available supply by March.
— **Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2025/02/24/655314/inspectors-to-check-for-onion-hoarding/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

PHL to export 66,000 MT of raw sugar next month

February 24, 2025 | 8:57 pm



VICTORIAS MILLING COMPANY, INC. FACEBOOK PAGE

THE PHILIPPINES will export 66,000 metric tons (MT) of raw sugar to the US next month, the industry's regulator said.

The Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) agreed to deliver two boatloads of 33,000 MT each to maximize the savings on freight, instead of the initial decision to ship 60,000 MT, Administrator Pablo Luis S. Azcona said at a briefing, citing input from traders.

Mr. Azcona said segments of the industry, including farmers, oppose sugar exports to the US because it buys the commodity at a lower price.

“Sugar is bought by traders at US prices, which is about P1,000 less than domestic price. That’s why farmers complained,” Mr. Azcona said.

To address farmers’ concerns, the SRA, in Sugar Order No. 2, will give traders who procure raw sugar from farmers at domestic prices “will be given priority” in future government import programs.

The SRA has come up with a list of traders who will be participating in the 66,000-MT export program — the soon-to-be-issued SO No. 3.

“The farmers said the SRA and government can do whatever they want as long as the farmers do not have to subsidize exports,” he said.

He said all exports will consist of sugar initially purchased from farmers at the domestic price.

Mr. Azcona said the Department of Agriculture will likely oversee the export program to address the US quota allocation for 2025.

He noted that the Philippines has the third-largest US quota for raw sugar, a status that it wants to maintain. The new arrangement calls for traders to absorb the losses from selling at the US price, to be offset by any gains they may realize from imports.

Traders in the program will be allowed to import 2.5 kilograms of refined sugar for every kilogram of raw sugar exported. The 66,000 MT export shipment implies plans to import 165,000 MT of refined sugar.

“The exporters export at a loss and they make it back with imports,” he added. — **Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2025/02/24/655317/phl-to-export-66000-mt-of-raw-sugar-next-month/>

REMATE:

Mas mataas na alokasyon sa meat processors sa pork MAV, target ng DA

February 24, 2025 09:49



MANILA, Philippines – Plano ng Department of Agriculture (DA) na ilaan ang malaking bahagi ng pork imports sa ilalim ng 55,000 metriko tonelada ng minimum access volume (MAV) quota para sa mga meat processor, at “significant” portion sa attached agencies nito.

Sa pahayag nitong Linggo, Pebrero 23, sinabi ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. na ang “general direction” ay ilaan ang 30,000 MT sa meat processors, para mapahupa ang presyo sa mga merkado kasabay ng pagpalo ng presyo ng karneng baboy sa mga pamilihan sa mahigit P400 kada kilo.

Sa kabila nito, sinabi ni Tiu Laurel na isasapinal pa ang alokasyon “within the next few weeks.”

Nakita sa datos mula sa DA na ang presyo ng karneng baboy sa Metro Manila ay mula P230.00 hanggang P435.07 kada kilo hanggang nitong Pebrero 20, 2025.

Ani Tiu Laurel, ititira ng DA ang nasa 15,000 MT, na ilalaan sa Food Terminal Inc. (FT) o Planters Products Inc. para magbigay ng pagkakataon sa pamahalaan na mapahupa ang presyo kung kinakailangan, gamit ang mas mababang taripa sa ilalim ng MAV, habang ang nalalabing 10,000 MT ay ipamamahagi sa mga trader. Sa ilalim ng Executive Order 50, ang pork imports na nasa MAV quota ay binibigyan ng mas mababang taripa na 15%, kumpara sa standard 25%.

Ang susobra sa quota ay papatawan ng standard rate.

Malugod namang tinanggap ni Philippine Association of Meat Processors Inc. director Jet Ambalada ang planong alokasyon dahil ito ay magpapataas ng alokasyon sa local processors.

“This will help us maintain stable prices. As I’ve mentioned, the price of hotdogs has remained steady for over a decade, and a can of luncheon meat is now even cheaper than a can of sardines of the same size,” pahayag niya. *RNT/JGC*

<https://remate.ph/mas-mataas-na-alokasyon-sa-meat-processors-sa-pork-may-target-ng-da/>

REMATE:

Inspeksyon sa onion storage iniatas ng DA para iwas manipulasyon sa presyo

February 25, 2025 07:35



MANILA, Philippines – Inatasan ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. ang Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) na inspeksyunin ang mga cold storage facility ng sibuyas upang maiwasan ang hoarding at manipulasyon ng presyo.

Nagsimula ang inspeksyon noong Lunes, at inaasahang lalabas ang resulta sa kalagitnaan ng linggo.

Naglabas ng kautusan si Tiu Laurel matapos ang pangamba na hindi maabot ng mga bagong aning sibuyas ang pamilihan, na posibleng magdulot ng pagtaas ng presyo.

Ayon sa kanya, ang pagtatago ng sibuyas sa simula ng anihan ay maituturing na hoarding.

Binabantayan din ng Department of Agriculture (DA) ang pagdating ng mga imported na sibuyas, kung saan 3,236 metric tons pa lamang sa kabuuang 4,000 MT ang inaasahang darating ngayong linggo.

Sa Metro Manila, ang presyo ng lokal na pulang sibuyas ay nasa pagitan ng PHP140 hanggang PHP240 kada kilo, habang ang puting sibuyas ay nasa PHP90 hanggang PHP160 kada kilo.

Kung hindi bababa ang presyo sa kabila ng pagdating ng imports, maaaring magpatupad ang DA ng maximum suggested retail price (MSRP).

Binibigyang-diin din ng DA ang pangangailangan ng “tactical” na pag-import upang mapanatili ang balanse ng suplay at maprotektahan ang interes ng mga lokal na magsasaka, na inaasahang maaabot ang peak harvest mula huling bahagi ng Marso hanggang Abril. *Santi Celario*

<https://remate.ph/inspeksyon-sa-onion-storage-iniatas-ng-da-para-iwas-manipulasyon-sa-presyo/>

REMATE:

P33-P35 kada kilong bigas mabibili na sa Manila

February 25, 2025 07:47



PINANGUNAHAN ni San Juan City Mayor Francis Zamora, at City Council kasama si Department of Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr., ang pagbebenta ng NFA rice sa halagang P1,650 kada sako, katumbas ng P33 kada kilo sa San Juan City Hall. Ang programang ito ay bahagi ng Food Security Emergency Program ng Pambansang Pamahalaan at naglalayong magbigay ng abot-kayang bigas sa gitna ng pagtaas ng presyo ng mga bilingin. **DANNY QUERUBIN**

MANILA, Philippines – Nagsimula nang magbenta ang mga lokal na pamahalaan sa Metro Manila ng bigas mula sa buffer stock ng National Food Authority (NFA) sa halagang P33 hanggang P35 kada kilo matapos ideklara ang food security emergency. Inisyal na 150,000 sako ang inilaan, at maaari pang madagdagan batay sa pangangailangan.

Bawat sako ay nagkakahalaga ng P1,650 o P33 kada kilo at maaaring ibenta sa mga mamimili ng hanggang P35 kada kilo. Binalaan ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. na huwag itong ibenta sa mga negosyante o taasan ang presyo lampas sa itinakdang halaga.

Sa San Juan City, pumila ang mga residente para sa murang bigas sa gitna ng pagtaas ng presyo ng mga pangunahing bilingin. Ayon kay Marisa Cruz, malaking tulong ang naipon nilang mahigit P1,000 sa gastos sa pagkain.

Malapit na ring maging available ang NFA rice sa mga probinsya tulad ng Camarines Sur. Wala pang limitasyon sa bentahan sa ngayon, pero posibleng magpatupad ng lingguhang cap kung tataas ang demand sa buong bansa. **RNT**

<https://remate.ph/p33-p35-kada-kilong-bigas-mabibili-na-sa-manila/>

REMATE:

TINGNAN: Murang bigas ng pamahalaan sinimulan na ibenta sa San Juan

February 24, 2025 15:10



PINANGUNAHAN ni San Juan City Mayor Francis Zamora, at City Council kasama si Department of Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr., ang pagbebenta ng NFA rice sa halagang P1,650 kada sako, katumbas ng P33 kada kilo sa San Juan City Hall. Ang programang ito ay bahagi ng Food Security Emergency Program ng Pambansang Pamahalaan at naglalayong magbigay ng abot-kayang bigas sa gitna ng pagtaas ng presyo ng mga bilihin. **DANNY QUERUBIN**



<https://remate.ph/tingnan-murang-bigas-ng-pamahalaan-sinimulan-na-ibenta-sa-san-juan/>

REMATE:

100 baboy patay sa ASF-like ailment sa Northern Samar

February 24, 2025 13:26



MANILA, Philippines – Iniulat ng municipal government ng Catarman, Northern Samar na namaay ang mahigit isang daang mga baboy sa 50 backyard raisers matapos makitaan ng sintomas ng African swine fever (ASF).

Ang mga baboy ay inaalagaan sa walong mga barangay na itinapon ng kani-kanilang mga may-ari bilang bahagi ng protocol sa paghawak ng mga may sakit na baboy, ani Rachel Arnaiz, municipal information officer.

Aniya, hindi pa nila makumpirma kung ang mga baboy ay nasawi dahil sa ASF “although they displayed ASF-like symptoms,” katulad ng mataas na lagnat, pamumula ng balat, kawalan ng ganang kumain, pagsusuka, panghihina, at ubo.

Ani Vivencio Moreno, slaughterhouse master and meat control officer, wala pa silang eksaktong bilang ng mga nasawing baboy “because the owners either butchered their pigs and sold them or they immediately buried them in a pit” upang maiwasan ang pagkalat ng bacteria.

Kasalukuyang nasa pink zone category ang Catarman na nangangahulugang malapit ito sa isang infected area o isang ASF-free area.

Inatasan na ni Catarman Mayor Francisco Aurelio Rosales III ang Municipal Agriculture Office na kumuha ng blood samples ng mga baboy na dinala sa local slaughterhouse at ang mga buhay na baboy na inaalagaan sa mga barangay na malapit sa lugar kung saan may hinihinalang kaso ng ASF.

Para maiwasan ang pagkalat ng ASF sa probinsya, ipinagbawal ni Northern Samar Gov. Edwin Ongchuan ang pagbiyahe ng mga buhay na baboy at pork products mula sa mga lugar na may hinihinalang kaso ng ASF gaya ng mga bayan ng Las Navas, Catubig at Laoang. ***RNT/JGC***

<https://remate.ph/100-baboy-patay-sa-asf-like-ailment-sa-northern-samar/>

ABANTE:

Tamang hinala sa hoarding: Laurel pinabusisi mga bodega ng sibuyas

Abante News

- February 24, 2025



Inatasan ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. ang Bureau of Plant Industry na bisitahin ang mga cold storage facility upang maberipika kung tinatago ang mga bagong ina-ning sibuyas sa bansa. Ang hakbang aniya ay bilang precautionary measure sa posibleng hoarding ng sibuyas.

“[Sinabihan kong] inspeksyunin kung meron bang new harvest na tinatago at hindi binebenta, kasi kung merong ganun, mali yon,” wika ni Tiu Laurel sa mga reporter nitong Lunes.

“Kung magtatago ka ng onion is towards the middle or end of the harvest season eh, not sa umpisa eh. Doon pa lang, makikita natin kung merong manipulasyon,” dagdag pa niya.

Aabutin aniya ng apat na araw hanggang isang linggo ang inspeksiyon sa mga cold storage facilities kaya matatagalan pa ang pagsusumite ng report sa kanya.

Nauna nang nirekomenda ng grupong SINAG na dapat din magkaroon ng maximum retail price sa mga sibuyas pero ayon sa Agriculture secretary, nananatili sa P170 per kilo ang presyo ng sibuyas ngayon.

“Kung sakaling tumaas pa, titirahin din natin ng gano’n pero as of the moment, harvest is coming soon. Sakaling mag MSRP sa onion, that would be limited, two weeks lang yan,” anang kalihim.

Kamakailan lamang, inaprubahan ng DA ang importasyon ng 3,000 tonelada ng pulang sibuyas at 1,000 tonelada ng puting sibuyas bilang paghahanda sa posibleng shorte ng supply bago ang panahon ng anihan.

<https://www.abante.com.ph/2025/02/24/tamang-hinala-sa-hoarding-laurel-pinabusisi-mga-bodega-ng-sibuyas/>

THE MANILA TIMES:

Oversupply to allow sugar exports to US

By Giselle P. Jordan

February 25, 2025

THE Philippines will export 66,000 metric tons (MT) of sugar to the United States before April to stabilize domestic prices, while the industry is at the peak of the milling season until March, according to Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) Administrator and CEO Pablo Luis Azcona.

Admitting he had been against exporting, Azcona said he learned, in the course of his job, that the country has an oversupply of sugar from January to March or the first quarter (Q1) of the year, the peak of the milling season, which tends to negatively impact on the farmers.

"What happens is [while] the retail and wholesale price remains, the farmer's price goes down because there's so much sugar. So, to create a demand and to stabilize the price, we export in January, February, and March, and then once we have a gap, we import when harvest is done, to replenish the export," Azcona explained.

The farmers agreed to let the SRA decide what's best, as long as they don't have to subsidize the exports, Azcona said. "The farmers sell their sugar at domestic prices, and that's what is exported, at a loss. They make up for their losses with their imports."

Previously the farmers had also been against exporting to the US, since the buying price was P1,000 lower than the domestic price per 50-kilogram bag.

Political decision

But Azcona said it's a political decision because the Philippines has one of the largest US sugar quotas per capita at 143,000 MT: "The SRA does not want to lose the quota... We never know, let's say there comes a year when we have a bumper crop, and there is excess yield."

Raw sugar inventory has increased with the opening of the Bukidnon and Panay mills, he said.

The SRA recently opened applications for the purchase of locally produced farmers' share sugar to avail of allocations for future imports program under Sugar Order (SO) 2. Azcona said the SRA has filled out the tonnage for exports.

Azcona pointed out the SRA was hoping to have 120,000 metric tons (MT) of locally produced farmers' sugar purchases to export 60,000 MT. For the agency to achieve a ratio of 2:1, local purchases should be twice the volume of exports.

"I was corrected by the exporters. I was saying 60,000 [MT], and they told me it's more efficient at 66,000 [MT] because we have a capacity of 33,000 MT per boat," Azcona said, adding that this would make the freight more cost-efficient.

The Philippines almost failed to make the deadline in 2024, Azcona disclosed. Sugar exports arrived in the US on Sept. 27, a few days shy of the Sept. 30 deadline. The sugar quality was by then deteriorating, causing the shipment to be slapped with a 10-percent penalty.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/02/25/business/top-business/oversupply-to-allow-sugar-exports-to-us/2061324>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Are onions being withheld from us? D.A. wants to know

Ada Pelonia

February 24, 2025

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) on Monday ordered the inspection of onion warehouses to determine if newly harvested supplies are being withheld from the market.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said onion harvests were expected to start this month, which should have provided fresh supplies that would ease prices. However, he noted that the harvest might not be reaching the market as expected.

“Last Friday, I directed the Bureau of Plant Industry and its team to visit all the onion cold storage facilities across the country and inspect whether newly harvested onions are being kept there instead of being sold,” Laurel said in a statement.

“If they are, that’s wrong. Onions are typically stored toward the middle or end of the harvest season, not at the start. This clearly points to price manipulation—it’s hoarding,” he added.

Laurel estimated that the BPI would complete its inspection within four to seven days, with a report expected by the end of the week.

Under the law, hoarding and price manipulation are illegal trade practices punishable by law.

Earlier, Laurel authorized the importation of 3,000 metric tons (MT) of red onions and 1,000 MT of white onions to address the projected shortfall before the harvest season.

BPI had earlier projected that the early harvest would add several metric tons to supply, with an expected total of around 33,000 MT by March.

Data from the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) showed that the country’s red onion inventory as of February 14 stood at 34 MT while yellow onion stocks were estimated at nearly 257 MT.

Retail prices of red onions ranged from P140 to P240 per kilo, higher than P115 to P180 per kilo recorded on January 25, based on the government’s latest price monitoring report.

Local white onions ranged from P90 to P150 per kilo while imported white onions stood at P110 to P160 per kilo.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/24/are-onions-being-withheld-from-us-d-a-wants-to-know/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

PHL to export 66K MT sugar to meet US quota allocation

Ada Pelonia

February 24, 2025

SIPALAY CITY—The Philippines is eyeing to export 66,000 metric tons (MT) of raw sugar before April to fulfill its United States sugar quota allocation and stabilize farmgate prices of the sweetener amid peak harvest season.

Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) Administrator Pablo Luis Azcona stressed the importance of maintaining the US quota, especially in case of a bumper crop.

“The Philippines has one of the largest US quotas. We don’t want to lose it,” Azcona told reporters in an interview here.

Azcona said they are looking at exporting early this year to guarantee that the shipment would arrive at its best condition before the September 30 deadline.

Last year, the US Trade Representative (USTR) announced the allocation of 145,235 metric tons raw value (MTRV) of raw cane sugar under the tariff-rate quota (TRQ) system for fiscal year 2025, which started on Oct. 1, 2024.

The Philippines got the third largest allocation after the Dominican Republic at 189,343 MTRV and Brazil at 155,993 MTRV.

Meanwhile, the SRA chief also noted the trajectory of oversupply in sugar during the first quarter, which pulled farmgate prices down.

“If you look at the inventories, the raw sugar inventory is going up already because we’re at the peak of milling season,” Azcona said.

“So, to create a need and a demand and to stabilize the price, we export [...] and then once we have a [supply] gap, we import when harvest is done to replenish the export.”

Azcona said the agency plans to import refined sugar at a ratio of 1 (raw sugar exported):2.5 (imported refined sugar).

“We are thinking of a total import [volume] for the export replenishment of about 165,000 MT of refined sugar. So, [the exporters] can make up for the difference in cost.”

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/24/phl-to-export-66k-mt-sugar-to-meet-us-quota-allocation/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

San Juan City launches affordable NFA rice sale at P1,650 per sack to combat rising food prices

Claudeth Mocon-Ciriaco

February 24, 2025

The city government of San Juan on Monday launched the sale of National Food Authority (NFA) rice at P1,650 per sack, equivalent to P33 per kilogram under the Food Security Emergency program of the National Government.

Mayor Francis Zamora said that the initiative aims to provide affordable rice to San Juaneños amidst rising food prices.

“Providing affordable rice to our residents is a priority for the City Government of San Juan. Through this program, we are ensuring that our constituents have access to quality food at a low price, especially in these challenging times,” Zamora said, highlighting the importance of the said initiative.

Zamora added that to help his constituents even more, San Juan is shouldering all the costs for hauling, transport, logistics, and other expenses associated with selling the rice.

“This is our way of assisting our residents and ensuring they have access to affordable food. We will get them from the NFA at P1,650 and sell them to our constituents at P1,650 as well so as not to burden our people with additional expenses. The city government will shoulder all of these expenses for them,” he explained.

San Juan City will sell the rice per 50-kilogram sack. The city has committed to an initial 1,000 sacks, with provisions to order more should demand increase.

Department of Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. was also present to witness the start of the rice distribution.

Zamora was among the first local chief executives to express interest in participating in this program for the benefit of his constituents.

The National Government declared a Food Security Emergency in response to fluctuating rice prices and supply concerns.

This program, facilitated by the Department of Agriculture, ensures that staple food remains accessible to Filipino families.

The NFA rice program is part of the government’s measures to stabilize food prices and ensure national food security.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/24/san-juan-city-launches-affordable-nfa-rice-sale-at-p1650-per-sack-to-combat-rising-food-prices/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

SRA to impose fees on sweeteners in March

Ada Pelonia

February 24, 2025

Bacolod City—The government will start implementing in March a sugar order (SO) that calls for the imposition of import clearance fees on alternative sweeteners, according to the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA).

SRA Administrator Pablo Luis Azcona said a draft SO consisting of amended guidelines would take effect next month.

He added that the draft order would be sent to industry groups this week for comments.

“We’re ready [to implement it],” Azcona told reporters in an interview here.

The SRA had issued SO 6, which imposes a clearance fee of P60 per metric ton (MT) on imported goods under Harmonized System (HS) codes 1701, 1702, and 1704.

Some of these items include sucrose, lactose, maltose, glucose, maple syrup, honey, caramel, and sugar confectionery items, such as chewing gum and white chocolate not containing cocoa.

Importers of items under these tariff codes should first secure a clearance before their shipments are released by the Bureau of Customs (BOC).

However, the supposed implementation of the measure last February 1 was deferred after confectionery and beverage makers voiced their concerns about possible shipment delays.

Azcona confirmed that some of the amended rules decided by the regulatory agency and industry groups are the immediate approval of import clearances when not acted on by SRA in five days and the “green lane” which would streamline the application process for legitimate importers.

He noted that they are in the process of organizing an online portal that would make the application process “more efficient.”

The importers should also secure a new license for other sugars or the shipments under HS 1702 to collect a database on those importing these items.

“We told them [that] to avoid the red tape, we will give them six months to finish their license application...or the meantime, they can continue importing,” Azcona said.

Last month, the Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI) warned of a possible spike in prices of confectionery and beverages due to the implementation of SO 6.

FPI said the order could trigger a ripple effect, such as congestion at the ports that would result in additional demurrage charges. Such fees would eventually put pressure on the prices of sweet treats and beverages.

However, Azcona said the P60 per MT clearance fee would not make a dent in the manufacturers’ margins.

“Their average shipment cost is P75,000 per ton. Given the P60 per MT import clearance fee, that would only be 0.08 percent of their cost.”

Azcona said the goal of SO 6 is “to provide accurate data for better supply and demand planning, ultimately benefiting both local farmers and consumers.”

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/24/sra-to-impose-fees-on-sweeteners-in-march/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Kadiwa stores to rise in PNP and AFP headquarters

Ada Pelonia

February 24, 2025

The Department of Agriculture (DA) on Friday signed agreements with the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to expand the Kadiwa ng Pangulo program.

The DA said the initiative aims to provide farmers and fishermen with direct access to markets where they can sell their produce to consumers.

In separate events, Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr. led the launch of Kadiwa ng Pangulo stores at both the PNP headquarters in Camp Crame and the AFP headquarters in Camp Aguinaldo. PNP Chief Police General Rommel Marbil and AFP Chief of Staff General Romeo Brawner Jr. hosted the events.

The Kadiwa ng Pangulo centers will be set up in select police and military camps across the country, offering PNP and AFP personnel and residents in surrounding communities access to affordable, fresh agricultural products while simultaneously supporting local farmers and fisherfolk. The PNP employs around 228,000 personnel, while the AFP has about 150,000 members.

“This initiative brings us closer to achieving a sustainable agricultural economy,” Laurel said in a statement. “By eliminating middlemen, the Kadiwa stores ensure fair prices for farmers and lower costs for consumers.”

Brawner welcomed the DA’s effort to address the needs of Filipino soldiers and their families, particularly in providing fresh and affordable food.

“If our country is food-secure—where supply is stable and prices are affordable—we will have a more stable nation.”

Marbil echoed this sentiment, saying the initiative to bring the Kadiwa ng Pangulo is “a testament to genuine concern of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. for the welfare and well-being of the men in uniform.”

The program tackles two major challenges: increasing market access for producers and offering affordable food for consumers.

“By linking farmers and fishers directly with institutional buyers like the PNP and AFP, Kadiwa promotes a more equitable agricultural ecosystem.”

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/24/kadiwa-stores-to-rise-in-pnp-and-afp-headquarters/>

BUSINESS MIRROR:

Govt banks on imports to prevent surges in fish prices

Ada Pelonia

February 24, 2025

The government is aiming to prevent price surges in the domestic market by allowing the importation of up to 25,000 metric tons (MT) of various fish and seafood, according to the Department of Agriculture (DA). Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said he has approved the guidelines for the importation of various fish and seafood starting March.

“This will also add variety in the market, especially for food service industry, since fish and marine species covered by this importation are mostly fish and marine products not caught locally,” Laurel said in a statement.

“This should not affect local fishermen and should help in the ease of doing business.”

The National Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council (NFARMC) set this import ceiling late last year, viewing it as “an experimental approach” to address inflation concerns and improve the allocation of import volume for institutional buyers and wet markets.

Laurel said the goal is to test whether the combined import cap can help stabilize prices while ensuring sufficient food supply.

As part of the trial, NFARMC also mandated an impact analysis to evaluate whether the import limit would effectively curb inflation, improve food security, and diversify nutritional offerings.

Under the approved guidelines, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) will issue sanitary and phytosanitary import clearances with 45-day validity. Additionally, only BFAR-accredited cold storage facilities will be allowed to store the imported seafood.

Importers wishing to participate must have been accredited for at least one year and previously engaged in similar imports. Those under investigation for food safety violations, incomplete documentary requirements or without Bureau of Customs accreditation at the start of the importation period will be excluded.

Covered by the 25,000-MT import ceiling are Alaskan pollock, barramundi, blue fin tuna, capelin, Chilean seabass, clams, cobia, cod, croaker, eel, emperor, fish meat, flounder, gindara, grouper, hake, and halibut. It also covers hamachi, hoki, lobster, marlin, moonfish, mussels, mullet, octopus, oil fish, oyster, pangasius, red snapper, salmon, sardines, scallops, sea bream, silverfish, smelt, soft and hardshell crabs, squid, swordfish, tuna by-products, and yellowtail sole.

Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) showed that fisheries output fell by 5 percent to 4.05 million metric tons (MMT) in 2024, the lowest in two decades.

Preliminary data from the PSA indicated that the total volume of fisheries production last year was lower than the 4.26 MMT recorded in 2023.

This production level was last seen in 2004, when output reached 3.93 MMT, according to figures from the PSA.

The agency said output of the three out of the four subsectors registered declines last year. Only the commercial fisheries subsector posted an increase in production in 2024.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/24/govt-banks-on-imports-to-prevent-surges-in-fish-prices/>

PILIPINO STAR NGAYON:

Malaking bulto ng imported pork, ilalaan ng DA sa meat processors

Angie dela Cruz

February 25, 2025 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Target ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel na ilaan ang malaking bulto ng imported pork sa meat processors upang matiyak na magiging stable ang presyo ng karneng baboy sa mga pamilihan sa bansa sa ilalim ng Minimum Access Volume (MAV)

Aniya nasa 30,000 hanggang 55,000 metrikong tonelada ng karne na sakop ng MAV quota ang ilalaan sa meat processors.

“ This quota collects a lower 15 percent tariff on pork compared to the standard 25 percent,” pahayag ni Secretary Tiu-Laurel..

Sinabi ni Tiu-Laurel, ang matitirang 10,000 metrikong tonelada ng karne ay pantay na ibibigay sa mga traders.

Pumapalo sa ngayon sa P400 ang kada kilo ng karne sa mga palengke. Nagpasalamat naman si Jet Ambalada, director ng Philippine Association of Meat Processors Inc., sa plano ng Kalihim.

<https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/metro/2025/02/25/2424000/malaking-bulto-ng-imported-pork-ilalaan-ng-da-sa-meat-processors>