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DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Upi farmers' co-op selling quality seedlings

(Second of two parts)

By Nash Maulana

UPI, Maguindanao—The Upian Farmers' Cooperative Inc. is now supplying long-term crop seedlings to farms nationwide, including leading corporate coffee plantations in Batangas and Mindoro.

Muncipal Agriculture Office Ismael Kamad said the cooperative's partnership with the Mindanao Development Authority for the Double-Up Program stemmed from an agreement the Philippine government entered into with Japan, providing support for the foreign marketing of Philippine-produced cacao.

The partnership has also brought in more nursery nets and an enhanced water system, Kamad said.

There were instances, he said, when the municipal government published bidding calls for supply of seedlings. But the Upian hardly participated in bids because of an imminent violation of the principle of "conflict of interest" with Municipal Mayor Ramon Piang, who is the father-in-law of cooperative chairman Jonathan Acupio.

Piang is a multi-awarded local official for good governance.

Senior Agriculturist Hadja Jalika Mangakop said the regional Department of Agriculture and Fisheries-High Value Crops Development Program also put up a small building here to serve as the stockroom for the seedling farmers.

As the cooperative sells more seedlings, both Acupio and Orlando Ortega, who heads the co-op's Committee on Mediation and Reconciliation, would always look back to their difficult years when the government provided them gradual support.

That started with seedling bags, water sprinkler containers, and eventually, a level 2 water system, and nursery nets through the DAF-ARMM-HVCDP.

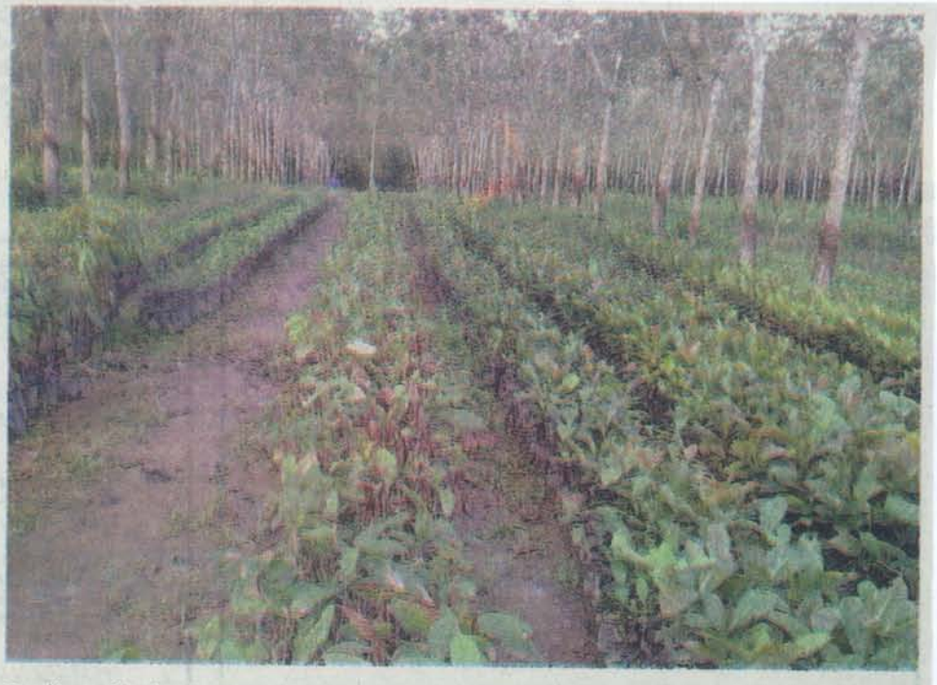
Senior Agriculturist Hadji Jalika Mangakop, head of the high-value crop program, said DAF Regional Secretary Alexander Alonto Jr. has also connected the cooperative with the MinDA to support further local cacao production.

DAF-ARMM planning officer Mariam Abutazil said MinDA's P 1.3 million "Double-Up" assistance package for the Upian seedling farmers was inaugurated recently by Alonto Jr. and representatives of MinDA Chairman Abul Khayr Alonto.

Acupio shared his secret of growing successful leadership as this: "good intentions, honesty and transparency."

Cooperative Chairman Acupio said there were times when pressure seemed enough reason to resign from their collective endeavor at seedling farming. However, he would also end up mulling about who will follow their path from among the young generation if he gave up. That thought pushed him to engage the future by investing on the education of cooperative members' children.

Counting the number of times they would seem to fall, Acupio and Ortega said the hot El Niño season of April 2016 took a toll of the cooperative's seedling farm.



Seedlings of high-value crops, including coffee, cacao and rubber, grow in the Upian Farmers' Cooperative Inc.'s farm in Upi, Maguindanao. The cooperative is the lone accredited seedling farm supplier in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. **Nash B. Maulana**

"We sold only to get even, but still losses were pegged at close to P2 million. We have learned our lesson. We had—as we still do today—to pump-in water direct from the Matuber River," Ortega recalled.

"Since then, sales slowly rose back to an even level, and eventually to some point at profit margin," he added.

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER
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Jollibee-Cargill venture opens biggest poultry processing plant in the country

By **JAMES A. LOYOLA**

Cargill Joy Poultry Meats Production, Inc. (C-Joy), a joint venture between Jollibee Foods Corporation (JFC) and Cargill, has inaugurated the country's biggest poultry processing plant.

Located in Santo Tomas, Batangas, the plant increases income opportunities for local poultry farmers in Batangas and nearby provinces as they will supply the chickens to be processed at the JFC facility.

With a processing capacity of 45 million chickens per year, the plant is the largest in the Philippines and provides dressed and marinated chicken to meet the increasing demand at JFC brands in the country.

The investment underscores C-Joy's commitment to deliver convenient, safe and affordable chicken products to the JFC brands in the Philippines.

"We are bringing protein to family's tables across the Philippines. Cargill and Jollibee came together to start this plant because of our common commitment to the highest standards in product quality and food safety," said C-Joy President Paul Fullbright.

He noted that, "this is reflected in this new plant which harnesses technology and global experience to deliver tasty chicken products in an environment which is safe for our employees and is environmentally sustainable."

C-Joy is partnering with local poultry farmers in Batangas and nearby provinces to supply chickens to the new facility. The *farming community* expressed their excitement at the income opportunities and highlighted their eagerness to providing chicken to JFC brands in the country.

"We are looking forward to producing the chickens that will be supplied to the C-Joy plant to meet the poultry meat requirements of Jollibee," said Vic Lao, President of Highcrest Corporation, a partner-grower of C-Joy.

Lao said that, "one thing I was impressed about is the biosecurity requirements to control food safety at every stage of production. They are surely raising the bar there."

US Ambassador to the Philippines Sung Kim views the continued investments from Cargill in the Philippines as an example of the strong economic relationship between the United States and the Philippines. Philippines was the first country Cargill established its presence in Asia back in 1948.

"We are proud that US companies like Cargill make investments that strengthen the economic partnership between our two countries and contribute to the economic development of the Philippines by providing livelihood opportunities, particularly in rural areas," said Kim.

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Sandigan orders trial of DA ex-chief to proceed

By **CZARINA NICOLE O. ONG**

The Sandiganbayan Sixth Division has ordered the trial of former Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary Arthur Yap to proceed after it denied his omnibus motion for judicial determination of probable cause for lack of merit.

In a nine-page resolution signed by Associate Justice Sarah Jane Fernandez and concurred by Associate Justices Michael Frederick Musngi and Bayani Jacinto, the court ordered that Yap's ...ment be scheduled. No warrant issued since he already posted bail.

Earlier, Yap was charged with two graft and two malversation cases for his involvement in the PDAF scam of former Congressman Rodolfo Welborn Antonino of the 4th District of Nueva Ecija.

This is for the endorsement of the non-government organization (NGO) Buhay Mo Mahal Ko Foundation Inc. (BMMKFI), as a "project partner" in implementing livelihood projects for the province's 4th district, even though the NGO was being operated by Antonio.

The former congressman funded the projects with ₱13,095,000 and ₱1,455,000 coming from his PDAF even though there was no public bidding conducted. At the same time, the BMMKFI was unaccredited and unqualified to undertake the project.

YAP

The National Agribusiness Corporation (NABCOR) then entered into a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with BMMKFI to implement Antonio's PDAF-funded project, while the DA, through Yap, did the same.

Yap sought to have the charges against him dismissed. He argued that there is no probable cause to charge him with violation of Section 3(e) of R.A. 3019 or the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, since he had no participation in the selection or engagement of BMMKFI to implement Antonio's project.

He added that there is no evidence or even an allegation that he received "a single centavo" when the DA-NABCOR agreement was made.

The Manila Times

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Jollibee-Cargill JV opens largest PH poultry plant

BY ANGELICA BALLESTEROS

CARGILL Joy Poultry Meats Production, Inc. (C-Joy), a joint venture of Jollibee Foods Corp. (JFC) and Cargill Philippines, Inc., officially launched on Tuesday its P867-million poultry processing plant in Sto. Tomas, Batangas.

Envisioned to be the largest poultry plant in the Philippines, Jollibee said the new plant is targeted to produce 45 million dressed and marinated chickens per year to meet the increasing demand of Jollibee's fast-food businesses in the country.

The plant started construction in the first quarter of 2016.

C-Joy partnered with local poultry farmers in Batangas and nearby provinces to supply chickens to the new facility. The plant is expected to generate 1,000 new jobs.

"We partnered with Cargill to deliver high quality chicken products through Cargill's technology and quality standards. The facility will provide Jollibee with dressed and marinated chicken to augment the chicken supply requirements of the growing needs of Jollibee brands," Jollibee Chief Executive Officer Ernesto Tanmantiong said.

"This partnership will meaningfully benefit our customers, our operations, as well as the overall Philippine food industry. We will continue to maintain our strong relationship with key chicken suppliers in the country and look forward to sustained long-term supply arrangements with them as our businesses grow together," he added.

Vic Lao, president of Highcrest Corp. which is a partner-grower of C-Joy, said he is looking forward to producing the chickens to be supplied to Jollibee.

"We have already built a strong relationship with C-Joy and the executives from Cargill that we have met, and I am assured that our partnership will be a successful one for all parties," he said.

Jollibee is a homegrown brand and is the largest fast food chain in the country. Aside from its flagship brand Jollibee, it also owns the Chowking and Greenwich restaurant chains, among others.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR
TRUTH SHALL PREVAIL

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Jollibee-Cargill joint venture opens largest poultry processor

By LOUISE MAUREEN SIMEON

Cargill Joy Poultry Meats Production Inc. (C-Joy), a joint venture between Cargill and Jollibee Foods Corp. (JFC) has opened the country's largest poultry processing plant that would boost income opportunities of farmers from Batangas.

Located in Sto. Tomas in Batangas, the facility has a processing capacity of 45 million dressed and marinated chickens per year that will be supplied to the JFC brands nationwide.

"This new plant harnesses technology and global experience to deliver tasty chicken products in an environment which is safe for our employees and is environmentally sustainable," C-Joy president and CEO Paul Fullbright said.

The local government unit of Batangas also welcomed the investment that would contribute to the strengthening of the development of the local economy in the area.

"We hope that this plant will eventually provide and augment work and business opportunities to poultry growers and allied services," said Sto. Tomas Mayor Edna Sanchez.

US Ambassador Sung Kim said the continued investments from Cargill in the Philippines is an example of the strong economic relationship between the two countries.

Philippines was the first country Cargill established its presence in Asia back in 1948.

Cargill provides food, agriculture, financial and industrial products and services globally.

JFC, on the other hand, is the largest Asian food service company which has over 3,600 stores in 16 countries with seven wholly-owned brands, two franchised brands and a 60 percent ownership in a joint venture, the SuperFoods Group, that owns Highland Coffee and Pho 24 brands.

THE PHILIPPINE STAR
TRUTH SHALL PREVAIL

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Crops output seen to sustain growth in Q1

By LOUISE MAUREEN SIMEON

The country's production of palay (unhusked rice) and corn is seen to improve next year, banking on better yields and climatic conditions.

Based on the latest crops outlook of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), palay production for the first quarter may reach 4.53 million MT, three percent higher than the 4.41 million MT output recorded a year ago.

The harvest area may expand by three percent but yield may slightly decline by 0.40 percent to 3.83 MT per hectare per harvest.

PSA said probable increments in production may be expected among regions except in the Cordilleras, Western Visayas, Zamboanga peninsula and ARMM.

"Farmers are optimistic to utilize more areas in view of the continuous government intervention on high yielding varieties, seeds and fertilizer support," PSA said.

For this year, palay production may reach 19.4 million MT, up 10 percent year on year.

According to the PSA, harvest area may expand six percent and yield may improve to 4.03 MT per hectare from the 3.87 MT per hectare per harvest a year earlier.

Corn production is expected to rise to 2.5 million MT from 2.37 million MT.

Harvest area may expand to 7,390 hectares, 6.17 percent higher than the previous year.

Yield, however, may slow down to 3.38 MT per hectare from 3.4 MT per hectare in 2016.

"Possible increase in production is foreseen largely in Cagayan Valley, Northern Mindanao and Soccsksargen. Farmers are hopeful for a favorable weather condition as compared to the previous year," PSA said.

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EDITORIAL

Necessary push for agriculture

Manufacturing activity in the country has been picking up pace and is reported to be on course to have the fourth quarter its strongest for 2017. This is thanks to government policies encouraging investments in the manufacturing sector. However, if the government is to make a big dent on cutting poverty, it should exert more effort in boosting the agriculture sector.

Poverty in the Philippines remains concentrated in the countryside. Two-thirds of the poor are in rural areas dependent on jobs and incomes from farming or fishing. Statistics show that poverty incidence has also been historically high in this sector. In its 2015 Poverty Statistics for Basic Sectors report, the Philippine Statistics Authority identified farmers, fishers and children as the sectors with the highest poverty incidence among nine basic sectors identified in the Social Reform and Poverty Alleviation Act. Poverty incidence among farmers was recorded at 34.3 percent; fishers, 34 percent; and children, 31.4 percent. These sectors also consistently registered as the three sectors with the highest poverty incidence in the 2006, 2009 and 2012 surveys. The poverty incidence in these sectors also exceeded the national average of 21.6 percent.

What then needs to be done? Subsidizing irrigation and distributing free seeds to farmers can do only so much. Uplifting the agriculture sector requires a comprehensive program to tackle the different problems and bottlenecks hindering its growth and, in turn, the employment and incomes in the farm and fishery segments.

Studies have shown that among the projects in the rural areas, farm-to-market roads appeared to have the most significant impact on the communities. Given that rural infrastructure is critical to agriculture development, the absence or lack of rural infrastructure in the Philippines has been cited as a major reason for its poor agricultural productivity and the resulting high rural poverty.

There are pockets of success stories and micro programs worth adopting on a larger scale in the agriculture sector. There is this program of the Kapampangan Development Foundation led by businessman Manuel V. Pangilinan to get 30 one-hectare farms to serve as catalytic models in transferring technology and improving small farmer incomes.

The Zamboanga Research Center of the Philippine Coconut Authority has also shown how technology can significantly help coconut farmers overcome poverty. For instance, it noted that when little technology was used, a farmer earned an average annual net income per hectare of only P20,000. By adding a mere P2,400 for micronutrients, the farmer made a net income of P57,600. With the added use of hybrid technology with a one-time investment of P2,500 for the next 60 years, the net income jumped to P125,100.

Then there is the experience of Leyte, which has managed to rise from the devastation of Supertyphoon "Yolanda" by focusing on agriculture. The local government solicited the help of government agencies and the private sector to introduce livelihood activities such as higher-value organic vegetable farming. With the added focus on the health and skills of the residents, poverty significantly decreased. In one barangay, it was reported that 36 formerly poor farmers now collectively earn P12 million in annual revenue from agriculture. While the target of the provincial government is to adopt the program for the whole of Leyte, it is starting one barangay at a time until there will be 300 model villages by 2019 successfully earning from agriculture.

There are a lot of other little success stories in the agriculture sector that have successfully addressed poverty. It is just a matter of studying them and replicating those that can be replicated in other rural areas where poverty is a big challenge. Simply put, poverty cannot be addressed if agriculture continues to be neglected. If the government wants to lick the poverty problem, it should focus on boosting agricultural productivity as a national policy.

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P7.7-M DONATION

CHINA AIDS PAMPANGA IN BIRD FLU FIGHT

China on Tuesday gave P7.7 million to the Pampanga provincial government to help prevent future avian influenza infestations in the province.

The first known bird flu outbreak took place in San Luis town in August, before two more towns in Nueva Ecija province were also quarantined for avian flu infections.

Chinese Ambassador Zhao Jianhua said his government was monitoring the recent detection of bird flu in Cabiao town, also in Nueva Ecija, to see how his country could help.

Pampanga Gov. Lilia Pineda said the money would be used to buy a mobile laboratory for testing avian influenza strains. Regulatory and monitoring capacities would also be improved, she said.

Pineda and Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo received the donation at the Chinese Embassy in Makati City.

Zhao described the donation as the "first step" in helping prevent avian influenza in the province.

"China suffered many cases of bird flu and natural disasters and we feel the same [losses]," he said.

Losses from the culling of more than 420,000 chickens, ducks and quails in Pampanga reached P192 million, according to the provincial disaster risk reduction and management office.

"Our end goal is to make food safe to the Filipino people," Pineda said in her acceptance speech. Pampanga is among the top five poultry producers in the country.

Zhao also said the Chinese Embassy was following the developments in Cabiao where the third bird flu outbreak was detected last month. The towns of Jaen and San Isidro in Nueva Ecija were quarantined in August to contain bird flu infections there.

In San Luis, 1,200 chicks were introduced in four farms to check whether the H5N6 bird flu strain continued to thrive there, according to Dr. Augusto Baluyut, provincial veterinarian.

Fecal samples from the sentinel chicks are taken every Tuesday from the four farms, he said, adding that so far, "there have been no unusual [cases of] mortality."

—TONETTE OREJAS INQ

Pampanga Gov. Lilia Pineda (right) receives a check for P7.7 million from Chinese Ambassador Zhao Jianhua.
—TONETTE T. OREJAS

BusinessWorld
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Agri exporters urged to target Russian market

THE government said exporters — especially those in the agriculture sector — should set their sights on Russia where the opportunities for expansion are promising, a trade official said.

The head of the Philippine Trade and Investment Center's London office and commercial attache Anne Marie Kristine C. Umali said on Tuesday during the National Export Congress in Pasay City that President Rodrigo R. Duterte's pivot to non-traditional trade partners provides exporters with opportunities in new markets.

"I've been to St. Petersburg and Vladivostok. There are vast opportunities. In fact, just last night, a buyer was looking to source coconut products. There are other opportunities for fresh pineapple and banana and others," she added.

In October, the Department of Agriculture and its Russian counterpart signed a deal involving Russian purchases of agricultural products worth $2.5 billion. Last month, the Philippines and Russia also signed eight agreements related to trade and energy.

Ms. Umali said that as of 2016 Russia is 33rd in terms of total trade with the Philippines — the 39th largest export destination and the 32nd largest source of imports.

"I'd also like to note that total trade with them is only $234 million. There's really a lot of room to grow," she added.

She said the opportunities are also pressing due to the sanctions regime in 2014 which restricted food imports from the US, the European Union and selected countries.

"Just to note, we [also] have a GSP — generalized system of preferences — that exporters can also take advantage of. We have a Euro-Asian economic community (EuAsEC)... [This means] zero to reduced tariff rates [for selected products]," she added.

The GSP from EuAsEC became effective in 2010, with the Philippines being one of the 103 developing countries that are beneficiaries of the program.

Some of the products which qualify for little to no tariffs are meat and seafood, dairy products, vegetables, fruits and nuts, coffee, tea, spices, rice, sauces and condiments, medicaments, natural rubber, wood products and imitation jewelry.

— **Anna Gabriela A. Mogato**

PEOPLE'S JOURNAL
Everybody's Newspaper

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Former aggie chief faces trial over pork 'misuse'

By Jester P. Manalastas

FORMER Agriculture Secretary now Bohol Rep. Arthur Yap will be tried for graft over the alleged misuse of P14.55-million pork barrel fund in 2007, the Sandiganbayan Sixth Division ruled after finding probable cause to go on with the trial.

"Accused Yap argues that the information in the present cases must be dismissed or quashed for lack of probable cause. The court disagrees," the resolution read.

Associate Justice Sarah Jane Fernandez penned the resolution.

Yap, as co-accused in the case of former Nueva Ecija representative Rodolfo Antonino, is facing two counts each of violation of Section 3(e) of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act and malversation of public funds.

Based on the charge sheet filed by the Office of the Ombudsman, Antonino unilaterally chose Buhay Mo Mahal ko Foundation, Inc. (BMMKFI) as "project partner" in implementing livelihood projects for barangays in the 4th District of Nueva Ecija. The BMMKFI was supposedly operated by Antonino.

The Ombudsman also said that National Agribusiness Corporation's Alan Javellana entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the BMMKFI on the implementation of the PDAF-funded project.

Then-DA chief Yap also signed a MOA with Javellana and allegedly conspired with other private individuals, the Ombudsman added.

Yap, in his motion, said he should not be charged with the offense since he was only acting as a representative of DA and that he had no participation in the selection of BMMKFI and the implementation of the PDAF-funded project, and that he did not receive a single centavo from the PDAF.

However, the Sandiganbayan said it found sufficient evidence to hold Yap and his co-accused for trial after a careful study of the evidence.

"The court finds that sufficient grounds exist for the finding of probable cause for the purpose of issuing warrants of arrest against the accused," the ruling added.

The Sandiganbayan however will no longer issue arrest warrants against Yap and Antonino, who have already posted their respective bail bonds of P140,000.

Those ordered arrested were Javellana, Rhodora Mendoza, Encarnita Munsod, Maria Ninez Guanizo, and private individuals Marilou Antonio and Carmelita Barredo.

Meanwhile, in a separate 28-page resolution, the Sandiganbayan Third Division denied the quash motion of Yap as a co-accused in the case of former Misamis Occidental representative Marina Clarete over her alleged misuse of P65 million worth of PDAF from 2007 to 2009.

In this case, Yap is facing two counts of graft and one count each of malversation and malversation through falsification of public documents in the Third Division.

Balita

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Ex-DA Sec. Yap, lilitisin sa graft

Iniutos kahapon ng Sandiganbayan na litisin na ang kasong graft ni dating Department of Agriculture (DA) secretary at ngayo'y Bohol Representative Arthur Yap kaugnay sa umano'y pagkakasangkot nito sa P14.55 milyong pork barrel fund scam noong 2007.

Ito'y matapos ibasura ng 6th Division ng anti-graft court ang inihaing Judicial Determination of Probable Cause ni Yap dahil sa kawalan ng merito.

Nahaharap din si Yap sa kasong malversation of public funds, kasama si dating Nueva Ecija Rep. Rodolfo Antonino.

Inaakusahan ng Office of the Ombudsman ang dalawang opisyal ng paglabag sa Government Procurement Act nang hindi dumaan sa public bidding ang paggawad sa Buhay Mo Mahal ko Foundation, Inc. (BMMKFI) ng livelihood projects para sa mga barangay sa 4th District ng Nueva Ecija.

Rommel P. Tabbad

PILIPINO MIRROR
FILIPINO MIRROR MEDIA GROUP CORPORATION
• SALAMIN NG KATOTOHANAN •

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PINAKAMALAKING POULTRY PLANT SA PINAS BINUKSAN

INIHAYAG ng Cargill Joy Poultry Meat Productions, Inc. (C-Joy), ang joint venture ng Cargill at Jollibee Foods Corporation (JFC), na pinasinayaan nito ang isang poultry processing plant sa Batangas, na pinakamalaki sa bansa.

Sa kanilang disclosure sa Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), sinabi ng kompanya na ang planta ay makatutulong para kumita ng mas malaki ang mga lokal na magsasaka ng manok sa Batangas at mga kalapit na lalawigan na magsu-supply ng manok para iproseso sa JFC facility.

Ang processing capacity ng planta ay nasa 45 milyong manok kada taon.

Naniniwala ang kompanya na matutugunan nito ang malaking pangangailangan ng Jollibee sa supply ng manok.

Ang komitment ng C-Joy ay ang makapag-deliver ng maayos, ligtas at abot-kayang presyo ng manok sa mga brand ng JFC sa bansa.

"We are bringing protein to family's tables across the Philippines. Cargill and Jollibee came together to start this plant because of our common commitment to the highest standards in product quality and food safety. This is reflected in this new plant which harnesses technology and global experience to deliver tasty chicken products in an environment which is safe for our employees and is environmentally sustainable," wika ni Paul Fullbright, President and CEO ng C-Joy.

Ang C-Joy ay makikipag-partner sa mga lokal na magmamanok sa Batangas at mga kalapit na lalawigan para makapag-supply ng manok sa bagong pasilidad.

Ikinalugod naman ng mga magsasaka ang nasabing proyekto dahil sa magandang oportunidad at tataas ang kanilang kita dahil ang mga mapoprodyus nilang manok ay may sigurado ng merkado. **MONCHET LARAÑO**

Malaya
Business Insight

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Soybeans up; wheat eases

SINGAPORE- Chicago soybean futures rose for a third straight session on Tuesday with the market trading near its highest in more than four months, buoyed by dry weather in Argentina and strong US demand.

Wheat slid for a second day as US exporters face stiff competition in an amply supplied global market.

The Chicago Board of Trade most-active soybean contract gained 0.2 percent to $10.00-1/2 a bushel, not far from Monday's peak of $10.08-1/2, the highest since July 31.

Wheat lost 0.1 percent to $4.35 a bushel and corn was down 0.1 percent to $3.53-1/4 a bushel.

Hot and dry weather in parts of Argentina's oilseed-producing areas is expected to reduce yields. -***Reuters***