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**MANILA BULLETIN:**

# Philippines declares food security emergency amid soaring rice prices

BY [DEXTER BARRO II](#)

Feb 3, 2025 07:20 PM

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The Department of Agriculture (DA) declared on Monday, Feb. 3, a food security emergency on rice as prices for the commodity remain stubbornly high.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel said the declaration was prompted by the "extraordinary" increase in local rice prices despite the government's reduction in tariffs last year and the lower global market costs.

Under this, the National Food Authority (NFA) is authorized to release rice buffer stocks in a bid to stabilize prices.

"Despite efforts to liberalize rice imports and reduce tariffs, the domestic market has been slow to respond, with retail prices surpassing expectations," Laurel said,

"This volatility has left many Filipinos, particularly those in lower-income brackets, struggling to afford rice," he stressed.

Laurel, through Department Circular (DC) No. 03, said it is critical for the agency to act urgently to ensure that rice remains accessible for Filipinos.

His decision follows a resolution approved by the National Price Coordinating Council (NPCC) on Jan. 16 recommending the need for a declaration.

Citing figures from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), the NPCC noted that rice inflation jumped to 17.9 percent in July 2023, far exceeding the government's target of four percent for food inflation.

It likewise referenced data in December 2024, which stated that the cost of regular and well-milled rice remained high, with increases by 19 percent and 20 percent, respectively, compared to that of the previous year.

The NPCC, headed by Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Secretary Cristina Roque, identified the "extraordinary" nature of the price increases, which prompted Laurel's move.

The authority to declare a food security emergency was granted to the Agriculture Secretary under Republic Act (RA) No. 12078, which amended the Rice Tariffication Law (RTL).

The law, signed in December of last year, also permits Laurel to direct the NFA to release its buffer stocks to the Kadiwa ng Pangulo (KNP) program, local government units (LGUs), and other government agencies. Without a declaration, the NFA is legally restricted from selling rice directly to the public.

The NFA currently holds a buffer stock of approximately 300,000 metric tons (MT) of rice.

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

Releasing these reserves is expected to help decongest warehouses in preparation for the upcoming February harvest.

With the upcoming rice harvest season, the NFA is set to procure palay or unmilled rice at P23 per kilo.

The declaration of a food security emergency is anticipated to bring some relief to consumers, with potential price reductions of P3 to P5.

Laurel said the food security emergency will remain in effect until the situation improves, although the government has committed to regularly monitor the situation to determine when it can be lifted.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/2/3/ph-declares-food-security-emergency-amid-soaring-rice-prices>

**MANILA BULLETIN:**

# GP Party-list eyes nationwide replication of Nueva Ecija rice production model

BY [ELLSON QUISMORIO](#)

Feb 3, 2025 11:41 PM

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## AT A GLANCE

- Nueva Ecija's rice production success is so impressive that Galing sa Puso (GP) Party-list wants to replicate it in the entire country through legislation.



Galing sa Puso (GP) Party-list first nominee Jan Padiernos (GP Party-list)

Nueva Ecija's rice production success is so impressive that Galing sa Puso (GP) Party-list wants to replicate it in the entire country through legislation.

GP Party-list first nominee, lawyer Jan Rurik Padiernos had this to say following the Department of Agriculture's (DA) statement that a national food security emergency will be declared by Feb. 4 due to the persistently high prices of rice.

This, despite the global price drops and tariff reductions on the Filipino staple grain.

Padiernos says that the Nueva Ecija model of rice production could be beneficial to the country in the long run.

"The success of Nueva Ecija in sustaining rice production provides a valuable blueprint that we can replicate nationwide through well-targeted legislative measures," stressed the aspiring House of Representatives member.

Padiernos also highlighted the urgent need for improved infrastructure and support for farmers, including access to modern technologies, advanced farming practices, and better logistics systems.

"The Philippines must invest in a resilient and sustainable agricultural system that is capable of meeting the growing demands of our people," he said.

The DA's potential emergency declaration comes after prices in certain areas remain elevated, even with the 35 percent to 15 percent tariff reduction implemented last July under President Marcos' directive.

DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. confirmed that the National Price Coordinating Council had recommended such declaration.

If the emergency declaration is issued, the National Food Authority (NFA) will sell buffer stocks to government agencies and local government units at P36 per kilogram and to consumers at P38 per kilogram.

Under the amended Rice Tariffication Law, the DA is authorized to declare a food security emergency if rice supply shortages or extraordinary price hikes occur.

[https://mb.com.ph/2025/2/3/gp-party-list-eyes-replication-of-nueva-ecija-rice-production-model-in-the-philippines#google\\_vignette](https://mb.com.ph/2025/2/3/gp-party-list-eyes-replication-of-nueva-ecija-rice-production-model-in-the-philippines#google_vignette)

**MANILA BULLETIN:**

# **DOST to launch Elev8 Philippines to fortify AI, quantum tech, biopharmaceuticals**

**BY [JEL SANTOS](#)**

Feb 3, 2025 06:09 PM

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In a bid to strengthen the country’s technological landscape, the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) said it will launch Elev8 Philippines on Feb. 5, an ambitious research and development (R&D) program focusing on eight key technology areas, including artificial intelligence (AI), quantum computing, and biopharmaceuticals.

DOST Secretary Renato Solidum Jr. said the initiative aims to bolster the country’s scientific and technological capabilities, addressing critical sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, and healthcare.

“Elev8 kasi walong R&D programs na malalaki na sa tingin namin ay kinakailangan ng ating bansa na mapalakas (Elev8 because it consists of eight major R&D programs that we believe our country needs to strengthen),” he said during an interview with state-controlled PTV-4 on Monday, Feb. 3.

One of the program’s major components, according to him, is the establishment of AI hubs to enhance computing power in universities and strengthen AI-driven applications across industries.

“Maliban sa paggawa at pag-increase ng ating kapasidad na gumamit ng artificial intelligence sa pagpapalakas ng ating infrastructure sa DOST, gusto nating tulungan ang iba’t ibang mga unibersidad na magkaroon din sila ng computing power para iyong paggamit ng artificial intelligence applications ay maparami pa at mapabilis (Apart from developing and increasing our capacity to use artificial intelligence to strengthen DOST’s infrastructure, we also want to help various universities acquire computing power so that the use of AI applications can expand and accelerate),” Solidum said.

He stated that the initiative will also prioritize quantum technologies, particularly quantum computing, to ensure the country is prepared for future advancements in computing power.

Another focus area is smart technologies, which will support various industries through funding and innovation-driven solutions.

### **Data analytics, industry 4.0, circular economy**

The DOST chief said Elev8 Philippines will introduce the Geospatial Analytics and Technology Solutions Program to improve data collation and analysis, starting within the DOST system.

“After analytics, gagawa ka ng solusyon doon (you will develop a solution based on it),” Solidum added.

The program will also promote Industry 4.0, assisting local manufacturers in integrating advanced technologies to enhance production efficiency, he stated.

As such, Solidum said it will push for a circular economy, aligning with the Philippine Development Plan by leveraging science, technology, and innovation to minimize waste and maximize the use of raw materials.

“Science, technology, and innovation-driven ang circular economy. Paano natin magagamit ang dati natin na ay waste parts ng mga halaman o mabawasan ang waste sa mga production pati consumption ng mga tao (The circular economy is driven by science, technology, and innovation. How can we repurpose plant waste or reduce waste in both production and consumer consumption)?” he explained.

### **Gearing workforce for advanced technologies**

With the rapid development of AI, quantum computing, and smart technologies, Solidum acknowledged the need to strengthen workforce development, particularly in tertiary institutions.

“Iyong iba diyan ay kailangan natin ng dagdag na tulong. For example, mayroon tayong pag-uusap with the private sector advisory council ng ating Pangulo on semi-conductor and electronics, pagdating sa isang industriya na iyan ang pinakamataas ang export natin. Pero marami na rin tayong kumpetisyon sa palibot ng Southeast Asia tulad ng Vietnam (Some of those areas will need additional support. For example, we are in discussions with the President’s private sector advisory council on semiconductors and electronics, as this is the country’s top export industry. However, we are facing increasing competition from neighboring Southeast Asian countries like Vietnam),” he stated.

Solidum stressed that while the country has made progress in AI research, there remains a gap in workforce readiness for industries.

“Iyong artificial intelligence, iyong workforce development ay kailangan, kasi nagsimula kami sa mga researchers kaya nakakagawa na tayo ng AI application sa iba’t ibang larangan ng R&D. Pero pagdating sa industriya, kulang pa. Kailangan natin ngayon na masigurado na iyong ating educational system ay magkaroon ng transformation para matutunan ng ating mga kababayan itong mga makabagong teknolohiya (Artificial intelligence and workforce development are essential because we started with researchers, which is why we have been able to create AI applications in various fields of R&D. However, when it comes to industry, there is still a gap. We now need to ensure that our educational system undergoes a transformation so that our fellow citizens can learn these modern technologies),”he explained.

DOST, he said, will play a crucial role in bridging this gap.

### **Advancing agriculture, biopharmaceuticals**

Recognizing the importance of food security, Solidum said that Elev8 Philippines will strengthen smart agriculture by supporting local governments in adopting innovative farming technologies such as SARAI (Smarter Approaches to Reinvigorate Agriculture as an Industry in the Philippines).

“Ito ay inirekomenda ng private sector advisory council na palaganapin ang implementasyon nito sa buong Pilipinas at gagawin natin ito sa lahat ng rehiyon ng bansa in partnership with DA and local government at siyempre iyong mga farmers and cooperative (This was recommended by the private sector advisory council to expand its implementation across the Philippines, and we will implement it in all regions of the country in partnership with the Department of Agriculture (DA), local governments, and of course, the farmers and cooperatives),” he said.

He added that the program will also promote high-value crops through smart agricultural techniques.

“For example, iyong Japanese melon na mahal na dati-rati ay sa Japan pa ine-import, nagawa na ito sa Pilipinas through greenhouse with all the gadgets na mano-monitor mo iyong temperatura, iyong sunlight, iyong nutrition (For example, the Japanese melon, which was once expensive and imported from Japan, is now grown in the Philippines through greenhouses equipped with gadgets that allow you to monitor the temperature, sunlight, and nutrition),” he stated.

In addition, he said that the initiative will focus on developing local agricultural machinery to reduce dependence on imports and generate more jobs for local fabricators.

The program, he said, will also invest in biologics in pharmaceuticals, aiming to enhance disease prevention and develop locally manufactured medicines.

“Ma-improve pa natin ang pag-prevent ng ating mga sakit at makagawa ng mga gamot para sa mga sakit dito sa Pilipinas (We can further improve disease prevention and develop medicines for illnesses in the Philippines),” said Solidum.

<https://mb.com.ph/2025/2/3/dost-to-launch-elev8-philippines-to-fortify-ai-quantum-tech-biopharmaceuticals>

**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

# DA declares food security emergency

**Bella Cariaso** - The Philippine Star

February 4, 2025 | 12:00am



**A man takes sacks of newly delivered Kadiwa ng Pangulo rice to a stall at the Kamuning Market in Quezon City on February 3, 2025**

Michael Varcas **Max SRP of 55/kilo for imported rice takes effect**

MANILA, Philippines — The country has been placed under a food security emergency as measures set in place by the government to pull down rice prices have failed.

Citing an “extraordinary increase in rice prices,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. issued yesterday Department Circular No. 3 formally declaring a food security emergency, based on a resolution of the 10-member National Price Coordinating Council (NPCC).

He said that under the newly enacted Republic Act 12078 or the Agricultural Tariffication Act, the secretary of the Department of Agriculture – upon the recommendation of the NPCC – may declare a food security emergency to address supply shortages or extraordinary increases in rice prices.

“On the basis of the recommendations (of the NPCC), the secretary hereby resolves to declare a food security emergency on rice due to extraordinary increase in prices,” Tiu Laurel said in his department circular.

Aside from the DA, members of the NPCC include secretaries of the Departments of Trade and Industry, Health, the Interior and Local Government, Environment and Natural Resources, Justice, Energy and Transportation as well as the National Economic and Development Authority.

“The state of food security emergency shall remain in force and effect until lifted or withdrawn by the secretary,” Tiu Laurel said.

He said that NPPC Resolution No. 01 cited the report of the Philippine Statistics Authority that rice inflation in July 2023 reached 4.2 percent, exceeding the upper limit of the four percent food inflation target under the Philippine Development Plan 2024-2028.

Tiu Laurel received the NPCC resolution on Jan. 30.

He said rice inflation further increased, reaching 17.9 percent in September 2023.



“The (NPCC) resolution determined that rice prices remain elevated, emphasizing that in December 2024, the price levels of regular milled rice and well-milled rice were respectively 19 percent and 20 percent higher compared to the period before the price spikes in July 2023,” Tiu Laurel noted.

He said the NPCC has resolved to adopt a formula for determining extraordinary price increases.

“There is an extraordinary increase in the price of rice when the rice inflation has exceeded the upper bound target for food inflation and reached double digits,” Tiu Laurel pointed out.

He said that as provided for in the NPCC resolution, the formula for the determination of the existence of an extraordinary increase in rice prices shall be subject to review every four months.

With the declaration of food security emergency, the National Food Authority (NFA) can start selling its rice stocks at P36 per kilo to local government units, which can resell it at P38 per kilo.

Tiu Laurel said that at least 300,000 metric tons (MT) of NFA rice will be released in the market.

Aside from the food security emergency, the DA has implemented a maximum suggested retail price of P58 after Executive Order 62, which lowered the tariff on imported grains to 15 percent, failed to bring down the retail price of rice.

The maximum SRP will further decrease to P55 per kilo beginning Feb. 5, Tiu Laurel said.

“As I previously said, the next maximum SRP will be P55 (per kilo) by Feb. 5. The maximum SRP for imported rice should be P55 and again by Feb. 15, it (maximum SRP) should be P52 (per kilo) and by March 1, the maximum SRP for imported rice five percent broken should be P49 per kilo,” Tiu Laurel said.

A maximum SRP of P58 per kilo took effect on Jan. 20 as rice prices remained elevated despite the implementation of EO 62 which lowered the tariff on imported rice to 15 percent from the previous 35 percent. President Marcos signed EO 62 in June 2024 and it took effect in July.

He said retailers were able to comply with the maximum SRP on imported grains.

“I am happy to report that almost all were able to comply based on the monitoring of the DA, the Department of Trade and Industry and Philippine National Police. I cannot say 100 percent as it is possible that we did not see (those selling beyond P58 per kilo) but all the markets that we visited were able to comply with the maximum SRP,” Tiu Laurel added.

He noted that world rice prices continue to go down. Based on the monitoring of the DA in Metro Manila markets, the retail price of imported special rice was sold between P52 and P61 per kilo. The P61 per kilo was still high compared to the P58 maximum SRP set by the government.

Imported premium rice ranged between P51 and P58 per kilo; imported well-milled rice, between P44 and P52 per kilo and imported regular milled rice, between P38 and P48 per kilo.

At the same time, Tiu Laurel said that Kadiwa ng Pangulo will continue to sell affordable rice until the end of the term of President Marcos in 2028. “We plan to run it (Kadiwa ng Pangulo) until the last day of this administration,” he said.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary for agribusiness, marketing and consumer affairs Genevieve Velicarica-Guevarra has said that at least 57 more Kadiwa ng Pangulo stores will open in Metro Manila where affordable rice varieties will be available.

## **Incompetence**

For the Federation of Free Farmers (FFF), the food security emergency declaration was meant to cover the inability of the NFA to manage its rice stocks properly.

“An emergency declaration would allow NFA to sell its inventory to national government agencies, local government units and Kadiwa stores, thereby freeing up warehouse space for the agency’s palay procurement,” FFF president Diosocoro Granada said earlier yesterday.

According to Granada, almost one-third of NFA’s current inventory of 300,000 MT could already be classified as aging rice and should have been disposed of earlier through public auction to interested buyers without need for an emergency declaration.

“A food emergency announcement, however, would authorize NFA to sell its stocks to government agencies at subsidized, below-market rates. Aside from causing the agency to incur huge financial losses, the sale of cheap NFA rice could open the door to widespread leakages and corruption. It could also work

against farmers if traders decide to lower their palay buying prices to compete with NFA rice,” Granada added.

He noted that congestion in NFA warehouses could have been avoided or minimized through proper disposal of stocks during the many calamities in 2024 and programmed sales of aging rice.

He added that palay and rice stocks in major production areas should have been transferred in advance to urban centers and other demand areas in preparation for the agency’s palay buying and rice distribution activities.

At the same time, Granada belied claims that the NFA’s warehouses are filled to the brim, noting that the agency’s warehouses have a total capacity of over one million tons, of which less than one-third is currently being used.

Earlier yesterday, FFF national manager Raul Montemayor asked the DA to fully study the legality of declaring food security emergency.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2025/02/04/2419069/da-declares-food-security-emergency>

**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

# **GCash, PCIC partner for faster farmer indemnification**

**Jasper Emmanuel Arcalas** - The Philippine Star

February 4, 2025 | 12:00am

Oscar Enrico Reyes Jr. and Jovy Bernabe

MANILA, Philippines — E-wallet giant GCash and the Philippine Crop Insurance Corp. have teamed up for a faster and more efficient rollout of indemnity payments to insure farmers nationwide.

PCIC president Jovy Bernabe signed a memorandum of agreement with G-Xchange Inc. president and CEO Oscar Enrico Reyes Jr. for the streamlining of the indemnification payout system, empowering farmers and advancing financial inclusion in rural areas.

PCIC is an attached corporation of the Department of Agriculture.

“Your commitment to this partnership demonstrates our shared goal of empowering the agricultural sector through innovation. Together, we are paving the way for a more resilient and financially inclusive future for our farmers and fisherfolk,” Bernabe said.

Under the MOA, GCash’s Funds Disbursement Service (FDS) would be introduced to the PCIC system, enabling indemnity payments to be deposited directly into farmers’ GCash wallet accounts in real-time. This, the PCIC pointed out, would eliminate delays and inefficiencies associated with issuing physical checks for indemnification.

“This innovation not only aligns with the government’s goal of financial inclusivity but also supports PCIC’s push for digitalization and process efficiency,” Bernabe said.

The PCIC said the partnership would allow farmers to be empowered, encouraging them to save, invest and access microfinancing tools for resilience and financial growth within the GCash ecosystem.

“It envisions to uplift agricultural communities and ensure resilience, inclusivity and innovation for farmers nationwide,” the PCIC added.

**<https://www.philstar.com/business/2025/02/04/2418969/gcash-pcic-partner-faster-farmer-indemnification>**



As of February 1, the [price range](#) for rice per kilogram in Metro Manila markets is as follows:

- **Imported**
  - **Special: P52 to P61**
  - **Premium: P51 to P58**
  - **Well-milled: P40 to P52**
  - **Regular milled: P38 to P48**
- **Local**
  - **Special: P55 to P63**
  - **Premium: P50 to P57**
  - **Well-milled: P40 to P55**
  - **Regular milled: P37 to P46**

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2025/02/03/2418959/da-declares-food-security-emergency-curb-rising-rice-prices>

**THE PHILIPPINE STAR:**

# Nationwide emulation of Nueva Ecija's rice production sought

Philstar.com

February 3, 2025 | 4:07pm



Farmers start harvesting their rice stalks at a rice field in Rajal, Nueva Ecija on March 13, 2023.

STAR / KJ Rosales

MANILA, Philippines — A bill seeking to replicate Nueva Ecija's success in rice production across the Philippines is being eyed at the resumption of the 20th Congress.

Galing sa Puso (GP) Party-list said it is planning to file the measure in response to the ongoing rice crisis. Atty. Jan Rurik Padiernos, GP's first nominee, made the announcement following the Department of Agriculture's statement that a national food security emergency will be declared by February 4 due to persistently high rice prices, despite global price drops and tariff reductions.

Padiernos suggested that Nueva Ecija's proven success in maintaining rice production is a "valuable blueprint" for national implementation, which is beneficial for the country in the long run.

"The success of Nueva Ecija in sustaining rice production provides a valuable blueprint that we can replicate nationwide through well-targeted legislative measures," Padiernos said.

He also cited the urgent need for improved infrastructure and support for farmers, including access to modern technologies, advanced farming practices, and better logistics systems.

"The Philippines must invest in a resilient and sustainable agricultural system that is capable of meeting the growing demands of our people," Padiernos added.

The DA's potential emergency declaration comes after prices in certain areas remain elevated, even with the 35% to 15% tariff reduction implemented last July under President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr.'s directive.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. confirmed that the National Price Coordinating Council has recommended this declaration, which the DA is still reviewing.

If the emergency declaration is issued, the National Food Authority will sell buffer stocks to government agencies and local government units at P36 per kilogram and to consumers at P38 per kilogram.

Under the amended Rice Tariffication Law, the DA is authorized to declare a food security emergency if rice supply shortages or extraordinary price hikes occur.

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2025/02/03/2418938/nationwide-emulation-nueva-ecijas-rice-production-sought>

**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:**

## South Korea donates 4,000 metric tons of rice to Kristine victims

By: [Jane Bautista](#) - Reporter / [@janebautistaINQ](#)  
Philippine Daily Inquirer / 05:10 AM February 04, 2025



Agriculture Secretary Francisco “Kiko” Tiu Laurel Jr. led the ceremonial distribution of 100,000 bags of rice donated by the Republic of Korea on Monday, February 3, in Laurel, Batangas, to aid families affected by Tropical Storm Kristine across Regions I-V. —Photo from DA

MANILA, Philippines — South Korea has donated 4,000 metric tons (MT) of rice to families in regions affected by Severe Tropical Storm Kristine (international name: Trami) last year.

The donation, totaling 100,000 sacks weighing 40 kilograms each, was shipped in two batches from South Korea to the Philippines in December and last month, the Korean embassy in Manila said in a statement.

Seoul’s donation is part of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve Tier 3 program (Apterr), with the Philippines represented by the National Food Authority.

Monday’s donation ceremony in Laurel, Batangas, was a follow-up initiative from the Korea-Philippines summit held during Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol’s state visit to Manila in October last year.

The event was attended by key officials, including Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr., Social Welfare Undersecretary for Disaster Response Management Group Diana Rose Cajipe, Laurel town Mayor Lyndon Bruce, Korean Ambassador to the Philippines Lee Sang-hwa, and Apterr secretary general Choomjet Karnjanakesorn.

According to the Department of Agriculture (DA), Laurel town was one of the hardest-hit areas by Kristine, with families needing relocation and

“This donation is more than just a gift of rice; it is a symbolic example of the readiness of both nations to cooperate on food security and disaster resilience,” Lee said in his speech.

In a statement, Tiu Laurel said the rice donation would cover the needs of affected residents across the Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Mimaropa and Bicol regions.

“Given the high food prices, this gift of rice from the government of Korea is most certainly welcome and provides timely assistance to the Philippine government in its efforts to aid calamity-affected provinces,” he added.

The Korean Embassy described the donation as a “significant milestone in strengthening the Philippines’ food security and further advancing bilateral cooperation.”

In 2024, the country incurred almost one million MT in losses in palay production due to the combined effects of the El Niño phenomenon, successive wea

The local palay output declined to 19.08 million MT in 2024 from 20.06 million MT in 2023. The DA, however, expressed optimism that local production would recover this year with more support given to farmers. —*with a report from PNA*

<https://globalnation.inquirer.net/263326/south-korea-donates-4000-metric-tons-of-rice-to-kristine-victims>



**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:**

# Failed agriculture, failed state

By: [Cielito F. Habito](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 04:55 AM February 04, 2025



I'm convinced that our failures as a nation largely trace back to failures in agriculture. I have also long been convinced that our failures in agriculture trace back to failures in governance and institutions.

It's not lack of knowledge and technology; we still have among the best brains in the agricultural sciences, and many of our neighbors' agricultural scientists trained here, especially at the University of the Philippines Los Baños and the International Rice Research Institute. It's not inferior natural endowments. Our soils are no less fertile, and waters for our fisheries far more abundant than in our neighbors. It's not lack of human power; Filipinos, especially from rural areas, are in fact forced to seek gainful work overseas by the millions. Yes, we have a disadvantage in exposure to destructive typhoons, but so does Vietnam, which has, nonetheless, come from behind and gone far ahead of us in farm performance. We actually have what it takes to have a farm and fisheries sector as dynamic as what our now more prosperous neighbors have achieved.

The difference with our neighbors lies in how we've governed and managed the sector. Just look at our agriculture bureaucracy's checkered history of corruption scandals, politicized and populist decision-making, excessive top-down management, and overall ineffectiveness. When the President finally appointed a full-time secretary of the Department of Agriculture (DA) after more than a year of taking on the job himself, I humbly offered unsolicited advice in this column, summed up in three S words: scale, support, and subsidiarity ("To our new DA chief," 11/7/23).

On scale, I suggested that we copy how our neighbors consolidated small farms into efficient large operating units to lower costs via economies of scale. On support, I urged a shift from relying on defensive trade protection to aggressive nurturing via appropriate support for our farmers toward sustained improvement in productivity and

international competitiveness. On subsidiarity, I suggested that the DA move away from top-down governance but instead work through the provinces, which must take responsibility and accountability for coordinating their municipalities in strengthening farmers and fishers. I called attention to how his predecessor had rolled out the very promising Province-led Agriculture and Fisheries Extension System or Pafes, which has already been picking up steam. It is proving to be a better way to deliver the second S of support to help our farmers stand shoulder to shoulder with their Asean counterparts, and stop fearing imports but rather see them as healthy competition to keep them on their toes. In the end, this is what will keep our food prices low, foster agri-based industries that are export competitive, and assure food security for our poor—the way things have been in our neighbors.

We all need to understand the critical importance of a strong farm sector to the rest of our economy and society, especially now that resurging inflation driven by food prices is prompting loud calls for wage increases. Our failures in agriculture led to much higher food prices than in our neighbors, especially for our rice staple, our primary wage good. Costlier wage goods, defined as the necessities that workers need to survive, necessitate wages higher than need be, and in turn, make it harder to attract job-creating and poverty-reducing investments.

Our wide poverty and high food prices led to high rates of severe child malnutrition and stunting, and their resulting weak cognitive and learning abilities compound the failures of our damaged education system. Not only does the poor state of education seriously threaten the quality of our future workforce, it also explains the political immaturity that yields the kind of leaders we keep voting into power. And it's these very leaders who push us ever closer to being a failed state; not a few believe we already are.

In the past year, agriculture's performance was abysmal. Output and incomes in the sector kept dropping in the last three quarters, ending in an overall annual decline of -1.6 percent, from as deep as -9.3 percent in sugarcane to -1.2 percent in pineapple. Now we see headlines on impending shortages of tomatoes, eggs, and more. It's convenient to blame bad weather for the glaring negative numbers almost all across our various crops, yet destructive typhoons have always been a fact of life in our farm areas. Persistent declines in farm performance point to systemic weakness. As an Inquirer editorial argued last November, we must “stop blaming the weather each time the agriculture sector posts a dismal production. There are available solutions, the only problem is that the government is not focusing on them with enough vigor and funding.” (see “Economy's weakest link,” 11/11/24)

And that, my friends, is why many believe our nation is failing.

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cielito.habito@gmail.com

<https://opinion.inquirer.net/180550/failed-agriculture-failed-state>

**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:**

# DA declares food security emergency

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

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 04:45 AM February 04, 2025



Agriculture Sec. Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. —DA

MANILA, Philippines — Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. declared a food security emergency on Monday, as he had announced earlier, to address the “extraordinary” rise in retail prices of rice.

The food security emergency declaration, contained in Department Circular No. 3 issued by the Department of Agriculture (DA), will remain in effect “until lifted or withdrawn” by the agriculture secretary.

It was issued as retail rice prices remained high despite a decline in global rice prices and a reduction in rice tariff rates to 15 percent since July last year, from 35 percent previously.

## Gov’t data, market prices

The National Price Coordinating Council (NPCC), which includes the DA, recommended this declaration, stating that, “There is an extraordinary increase in price of rice when the rice inflation has exceeded the upper bound target for food inflation and reached double digits.”

Citing the latest data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) covering the year 2023, the NPCC said rice inflation remained as high as 17.9 percent in September that year, exceeding the upper band of the government's target of 4 percent for food inflation. The PSA reading was significantly higher than the 4.2-percent rice inflation recorded in July 2023.

The NPCC noted further that prices of regular and well-milled rice remained high—up by 19 percent and 20 percent, respectively, in December last year, compared with the period before the price increases in July 2023.

But according to the DA's monitoring as of Feb. 1, public markets in Metro Manila sold local regular milled rice from P37 to P46 per kilo, lower than the P50-P53 per kilo in the same period a year ago.

Local well-milled rice was priced between P40 and P55 per kilo, also lower than the P49-P55 per kilo a year ago.

Imported rice was also sold at lower prices, with the regular milled variety at P38 to P48 per kilo and well-milled rice at P40 to P52 per kilo.

## **Buffer stocks**

Under the amended rice tariffication law, the agriculture secretary is authorized to declare a food security emergency on rice due to supply shortage or extraordinary increase in prices, as recommended by the NPCC.

“This emergency declaration allows us to release rice buffer stocks held by the National Food Authority (NFA) to stabilize prices and ensure that rice, a staple food for millions of Filipinos, remains accessible to consumers,” Tiu Laurel said in a statement on Monday. The NFA's buffer stocks stood at approximately 300,000 metric tons of rice. The DA said half of it could be released over the next six months to ensure sufficient supply for emergencies and disaster response.

The NFA's rice stocks will be sold to government agencies, local governments and outlets under the Kadiwa ng Pangulo program to “stabilize rice prices and protect consumers from further price hikes,” the DA said.

The supply will be released to these government outlets at P36 per kilo and sold to consumers at P38 per kilo.

## **NFA inventory**

The Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) had earlier warned against an emergency declaration and questioned if such a move would cover the “NFA’s poor stocks management.”

In a statement on Monday, the FFF pointed out that NFA warehouses were reportedly full during the dry season harvest starting this month.

“An emergency declaration would allow NFA to sell its inventory to national government agencies, local government units and Kadiwa stores, thereby freeing up warehouse space for the agency’s palay procurement,” FFF president Dioscoro Granada said.

This announcement would pave the way for selling NFA stocks at “subsidized” and “below-market rates,” he said.

“Aside from causing the agency to incur huge financial losses, the sale of cheap NFA rice could open the door to widespread leakages and corruption. It could also work against farmers if traders decide to lower their palay buying prices to compete with NFA rice,” Granada added.

The FFF said about one-third of the NFA’s current inventory could already be classified as “aging” rice and should have been disposed of earlier to interested buyers without an emergency declaration.

<https://business.inquirer.net/504776/da-declares-food-security-emergency>

**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:**

# DA declares food security emergency amid rising price of rice

By: [Jordeene B. Lagare](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)  
[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 06:08 PM February 03, 2025



MANILA, Philippines – Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. on Monday, February 3 declared [food security emergency](#) to address the persistent “extraordinary” [rise in the local price of rice](#).

“There is hereby declared a Food Security Emergency on Rice due to Extraordinary Increase in Prices,” Tiu Laurel said in Department Circular No. 03 on the emergency declaration.

“This emergency declaration allows us to release rice buffer stocks held by the National Food Authority (NFA) to stabilize prices and ensure that rice, a staple food for millions of Filipinos, remains accessible to consumers,” Tiu Laurel added.

Per the Department of Agriculture’s issuance, the food security emergency will remain in effect “until lifted or withdrawn by the Secretary,” subject to review every four months.

The Department of Agriculture made this declaration as retail rice prices remained high despite the decline in global rice prices and reduction in rice tariff rates from 35 percent to 15 percent in July.

This was based on the National Price Coordinating Council’s (NPCC) recommendation, which stated, “There is an extraordinary increase in price of rice when the rice inflation has exceeded the upper bound target for food inflation and reached double digits,”

The NPCC cited data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) noting that rice inflation reached 17.9 percent in September 2023, exceeding the upper band of the government's target of 4 percent for food inflation.

The PSA reading is significantly higher than the rice inflation of 4.2 percent recorded July 2023.

The DA also noted that prices of regular and well-milled rice remain elevated, up by 19 percent and 20 percent, respectively, in December last year, compared to the period before the price spikes in July 2023.

Under the amended Rice Tariffication Law, the agriculture secretary is authorized to declare a food security emergency on rice due to supply shortage or extraordinary increase in prices, as recommended by the NPCC. *(with a report from Luisa Cabato / INQUIRER.net)*

<https://business.inquirer.net/504666/da-declares-food-security-emergency-amid-rising-price-of-rice>

**PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:**

# Food price manipulation must end!

By: [Jake J. Maderazo](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)  
[INQUIRER.net](#) / 05:30 AM February 04, 2025

The current state of our food market is marred by a conspicuous failure of this administration to regulate and control the rampant greed exhibited by unscrupulous middlemen and retailers. This negligence has allowed these opportunists to consistently manipulate the prices of essential commodities—rice, meat, vegetables, fish, and now eggs—betraying the trust of consumers who are hit hardest by soaring costs.

Farm gate prices remain low while retail prices in markets skyrocket, a phenomenon driven not by genuine supply shortages but by manufactured hysteria—rumors of shortages, threats of avian flu, and other fabrications. This orchestrated manipulation, where middlemen wield disproportionate power, exposes an alarming truth: our food system is being used as a weapon against the very citizens it is meant to feed.

Most troubling is the apparent inutility of our national institutions, particularly the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the Department of Agriculture (DA), the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) which seem more like spectators than enforcers in this crisis. Tasked with monitoring violations, these agencies merely report infractions without the necessary authority to act decisively. Their ineffectiveness is compounded by a bewildering jurisdictional divide with local government units (LGUs), who have the prerogative to close down establishments yet often stand idle in the face of blatant price gouging. It is unacceptable that there is no cohesive strategy or collaborative action plan between the national government and LGUs, allowing middlemen to operate with virtual impunity.

This kind of bureaucratic confusion creates an environment of lawlessness within our food markets. Middlemen and retailers thrive in this chaos, their greed unchecked as they exploit the system that ought to protect ordinary citizens from exploitation. The disconnect between producers and consumers widens, with farmers earning meager profits while consumers face exorbitant prices. It is a vicious cycle of inequality that must be addressed immediately.

We implore our leaders to recognize the urgency of this situation. It is time for a robust collective effort among the DTI, DA, DILG and local mayors to assert control over price manipulation, enforce regulations with genuine intent, and hold accountable those profiting at the expense of consumers. Solve your “devolution” differences asap, because only through your decisive action can we dismantle this entrenched systems that perpetuate inequality and suffering.

Failure to act now would amount to a grievous neglect of duty—one that will ultimately erode public trust in our institutions. Our government must become synonymous with accountability and fairness rather than



complacency. Stand up against these greedy middlemen; act decisively to protect our farmers and consumers; cultivate a system that prioritizes the welfare of the people above all else. The time for lip service has passed; it is time for real change.

### **Joy Belmonte: QC's Transformative Leader!**

If there is one Metro Manila LGU official who stands out above the rest, it is none other than QC Mayor Joy Belmonte.

Looking at her pro-active QC LGU website, one sees the dizzying schedule almost 24/7 of the mayor attending to all the important needs of her more than 3 million grateful residents.

Her dedication, indefatigable spirit and unwavering commitment to uplift the lives of her constituents shines brightly through various initiatives that provide livelihood assistance, inaugurate vital infrastructure, and construct necessary educational facilities while prioritizing those often overlooked—informal settlers.

Take, for instance, this past week, the remarkable Small Income Generating Assistance (SIGA) program, aided over 370 QCitizens with significant financial support to boost local businesses. Recently, close to 600 solo parents received financial assistance designed to help alleviate financial strains and encourage participation in sustainable livelihood programs. It's this kind of heartfelt support that enhances the fabric of the community, ensuring that no one is left behind. Mayor Joy's vision extends beyond immediate financial aid — it encompasses future growth and security. The \*Pangkabuhayang QC\* program allows beneficiaries from various districts to receive additional funding and training aimed at fostering sustainable business practices

But residents are not just receiving financial aid; they are also witnessing a transformation in living conditions. The QCitizen Homes project has been a frontrunner in addressing housing needs for families affected by major construction projects like the Metro Manila Subway. With developments including multi-purpose halls and child-friendly environments, it represents a step toward a brighter future.

Seal-proofing the city against floods, Mayor Joy's administration has seen the construction of crucial infrastructure, such as the Kalamiong Creek Retaining Wall and the "Detention basin" at Palmera Phase 3 homes, Bgy Santa Monica.

In education, the inauguration of facilities continues non-stop such as the San Bartolome High School, Basement Bagbag Integrated High School, AMLAC Senior High School and Payatas C Elementary School. Bgy Sta. Lucia Multi-Purpose building.

Hospitals such as Rosario Maclang-Bautista in IBP Road and Novaliches District hospitals are being solarized for energy efficiency. New Parks are under construction including SB BuenaPlaza park in Bgy. Novaliches and the acquisition of land to build a new LGU facility in Teresa Heights, Bgy Pasong Putik.

Her bold and consistent innovations are being noticed not only here but also worldwide, from her exemplary free rides of QCitizens on electric buses, Sunday Car-free Carefree Tomas Morato Avenue , and implementation of calorie labelling ordinance to check on the health and nutrition of her people. Under her leadership, Quezon City is now a model for empowerment, sustainability, and community development as she enters into her third and final third term in May.

In conclusion, one thing remains clear: Mayor Joy Belmonte is a true advocate for her grateful constituents—a nurturing force dedicated to the well-being and progress of our ever-evolving city, despite being the biggest and most populous in Metro Manila.

<https://opinion.inquirer.net/180542/food-price-manipulation-must-end>

## BUSINESS WORLD:

# Food security emergency declared

February 4, 2025 | 12:34 am



Rice prices are displayed at a market in Manila, Feb. 1, 2025. — PHILIPPINE STAR/NOEL B. PABALATE

THE DEPARTMENT of Agriculture (DA) declared on Monday a food security emergency on rice, the latest effort by the government to lower the cost of the staple grain.

“This emergency declaration allows us to release rice buffer stocks held by the National Food Authority to stabilize prices and ensure that rice, a staple food for millions of Filipinos, remains accessible to consumers,” Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu-Laurel, Jr. said in a statement.

The DA cited the “extraordinary” increase in local rice prices despite the drop in global prices and the reduction in tariffs last July.

Last month, the National Price Coordinating Council approved the resolution urging the DA to declare a food security emergency for rice.

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

Under a food security emergency, the NFA would release its rice buffer stock to government agencies, local government units, and the KADIWA ng Pangulo program.

“The NFA currently holds a buffer stock of approximately 300,000 metric tons (MT) of rice, half of which could be released over the next six months to ensure sufficient supply for emergencies and disaster response,” the DA said.

“The NFA may increase this volume, if necessary, as it prepares to begin palay procurement in the coming weeks,” it added.

The department said the food security emergency “will remain in effect until the situation improves,” adding it will regularly review the situation.

Last week, the NFA said that it would release about 150,000 MT of rice stocks over a six-month period or 30,000 MT per month, allowing the NFA warehouses to free up space during the incoming harvest season.

President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. last year issued Executive Order No. 62 which slashed tariffs on rice imports to 15% from 35% previously until 2028. This was aimed at lowering rice prices and tame inflation.

According to the DA’s price monitoring of Metro Manila markets as of Feb. 1, a kilo of imported special rice was priced between P52 and P61, compared with the P57 and P65 per kilo a year ago.

The price of imported premium rice stood at P51-P58 per kilo as of Feb. 1. from P54-P62 per kilo last year.

On the other hand, imported well-milled rice is currently between P40 and P52 per kilo, while imported regular milled rice is at P38 to P48 per kilo. — **A.H.Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/top-stories/2025/02/04/650828/food-security-emergency-declared/>

**BUSINESS WORLD:**

# PHL unlikely to reach the upper end of 2025 target

February 4, 2025 | 12:33 am



**A man arranges fruits at a stall in Quezon City, Dec. 29, 2024. — PHILIPPINE STAR/MIGUEL DE GUZMAN**

By **Aubrey Rose A. Inosante**, *Reporter*

THE PHILIPPINES may have difficulty achieving the upper end of the government’s 6-8% gross domestic product (GDP) growth target amid heightened global uncertainties this year.

Asked if the country could hit 8% growth this year, Finance Secretary Ralph G. Recto told *BusinessWorld*: “6-6.5% [growth] is doable for 2025.”

Mr. Recto, however, said the outlook will depend on “inflation, interest rates, and strength of US dollar.”

The Philippine economy expanded by 5.6% last year, slightly faster than 5.5% in 2023 but fell short of the government’s revised 6-6.5% target.

The National Economic and Development Authority earlier said the GDP growth was hampered by extreme weather events, geopolitical tensions, and subdued global demand — which is now considered as the “new normal.”

Multilateral lenders World Bank and the Asian Development Bank project the Philippines to grow by 6.1% and 6.2% in 2025.

In an e-mail interview with *BusinessWorld*, Ateneo School of Government Dean Philip Arnold “Randy” P. Tuaño said the Philippines will “face difficulty” meeting the 8% growth target.

“It was relatively easy to achieve a 7% to 8% growth in the 2022-2023 period as we have been coming from a low-income base during the pandemic,” Mr. Tuaño said.

“Even then, 5% to 6%, while a respectable rate of growth, would make it difficult to achieve significant growth in income among the middle class and vulnerable in the next few years,” he added.

HSBC economist for ASEAN Aris D. Dacanay said that achieving an 8% growth rate is possible, but “a tall order.”

He cited global and domestic headwinds, including a sluggish Chinese economy, tariff risks, and climate-related impacts on the agricultural sector.

“This isn’t to say the Philippines won’t grow. Growing by 6.3%, we expect it to be one of Asia’s top performers in 2025 with the business process outsourcing sector (BPO), digitalization, and household consumption — sectors of the economy that are not subject to tariff risks — leading the charge,” he told *BusinessWorld* via e-mail.

In a note, Citi downgraded its 2025 GDP forecast to 5.9%, from 6% previously, after the weaker-than-expected growth momentum in 2024.

“Still, recent activity data such as income remittances continue to suggest that domestic demand would remain well-supported. Commercial bank loans rose 11.1% year on year in November 2024 suggesting robust business activities and consumption growth... Furthermore, continued monetary easing and more moderate inflation are also expected to support domestic demand expansion in 2025,” Citi said.

## **MORE**

## **INVESTMENTS**

## **NEEDED**

Mr. Recto said the upper end of the government’s target “can only be achieved if private investments double or triple.”

Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Principal Economist Joselito “Jojit” R. Basilio said the economy is likely to post 6-7% growth this year, although the upper end of the target “remains doable under certain circumstances.”

“Aside from the government’s continued ramping up of spending on public construction, recently approved PPPs (public-private partnership) projects should complement the aggressive ‘Build Better More’ program,” he said.

“But there are conditions that can push the economy to do more and grow by 7% to 8% in 2025,” he added.

Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. Chief Economist Michael L. Ricafort said hitting the upper end of the 2025 goal is a “long shot, realistically.”

“This would require more foreign and local investments, more tourists especially foreign, more merchandise exports that all generate more jobs and other economic opportunities that lead to higher per capita income,” he said.

To drive faster growth this year, Mr. Tuaño said the government should accelerate infrastructure projects and push regulatory reforms to boost investments, especially outside of the main urban centers.

The government should also invest in human resource development via education, healthcare, technological upgrading, and boost small businesses to drive growth, he said.

“Some potential opportunities for growth include stronger consumption driven by remittance growth and continuous expansion of services, and also the rebound of tourism,” Mr. Tuaño said.

Citi said continued policy easing by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas will support GDP growth this year. It maintained its expectation for a 25-basis-point (bp) rate cut this month.

“We expect the BSP to cut again in June and August, skipping April, partly to ascertain a few outcomes, including the potential increase of US tariffs and possible impact on global trade and US dollar-Philippine peso, the Fed’s rate cut decisions, the Philippines’ midterm election campaigning’s potential positive impact on domestic demand (although investment may see some delays from the 45-day pre-election ban on project disbursement) etc,” Citi said.

The Monetary Board has cut benchmark borrowing costs by a total of 75 bps since it began its easing cycle in August 2024, bringing its key rate to 5.75%.

Mr. Basilio said private consumption is expected to recover strongly, increasing by 6% in 2025 due to stabilized inflation and lower interest rates.

“The domestic demand is also anticipated to shift from ‘being subdued’ to one of gaining its momentum,” he said.

Mr. Basilio also noted that agricultural output is anticipated to make “a strong rebound” this year.

However, Mr. Dacanay said relying on fiscal and monetary policy to boost growth will be difficult.

“The government is in the midst of consolidating its fiscal resources from the pandemic, while the Federal Reserve puts a floor under how much the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas can cut policy rates to boost growth,” Mr. Dacanay said.

## **RISKS TO THE OUTLOOK**

Analysts cited geopolitical tensions and uncertainty as one of the downside risks to the Philippines’ economic outlook.

“Downside risks include geopolitical risks and uncertainties in global trade markets, considering further that goods export sector performance has been relatively anemic,” DBM’s Mr. Basilio said.

Mr. Tuaño said other downside risks include slower export growth due to “tariff escalation in the developed world... and natural disasters taking a toll on productive labor and capital.”

On the other hand, key upside risks include improved labor market conditions and election spending.

“For the current year, election spending is expected to result in increased economic activities, including advertising and campaign-related expenses in transport, hospitality, retail trade and others,” DBM’s Mr. Basilio said. — *with inputs from* **Aaron Michael C. Sy**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/top-stories/2025/02/04/650827/phl-unlikely-to-reach-the-upper-end-of-2025-target/>

**BUSINESS WORLD:**

# NFA Q4 procurement tops 208,691 MT

February 3, 2025 | 8:22 pm



PHILIPPINE STAR/MIGUEL DE GUZMAN

THE National Food Authority (NFA) reported that it procured 208,691.6 metric tons (MT) of palay, or unmilled rice in the fourth quarter, equivalent to 4.17 million bags weighing 50 kilograms each.

The NFA said procurement was significantly higher than the year-earlier total of 42,930.2 MT.

Nevertheless, the quarter's procurement amounted to only 66.84% of its 312,209.5 MT target.

“In spite of the implementation of the Price Range Scheme (PRICERS), the non-attainment of the target was mainly due to the NFA's limited drying capacity, when the primary trading during this period is fresh or wet palay,” the NFA added.

The PRICERS program sets a buying range of palay per province and by grade of grain at prices that are competitive against those offered by traders.

The NFA said it distributed 323,206 bags (16,160.3 MT) of milled rice in the fourth quarter, also well below target.

The distribution during the quarter was only 27.4% of its 1.18 million bags for the period.

“Sales of NFA rice were limited only to disaster/calamity response of local government units and other government relief agencies with minimal volume requested,” it added. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2025/02/03/650806/nfa-q4-procurement-tops-208691-mt/>

**REMATE:**

# Presyo ng karneng baboy, umabot na sa P480 kada kilo!

February 3, 2025 18:38



MANILA, Philippines – Umabot na sa hanggang P480 kada kilo ang presyo ng baboy sa National Capital Region.

Dahil dito ay nanawagan na ang mga magsasaka na magtakda ng maximum suggested retail price para sa mga karneng baboy.

Sa datos ng Department of Agriculture, ang presyo ng pork belly ay mula P380 hanggang P480 kada kilo, habang ang pork ham o kasim ay mula P340 hanggang P420 kada kilo.

Ikinokonsidera ng Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura ang presyo ng baboy sa NCR na napakataas na.

“From P220 to P240 ang farmgate price so pinakamataas dapat nasa 380,” ani So.

Aniya, ang presyo sa mga probinsya ay nasa acceptable range pa naman.

“Nasa P380 to P400 yung liempo so yung kasim nasa P350 to P360.”



Anang grupo, panahon na para sa DA na ikonsidera ang paglalagay ng maximum suggested retail price sa mga baboy sa Metro Manila.

“Nagkaroon kami ng usapan mi sec na mag set ng meeting para ma check yung retail price dahil sobrang mataas yung P480 and siguro magkaroon ng set ang retail price doon sa merkado,” dagdag pa ni So.

“Kailangan siguro kasi sobrang mataas yon ang we think maski ang farmgate umabot ng P240 hindi dapat ganun ang presyo ng retail,” aniya.

Sinabi naman ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. na ikinokonsidera na ang panukalang ito.

“Ngayon ko pa lang uupuan talaga yan to see the whole value chain kung saan napupunta margin na 100 to 150 peso,” ayon kay Tiu Laurel. *RNT/JGC*

<https://remate.ph/presyo-ng-karneng-baboy-umabot-na-sa-p480-kada-kilo/>

**REMATE:**

# NFA handa sa food security emergency

February 3, 2025 11:48



MANILA, Philippines- Nakahanda ang National Food Authority (NFA) para sa napipintong deklarasyon ng food security emergency sa bigas.

Kinumpirma ni NFA Administrator Larry Lacson na may ilang local government units (LGUs) ang nagpahayag ng interes na bumili ng NFA rice para sa disturbusyon sa oras na ideklara na ang emergency.

“We are ready. As we speak, ‘yung ating mga karatig na mga rehiyon... ay nagde-deliver ng mga bigas papunta ng NCR, aside ‘yung imbak natin diyan na marami na rin. Pinaghahandaan natin ito,” ang sinabi ni Lacson sa isang panayam.

“We are ready in the NFA to release the stocks, but we have to wait a little bit, tingin ko, bago maging available ito sa LGU na ibebenta na talaga sa publiko,” dagdag niya.

Nauna rito, sinabi ng Department of Agriculture (DA) na maaaring ilabas ang NFA rice, araw ng Martes, Pebrero 4, subalit bahala naman na ang lokal na pamahalaan sa distribution timeline nito.

Kinumpirma naman ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. na natanggap na ng kanyang tanggapan ang National Price Coordinating Council resolution na nagrerekomenda ng ‘emergency declaration.’

Sa oras na maaprubahan, pahihintulutan ang NFA na magpalabas ng buffer stocks at simulan ang pagbili ng bigas mula sa mga magsasaka sa nalalapit na harvest season.

Sinabi ni Lacson na ang ‘initial release’ ay 300,000 sako ng bigas, may posibilidad na tumaas sa 450,000–500,000, depende sa demand ng LGU at Kadiwa store.

Aniya pa, mabibili ang NFA rice sa LGUs sa P36 per kilo at sa mga consumers naman na P38 per kilo, na may mahigpit na regulasyon para pigilan ang mga retailers na sobrahan ang nasabing presyo.

“Sa totoo lang, malaki sanang tulong ‘yun, ‘yung napakaganda na mabilis ang distribution. Pero sa ngayon, medyo hindi pa ‘yan pupuwede. Wala pa ‘yung channel natin directly sa mga retailers,” ang wika ni

Lacson. **Kris Jose**

<https://remate.ph/nfa-handa-sa-food-security-emergency/>

**REMATE:**

## Suplay ng itlog sapat ‘gang Abril – PEBA

February 3, 2025 11:34



MANILA, Philippines- Taliwas sa pahayag ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr., sinabi ng Philippine Egg Board Association (PEBA) nitong Linggo na wala itong nakikitang kakulangan sa suplay ng itlog pagsapit ng Abril sa gitna ng pagkabahala sa bird flu.

Sinabi ni PEBA president Francis Uyehara na base sa kanilang pagtataya, magkakaroon ang bansa ng sapat na suplay ng itlog hanggang Abril at Mayo.

“Sa ating grupo sa industriya, wala tayong inaasahang kakulangan sa itlog sa darating na April at May. Nagulat din kami doon sa detalye na lumabas sa Department of Agriculture,” pahayag ni Uyehara sa isang panayam.

“Sa aming projection, meron tayong sapat na supply ng itlog at least hanggang April at May. Mas mataas po ang ating produksyon ng itlog ngayong taon kumpara nu’ng nakaraang taon of the same month,” dagdag niya.

Matatandaang inihayag ni Tiu Laurel na maaaring maharap ang bansa sa supply shortage sa Abril, kahit hindi pa nararanasan ng Pilipinas ang malawakang outbreak ng bird flu.

“May chance pa naman ma-avert itong sinasabi ko sa Abril dahil Pebrero pa lang naman. But at least, looking forward, there is a problem, and we will act on it,” pahayag pa ni Tiu Laurel. **RNT/SA**

<https://remate.ph/suplay-ng-itlog-sapat-gang-abril-peba/>

**MANILA STANDARD:**

## **DA decides food security crisis**



*Department of Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. (Courtesy: Department of Agriculture)*

**By Othel V. Campos**

**February 4, 2025, 12:35 am**

**Agriculture secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr. declared on Monday a food security emergency on rice through memorandum circular 03, following the approval from the National Price Coordinating Council (NPCC).**

**He said an “extraordinary” rise in local rice prices, which have remained high despite lower global prices and a reduction in rice tariffs implemented in July, prompted the emergency declaration.**

“This emergency declaration allows us to release rice buffer stocks held by the National Food Authority (NFA) to stabilize prices and ensure that rice, a staple for millions of Filipinos, remains accessible to consumers,” Tiu Laurel said. The declaration was made one day ahead of the schedule announced last week by the DA.

The decision follows the NPCC’s assessment that despite declining global rice prices and import rice tariff reduction from 35 percent to 15 percent in July, local prices have remained stubbornly high.

According to data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), rice inflation soared to 17.9 percent in September 2023, far surpassing the government’s target of 4 percent for food inflation.

The cost of regular and well-milled rice rose by 19 percent and 20 percent, respectively, compared to the previous year. In July 2023, rice inflation was just 4.2 percent.

Under Republic Act No. 12078, an amendment to the Rice Tariffication Law, the Agriculture secretary has the authority to declare a food security emergency in response to extraordinary price increases.

This allows the DA chief to direct the NFA, which is legally restricted from selling rice directly to the public, to release buffer stocks to government agencies, local government units, and the KADIWA ng Pangulo program.

The goal is to stabilize rice prices and protect consumers from further price hikes.

Currently, the NFA holds around 300,000 metric tons of rice in buffer stock, half of which could be released over the next six months to ensure adequate supply for emergencies and disaster response.

The NFA may increase this volume if needed as it prepares to begin palay procurement in the coming weeks.

The food security emergency will remain in effect until the situation improves, with the government pledging to regularly review the situation and lift the emergency once conditions stabilize.

*Editor's Note: This is an updated article. Originally posted with the headline "DA declares food security emergency."*

<https://manilastandard.net/news/314553656/department-of-agriculture-decides-food-security-crisis.html>

**MANILA STANDARD:**

# PH commits to advance agriculture sustainability

By DA News

February 3, 2025, 6:45 pm

Berlin, Germany—The Department of Agriculture last week outlined the Philippines' vision for a sustainable and inclusive agricultural future at the 17th Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA) in Berlin, aligning with the forum's 2025 theme of "Farming a Sustainable Bioeconomy."

Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr., in a speech read by Undersecretary Christopher V. Morales, stressed that the Philippines is already integrating bioeconomy principles into its national strategies.

Two key frameworks—the Philippine Action Plan for Sustainable Consumption and Production and the National Innovation Agenda—are central to the Philippines' efforts to promote resource efficiency and innovation within the agricultural sector.

"The Philippines is committed to advancing sustainability across all sectors, including agriculture," Morales said. He noted that while the country seeks to boost agricultural productivity, it is equally focused on minimizing environmental impact, aiming for a circular and resource-efficient economy.

Given the growing threats of climate change and resource scarcity, Morales said the challenges facing global agriculture require collective action.

"No single nation can address these issues alone," he said. "Collaboration is key, particularly in creating bioeconomy strategies that are inclusive, innovative and equitable."

At the heart of the Philippines' agricultural policy is a focus on technology-driven solutions. The National Innovation Agenda aims to tackle the complexities of modern agriculture by encouraging the adoption of green technologies and sustainable farming practices.

Morales said such innovations would not only increase efficiency but also ensure that farmers and fisherfolk benefit directly, improving their livelihoods and strengthening food security.

Morales also stressed the critical importance of inclusivity in these efforts. "We must ensure that the benefits of sustainable agriculture reach everyone, especially those most affected by climate change and economic instability," he said, citing the need for solutions that are accessible to vulnerable communities.

Morales reaffirmed the Philippines' dedication to advancing sustainable agrifood systems. "Building a sustainable bioeconomy is an ambitious goal, but one we can achieve through collaboration, innovation, and shared responsibility," he said. DA News

Morales' speech emphasized the Philippines' proactive role in addressing global agricultural challenges, positioning the country as a key player in the movement towards a sustainable, equitable food system. **DA News**

<https://manilastandard.net/spotlight/environmental-and-sustainability/314553840/ph-commits-to-advance-agriculture-sustainability.html>

**THE MANILA TIMES:**

# I love you veggie much

**By Stephanie Sevellano**

**February 2, 2025**

"Kapag fresh flowers, nalalanta. Iyan (vegetables) after Valentines', pwede pa nilang lutuin iyan, pwede pa nilang kainin."

ARE you looking for a healthier and fresh twist to the same old Valentine's Day gifts like a flower bouquet or a box of chocolates?

How about gifting your loved one with a bouquet of vegetables?

This and other unique gift items like "love baskets" of fruits or eggs have been "specially prepared" at the Department of Agriculture (DA) Kadiwa store in Quezon City for lovers looking for a healthier alternative. Jefferlyn Obillo, a Kadiwa store seller, said consumers might surprise their loved ones with locally produced vegetables arranged as bouquets at a very affordable price.

"Ngayon pong Valentine's [Day], mas maganda pong bumili ng gulay. Mayroon pong broccoli, sayote, carrots and beans (This Valentine's Day, it's better to buy vegetables. We have broccoli, chayote, carrots and beans)," she said.

Likewise, Juliet Labrador, 51, a representative of the farmers' association at the Kadiwa store, urged lovers to try the "healthier and more practical" gift idea.

"Instead na flowers and chocolates, dapat maging healthy food na lang tayo, maging practical. Kapag fresh flowers, nalalanta. Iyan after Valentines', pwede pa nilang lutuin iyan, pwede pa nilang kainin (Instead of flowers and chocolates, we must have healthy food, be practical. Fresh flowers wilt. After Valentines' Day, vegetables can be cooked and eaten)," she said.

Buyers may either avail of the readily prepared fruit basket or customize a gift of their own using local fruits available, including banana, pomelo, mango and pineapple.

Labrador said they could even add organic eggs and shrimp paste to their healthy love basket.

Besides supporting local farmers through the Kadiwa stores, the DA also urged Filipinos to give rice instead of roses on Valentine's Day.

Agriculture Undersecretary Roger Navarro said rice is sweeter than flowers.

"Ang dapat iregalo natin sa ating mahal sa buhay sa Valentine's Day ay bigas; huwag na 'yung flowers kasi hindi makain iyon. Matinik pati kasi ang rosas, pero matamis ang bigas (A gift we should give to our loved ones is rice, not flowers because they are inedible. Roses are thorny too, but rice is sweet)," he said. PNA

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Healthy gift alternatives: The story promotes healthier gift options like vegetable bouquets, fruit baskets and rice instead of traditional flowers and chocolates.
- Kadiwa initiative: The Department of Agriculture's Kadiwa store in Quezon City offers these unique gift ideas, supporting local farmers.
- Affordable and practical: These gifts are presented as both affordable and practical, with the benefit of being edible and supporting local producers.
- 'Rice is sweeter than flowers': Agriculture Undersecretary Roger Navarro encourages Filipinos to give rice as a Valentine's Day gift, highlighting its practicality and sweetness compared to flowers.

[https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/02/02/business/top-business/i-love-you-veggie-much/2048322?fbclid=IwY2xjawIM9q1leHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHREDtpXuHscfaA7Ah6PepiSORqDBhb4IpkPi0-sM-dQWUya9Ant6ckXxcQ\\_aem\\_aug-512cl7SRTLuQYu9qcg](https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/02/02/business/top-business/i-love-you-veggie-much/2048322?fbclid=IwY2xjawIM9q1leHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHREDtpXuHscfaA7Ah6PepiSORqDBhb4IpkPi0-sM-dQWUya9Ant6ckXxcQ_aem_aug-512cl7SRTLuQYu9qcg)



**THE MANILA TIMES:**

# Govt declares food emergency on rice

By **Giselle P. Jordan** and **Bernadette E. Tamayo**

February 4, 2025

**(UPDATE)** AGRICULTURE Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. on Monday declared a food security emergency on rice.

"This emergency declaration allows us to release rice buffer stocks held by the National Food Authority (NFA) to stabilize prices and ensure that rice, a staple food for millions of Filipinos, remains accessible to consumers," Tiu Laurel said in Department Circular 3.

The declaration was based on the recommendations of the National Price Coordinating Council (NPCC), prompted by its observation of persistently high prices of rice despite lower global market costs and the reduction of rice tariffs from 35 percent to 15 percent in July last year.



Rice varieties are sold at the Pasay City public market on Jan. 21, 2025, as their price continues to increase. PHOTO BY J. GERARD SEGUIA

The NPCC cited data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) showing a 17.9 percent rice inflation in September 2023, way higher than the 4 percent food inflation target of the government.

Regular and well-milled rice also remained high, rising by 19 percent and 20 percent, respectively, from the previous year.

While the government has reduced tariffs to liberalize rice imports, retail prices continued to increase.

Republic Act 12078 or the amended Rice Tariffication Law (RTL) authorizes the secretary of the Department of Agriculture (DA) to declare a food security emergency in case of extraordinary price increases.

While the NFA is restricted from selling rice directly to the public, the amended RTL allows the DA chief to release the agency's buffer stocks to government agencies, local government units (LGUs), and the Kadiwa ng Pangulo program.

Currently, the NFA has about 300,000 metric tons (MT) of buffer stocks, and the agency plans to release half of these over the next six months. The agency said it may increase this volume if necessary.

Senate President Francis Escudero said he supports the declaration of a food emergency and urged the government to do everything to lower the price of rice.

The senator's statement came amid the concerns raised by the Federation of Free Farmers (FFF), which said it could disadvantage farmers as traders, who need to remain competitive, would have to buy dry palay from farmers at P19 per kilo if NFA rice is sold at P38 a kilo.

At that price, the FFF said, most rice farmers will either break even or have very little left after paying debts and other expenses.

But Escudero emphasized the importance of bringing rice prices down.

"We must do everything we can to lower the price of rice, which, to a large extent, is responsible for a big chunk of our inflation numbers," he said. "If the concerns of the FFF are indeed proven correct, I am sure the DA (Department of Agriculture) can make the corresponding adjustments to rectify its unintended ill-effects, if any."

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel III said it would be "better that the people benefit from the rice in NFA (National Food Authority) warehouses rather than have these expire and rot away." He said the NFA "is there to buy rice" from local farmers.

The NFA "should make sure to buy at a reasonable, fair and profitable price for the Filipino farmers," he said.

"Quality price over quantity of rice. That is the rule that NFA should follow in its rice acquisition program," Pimentel said in a text message.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2025/02/04/news/govt-declares-food-emergency-on-rice/2048713>

## **BUSINESS MIRROR:**

# **Government declares food security emergency to lower rice prices**

Ada Pelonia

February 4, 2025

The Department of Agriculture (DA) declared on Monday a food security emergency on rice due to the “extraordinary spike” in the price of the country’s food staple.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. signed Department Circular (DC) 3, which authorized the declaration based on recommendations from the National Price Coordinating Council (NPCC).

The DA said the decision follows a determination by the NPCC, chaired by Trade Secretary Maria Cristina Roque, that local prices have remained high despite the easing of global rice quotations and slashed rice tariffs to 15 percent.

“This emergency declaration allows us to release rice buffer stocks held by the National Food Authority [NFA] to stabilize prices and ensure that rice, a staple food for millions of Filipinos, remains accessible to consumers,” Laurel said in a statement.

The agency noted that NFA currently holds a buffer stock of about 300,000 metric tons (MT) of rice, 50 percent of which could be released over the next six months to ensure sufficient supply for emergencies and disaster response.

However, it added that the grains agency may increase this volume if necessary, as it prepares to begin palay procurement in the coming weeks.

Under the amended Rice Tariffication Law (RTL), the DA Secretary is authorized to declare a food security emergency in response to extraordinary price increases.

This provision allows the DA chief to direct the NFA, which is legally restricted from selling rice directly to the public, to release buffer stocks to government agencies, local government units (LGUs), and the KADIWA ng Pangulo program.

“Despite efforts to liberalize rice imports and reduce tariffs, the domestic market has been slow to respond, with retail prices surpassing expectations. This volatility has left many Filipinos, particularly those in lower-income brackets, struggling to afford rice,” the DA said.

Meanwhile, the agency noted that the food security emergency will remain in effect until the situation improves, while the government has committed to regularly reviewing the situation to determine when it can be lifted.

The DA said Laurel’s declaration emphasizes the “delicate balance” the government must strike between open trade policies and domestic market stability.

“As rice is an essential commodity, ensuring affordable access for all consumers remains a top priority.”

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/04/government-declares-food-security-emergency-to-lower-rice-prices/>

**BUSINESS MIRROR:**

# **Dwindling supplies prompt Manila to import red onions**

Ada Pelonia  
February 3, 2025

The Philippines will import around 4,000 metric tons (MT) of red and yellow onions as stocks thin out, according to the Department of Agriculture (DA).

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. confirmed that the agency would approve onion imports, with a caveat that these would only plug the projected shortfall in domestic supply for this month.

“Maybe 3,000 MT of red onions and 1,000 MT of white onions,” Laurel told the BusinessMirror on Monday.

Data from the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) showed that the country’s red onion inventory as of January 24 stood at 7,281 MT while yellow onion stocks were estimated at nearly 800 MT.

The BPI estimated that red onion stocks would only last until this week while yellow onion supplies had been depleted since January 29, based on the country’s daily consumption.

However, the agency noted that onion harvests would replenish inventories by end-February.

The BPI said the expected volume of red onions that will be harvested until February 28 would reach 17,200 MT, minus the supplies already in cold storage facilities. These additional stocks are expected to last for 41 days or until March 7.

For yellow onions, the Philippines is expected to produce 7,765 MT by the end of February.

The Philippines imported 1,830 MT of yellow onions. The agency estimated that the country’s additional yellow onion supplies would last for 71 days or until April 5.

Despite this, Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said the depleted supply would be augmented since some planters have started to harvest onions in early January.

“Some farmers have already started to harvest this January. The peak harvest season for onions is January to March,” De Mesa told reporters in a previous interview.

“It was announced since last year that red onion stocks in cold storage would last until February...the timing for dwindling stocks would coincide with the harvest season,” he added.

Retail prices of red onions ranged from P110 to P200 per kilo, higher than P100 to P170 per kilo recorded on January 2, based on the government’s latest price monitoring report.

Local white onions ranged from P80 to P140 per kilo while imported white onions stood at P80 to P160 per kilo.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/03/dwindling-supplies-prompt-manila-to-import-red-onions/>

## **BUSINESS MIRROR:**

# **PhilRice urges preemptive action as pest threats loom for rice crops**

Ada Pelonia  
February 3, 2025

The Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) urged farmers to take proactive steps against potential pest infestations early this year.

PhilRice said historical data from 1994 to 2024 compiled by the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) showed that rodents, brown planthoppers (BPH), rice stem borers, bacterial leaf blight (BLB), and rice black bugs (RBB) were the top threats to rice crops.

It added that Central Luzon would be particularly vulnerable to these pests, while the Bicol Region is also projected to face severe infestations, especially from rodents and BLB.

The agency explained that rodents may cause yield losses ranging from 5 percent to 90 percent. They consume 10 to 12 percent of their body weight daily and can damage 30 to 300 tillers per night.

PhilRice said high infestations of rodents are expected in Central Luzon, Western Visayas, and Bicol.

The agency also said BPH infestations, which cause hopperburn or brown patches on dried plants, are anticipated in Central Luzon and Eastern Visayas.

“To manage BPH, farmers are encouraged to maintain a 20cm x 20cm planting distance, avoid artificial light sources near seedbeds, use early-maturing varieties, and practice balanced fertilization by splitting nitrogen applications into three stages,” the PhilRice said in a statement.

It added that rice stem borers are another major concern since these cause deadheart or shoot drying during early growth and whitening during heading to flowering stage.

PhilRice noted that BLB infections, which result in wilting, yellowing, and drying of leaves, are also expected to spread in Bicol and Central Luzon. The agency advised using clean and resistant seed varieties, minimizing transplanting injuries, and avoiding excessive nitrogen use.

The sap-feeding RBB, which attacks crops at nearly all growth stages, threatens Central Luzon, Calabarzon, and Western Visayas. Certain control measures include synchronous planting, direct seeding, using resistant varieties, and setting up light traps, PhilRice said.

Given the potential risks brought by pests on crops and yields, the agency stressed the importance of regular field monitoring, weed removal, and proper disposal of diseased plants to prevent pest outbreaks.

Central Luzon remained the country’s top rice-producing region in 2024, based on Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) data.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2025/02/03/philrice-urges-preemptive-action-as-pest-threats-loom-for-rice-crops/>

**ABANTE TONITE:**

# **Food security emergency sa taas-presyo ng bigas idineklara na**

**February 3, 2025**

Pinirmahan na ni Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. nitong Lunes, Pebrero 3, ang pormal na deklarasyon ng food security emergency sa bigas dahil diumano sa “extraordinary increase” sa presyo nito sa ilalim ng Department Circular No. 03.

Ayon sa DA, batay na rin ito sa rekomendasyon ng National Price Coordinating Council (NPCC) bunsod ng patuloy na hindi maipaliwanag na pagtaas sa presyo ng bigas sa bansa sa kabila ng pagbaba ng pandaigdigang presyo at pagbawas sa taripa noong Hulyo 2024.

Paliwanag ni Laurel, sa pamamagitan ng pagdeklara ng emergency, papayagan silang makapaglabas ng reserbang bigas mula sa National Food Authority (NFA) upang mapatatag ang presyo at masiguro na makakabili ang mga konsyumer.

Batay sa datos mula sa Philippine Statistics Authority, nakita ang pagtaas ng rice inflation ng 17.9% noong nakaraang taon na siya namang ginawang batayan ng NPCC.

Sa ilalim ng inamiyendahang Rice Tariffication Law, may kapangyarihan ang agriculture secretary na magdeklara ng food security emergency sa bigas bunsod ng kakulangan nito o dahil sa pagsirit ng presyo.

Samantala, kinuwestiyon ng Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) kung bakit nagmamadali ang NFA na ibenta ang mga bigas nito matapos umanong makakuha ng impormasyon ang grupo na puno pa ang mga bodega ng ahensiya.

Paliwanag ng FFF, ito umano ang dahilan kaya nagkukumahog ang NFA na ibenta ang mga hawak nitong bigas dahil walang mapaglalagyan ng bibilhin nilang mga palay na aanihin ng mga magsasaka ngayong buwan.

Ang deklarasyon ng food security emergency sa bigas ang ginagamit umano na dahilan para mabenta ang bigas na nasa mga bodega ng NFA na luma na bago pa ito bukbukin.

Sabi ni FFF president Dioscoro Granada, naiwasan sana ang problema kung ipinamahagi ng NFA ang bigas sa mga sinalanta ng bagyo noong 2024 at kung naglatag ng programa ang ahensiya kung paano ibebenta ang malulumang bigas.

Hindi naniniwala si Granada na umaapaw na ang mga bodega ng NFA dahil isang milyong tonelada ang kapasidad ng mga ito at 300,000 tonelada lamang ang hawak nito. (Just Ignacio/Eileen Mencias)

<https://tonite.abante.com.ph/2025/02/03/food-security-emergency-sa-taas-presyo-ng-bigas-idineklara-na/>