

CLIPPINGS FOR MONDAY, JULY 03, 2022

A. SEC. PBBM QUOTED

PILIPINO STAR NGAYON

Editoriyal: Wala nang magugutom?

REMATE

Bagsak!

B. DA FAMILY

MANILA BULLETIN

NIA tops anew in GOCC subsidies

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Bio-fertilizer use eyed to aid corn farmers

BUSINESS WORLD

Cotabato farmers trained in organic fertilizer preparation

Fisheries output seen rising in Q3 as El Niño boosts plankton growth

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

Editorial: Sugar tax

Phl pork consumption cut by half – DA exec

DA to Negros LGU: Replace missing fertilizer

MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT

NIA names 3 priority PPP projects

Editorial: PBBM admin after one year

THE MANILA TIMES

4K hog raisers to receive P2K 1st half of July

Japan empowers Benguet farmers through cold chain system

Onion, rice prices up as of mid-June

PhilMech to deliver rice processing systems

BUSINESS MIRROR

DA, livestock Philippines 2023: Valuable partnership towards a vibrant...

NIA to undertake big-ticket irrigation projects via PPP

C. AGRI-RELATED STORY

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Feed maker Vitarich face ASF risks in foray into hog production

BUSINESS WORLD

Well-milled rice prices up in six regional centers

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

Farmers urged to grow purple corn

THE MANILA TIMES

US connects Butuan City farmers to the internet

THE MANILA TIMES
June inflation likely slower at 5.4%

BUSINESS MIRROR
PHL food supply slightly higher in 2022 - PSA

D. FOREIGN STORY

MALAYA BUSINESS INSIGHT
Soy soars, corn dives

THE MANILA TIMES
China's hybrid rice security

BUSINESS MIRROR
FAO, partner agencies to lead \$115-M program to protect oceans

Date: July 3, 2023 Page: 5LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE**Editorial****Wala nang magugutom?**

MULING inulit ni President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. ang kanyang pangako na wawakasan na ang naranasang kagutuman ng nakararaming mamamayan. Ito ang ikatlo niyang paghahayag na ginagawa ng kanyang administrasyon ang lahat nang paraan para ang mga nagdarahop na Pilipino ay hindi na makaranas ng gutom at magkaroon ng magandang buhay.

Una niyang sinabi noong Mayo 30, 2022 sa kanyang kauna-unahang talumpati makaraan ang inagurasyon sa National Museum sa Maynila na ang susi sa pagkaroon nang maraming pagkain ay ang mahusay na pagpatnubay sa agrikultura. Ang papel aniya ng agrikultura ay napakahalaga pero napapabayaang kaya nagkaroon ng problema sa pagkain. Ipinangako niya na pauunlarin ang agrikultura at hindi aasa sa importasyon. Hinawakan ni Marcos ang tanggapan ng Agrikultura at hanggang ngayon, siya pa rin ang umaaktong kalihim.

Noong Hulyo 25, 2022 na kanyang kauna-unahang State of the Nation Address (SONA), muli niyang binanggit ang may kaugnayan sa food sufficiency at ang pagtulong sa mga magsasaka para maparami ang ani. Kabilang aniya sa mga ipagkakaloob na tulong ay ang pagbibigay ng tulong pinansiyal, abono, pestisidyo, mga punla, feeds, fuel subsidy at ayuda para sa mga karapat-dapat na benepisaryo.

Palalawakin din daw ang mga palaisdaan, babuyan at manukan. Gagamitan ng siyensya para tumaas ang produksyon. Gagawa rin ng national network ng farm-to-market roads upang mas mabilis na maihatid ng mga magsasaka ang kanilang mga produkto sa mga pamilihan. Binanggit din ng Presidente ang muling pagbuhay ng mga Kadiwa Centers kung saan ay makabibili ng murang pagkain.

Noon ngang Sabado, muli niyang inulit ang pagsikap ng pamahalaan para mawakasan na ang naranasang kagutuman ng nakararaming Pilipino. Hindi raw siya titigil hangga't hindi nalulutas ang problema sa kakapusan ng pagkain at naranasang gutom.

Habang paulit-ulit ang sinasabi niyang paggawa ng paraan sa problema ng pagkain, nagpapatuloy naman ang importasyon hindi lamang ng bigas kundi pati na rin ang asukal, galunggong, sibuyas at iba pang agri products. Taliwas ito sa ipinangakong pagyayamanin ang sariling ani at tutulungan ang mga magsasaka para madagdagan ang produksiyon.

Habang patuloy ang pag-angkat, dumadagsa rin naman ang mga smuggled agri products na lantarang nagdaraan sa tungki ng ilong ng mga taga-Bureau of Customs. Mga smugglers at korap sa Customs ang nakikinabang at nagsisiyaman.

Malawak ang lupain ng Pilipinas subalit ang nakahain sa hapag ay mga produktong inani sa ibang bansa. Malawak ang karagatan, pero ang galunggong ay ina-angkat.

REMATE

ANG DIARYO NG MASA

Date: July 3, 2023 Page: 5



LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

BAGSAK!

NATAPOS na ni Pangulong BBM ang unang taon ng kanyang administrasyon. Sa palagay ko lang naman, parang mabigat sa ka-looban ng ilan nating mga kababayan na bigyan ng pasang-awang grado ang gobyernong ito. Isa-isahin nga natin kung bakit.

Sa sitwasyong siya na nga ang Presidente at siya rin ang Secretary ng Dept. of Agriculture, inaasahan ko na mabibigyan niya ng prayoridad at siguruhing merong sapat, masustansya at murang pagkain ang mga Pilipino.

'Di nga ba, pangako n'yang gagawing bente pesos ang bawat kilo ng bigas?

Pero ang nakita natin ay sunod-sunod na krisis ng bigas, asukal, sibuyas at pagmahal ng

presyo ng karneng baboy at isda. Hindi rin nasolusyunan ang 'foot-and-mouth disease' at 'Avian flu' kaya halos bumagsak ang livestock industry, lalo na sa mga probinsya.

Ang solusyon ng Kagawaran ng Agrikultura ay dagdag na import para raw mabilis na mapababa ang presyo ng mga pagkain. Bumaba ang mga presyo ng mga pangunahing bilihin natin? Smugglers at importers lang ang nakinabang. Talo pa rin ang mga maliliit na magsasaka at lalong talo ang konsyomers na nagtititiis sa mataas ng presyo ng bilihin.

Sa usapin namañ ng kalikasan, bagsak na grado ang ibibigay ng mga makakalikasang grupo dahil daw mas naging agresibo ang pagmimina sa mga



REMATE OPINION

ALINANG NAIBA

NI ALIN FERRER

isla natin.

Ang kaso ng maarahas na 'dispersal' sa Sibuyan Island, Romblon at ang matagal na protesta ng mga magsasaka at katutubo sa bayan ng Brooke's Pt., Palawan laban sa nickel mining na nag-o-operate ng walang business permit.

Huwag din daw natin kalimutan ang mga isyu ng oil spill sa Mindoro, ang pagbubukas ng usapin sa nuclear energy at ang pagpapapabilis sa Kaliwa Dam sa Sierra Madre. Patong-patong

na dagok daw ang nakuha ng kalikasan nitong nakaraang taon sa gobyerno ni PBBM.

Sa ilalim ng maraming problema ng bansa, inuna pa ng Kongreso na ipasa ang Maharlika Investment Fund o MIF. Kahit na nga ba maraming tutol sa batas, lalo na ang mga eksperto sa economics.

Dahil sa mga rason na ito, tila bagsak ang grado ng gobyerno ni Marcos, Jr., sa unang taon ng kanyang panunugkulan.



LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

NIA tops anew in GOCC subsidies

By CHINO S. LEYCO

State-run **National Irrigation Administration (NIA)** received the largest subsidy support from the national government in May this year to aid its goal of ensuring the country's food security, data from the Bureau of the Treasury showed.

The national government gave away P7.39 billion in subsidies to government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) in May, with NIA receiving P4.22 billion, which accounted for 57 percent of the total subsidy disbursements.

While the subsidy received by NIA during the month was lower than the P6.26 billion in May 2022, it still maintained its position as the highest recipient of financial aid among state-run companies during the first five months of the year. The agency's subsidy also tripled in April to P3.1 billion, accounting for more than two-fifths of total financial support to state-run firms for the month.

From January to May, NIA, which is tasked with the development of the country's irrigation system, received a total of P18.28 billion in subsidies from the national government.

In an earlier directive, President Marcos emphasized the need for faster implementation of high-impact irrigation projects, in collaboration between NIA and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

The President emphasized that it is imperative for the government to undertake dam projects worth P200 billion annually, as these projects serve multi-purpose and contribute significantly to national development.

In 2022, NIA received P40.66 billion, which accounted for 20.3 percent of the government's total subsidies to GOCCs amounting to P200.4 billion.

The government provides a large subsidy to NIA to support agricultural development, provide affordable irrigation services to farmers, invest in irrigation infrastructure,

promote the public good, and address social equity.

In May, the government slightly decreased its subsidies to GOCCs by 7.3 percent, reducing the total amount from P7.97 billion to P7.39 billion compared to the previous year.

Among the GOCCs that received financial assistance from the government were the National Food Authority (P849 million), National Housing Authority (P363 million), and Philippine Fisheries Development Authority (P319 million).

Additionally, the Philippine Rice Research Institute received P239 million, while the Philippine Children and Medical Center got P173 million and the National Kidney and Transplant Institute with P125 million also received funding.

Despite the subsidy reduction in May, the national government's total aid expenses for GOCCs in the first five months of the year reached P37.65 billion, still 4.3 percent lower than the P39.36 billion provided during the same period last year.

Date: JUL. 03, 2023 Page: B3



LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Bio-fertilizer use eyed to aid corn farmers

By **Jordeene B. Lagare**
@jordeenelagare

The Department of Agriculture (DA) will now distribute bio-fertilizers to farmers in a move to boost local production and income of corn growers while lowering the cost of producing this commodity.

The agency promulgated the revised guidelines to include the provision of bio-fertilizers to corn farmers in its National Corn Program (NCP) which continue to grapple with the rising cost of inorganic fertilizers.

It is turning to bio-fertilizers as a cheaper alternative to inorganic fertilizers in order to meet the nutrients necessary to cultivate corn, one of the essential crops and staple foods of Filipino consumers.

Corn is used as an ingredient for animal feeds and several

other industrial uses. Due to its several uses, there is an increasing demand of corn, especially for feed use.

Yield support

"To sustain the yield level of corn and income of farmers and lower the cost of production, NCP supports the provision of bio-fertilizers to corn farmers as a supplemental source of plant nutrients," the DA said in a memorandum circular.

As explained by the DA, bio-fertilizers contain organisms that enhance the nutrient uptake of plants. It improves the plant's root system, enhances nutrient absorption, provides resistance to pests and diseases, and enhances soil condition.

"At present, the cost of inorganic fertilizers drastically increased as a result of increasing price of oil in the international

market. The high price of inorganic fertilizers significantly affects the cost of corn production in our country thus reducing the income of farmers," it added.

The new rules have two objectives: Reduce the usage of inorganic nitrogen-fertilizers and promote the use of bio-fertilizers for corn through various extension activities such as information caravans and training.

Registered farmers

Ready to use bio-fertilizers will be distributed to corn farmers registered in the Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture.

Distribution will be made through the active corn cluster organization. However, for individual farmers who do not belong to any cluster, the agricultural extension workers of local government units (LGUs)

will provide them.

Farmer-beneficiaries will use bio-fertilizers based on the area to be planted and following the manufacturer's recommended rate per hectare.

Aside from providing previous farming activities to their respective cluster organizations, corn producers are asked to implement other recommended production and post-harvest practices.

The DA's regional field office and the LGU will visit the area in order to assess the performance of corn production.

In the case of cluster organizations, they are to submit letters of intent and lists of recipients.

The groups will also hand over ready to use bio-fertilizers and consolidate data, reports and other pertinent documents on the status of bio-fertilizer distribution and utilization. **INQ**



LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE



COTABATO PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURIST

Cotabato farmers trained in organic fertilizer preparation

FARMERS in Cotabato province received training in the preparation of alternative fertilizers from the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPAg) at the Municipal Nursery of Midsayap.

Seventy organic farmers from Midsayap learned to make fertilizer using fermented fruit juice, fermented plant juice, fish amino acids, and calcium phosphate made from jackfruit, bananas, fish, eggshells, muscovado, vinegar, carbonized rice hulls, and liquid smoke' as well as organic composting.

The program is a farm-income improvement initiative of Governor Emmylou J. Taliño-Mendoza.

The OPAg lead official for organics, Dina A. Lumogdang, said the methods used will save farmers money and keep their farms chemical-free.

Meanwhile, the Department of Agriculture (DA) Region 12 and the provincial government of Cotabato also discussed the distribution of rice fertilizer support.

"Sa ngayon ay pinaghahandaan na ng probinsya ang isasagawang pamamahagi kung saan magkakaroon ng ikalawang pagpupulong kasama ang mga representante ng iba't-ibang munisipyo upang maibahagi ang nasa-bing fertilizers sa mga karapat dapat na mga benepisyaryo (The province is preparing for the distribution, for which we will convene a second meeting with representatives from each municipality, in order to distribute fertilizer to eligible beneficiaries)," the governor said.

In 2022, the DA ranked Cotabato province no. 1 in Region 12, no. 3 in Mindanao and no. 10 in the country in rice production, with output of 510,973 metric tons. — **Maya M. Padillo**



Fisheries output seen rising in Q3 as El Niño boosts plankton growth

By Sheldeen Joy Talavera

FISHERIES production could continue to improve in the third quarter, with the weather favoring the growth of plankton that fish depend on for food, a former fisheries official said.

"That is the trend that I am seeing with El Niño, (assuming no other) extreme weather disturbance," according to Asis G. Perez, former director of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and co-convenor of advocacy group Tugon Kabuhayan.

Mr. Perez said fish eat more in warm weather, allowing them to grow bigger. Warm weather also encourages plankton growth, on which the fish feed.

"Since primary production happens with sunlight, the production of the food for fish will be higher this time as El Niño is entering," he told *BusinessWorld* by phone.

The government weather service, known as PAGASA (Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration), has forecast the possibility of an El Niño episode beginning in June, running until the first quarter of 2024.

Fisheries production in the first quarter rose 2% to 991.14 thousand metric tons, led by the marine municipal fisheries and aquaculture subsectors.

From the three months to June, Mr. Perez said fishermen reported a good harvest as favorable weather allowed them to fish, while supply-chain disruptions are clearing up for processed animal protein (PAP), a material used in fish feed.

The Philippine Statistics Authority is set to release agricultural output data for the second quarter on Aug. 9.

During the third quarter of 2022, Mr. Perez said fisheries production, particularly aquaculture, declined due to the lower supply of PAP, which was caught up in the import bans on pork products imposed due to African Swine Fever.

"Now, we're hoping that with the better climate and at least with less rain and moderate sunlight, assuming no weather disturbances, then maybe fisheries performance will improve," he said.

Mr. Perez noted that increased volume of production does not translate to higher incomes, considering the market's demand and supply situation.

"*Kapag sobrang madami naman, 'yong farmer naapektuhan kasi* good

production does not necessarily mean more income... *kapag nagkasabay-sabay ang harvest medyo ang presyo apektado* (If the harvest is too bountiful, the farmer could be affected. Good production does not necessarily mean more income. If all the good harvests come in at once, the price could be affected)," he said.

According to the Department of Agriculture's price monitors, as of June 30 the retail price of *bangus* or milkfish in Metro Manila was between P145 and P240 as of June 30.

Tilapia fetched between P105 and P160 while *galunggong* or local round scad sold for between P180 and P200.

Mr. Perez also noted that pork imports have affected demand for fish and other commodities.



EDITORIAL

Sugar tax

With the head of the economic team himself renewing his push for the liberalization of sugar importation alongside the proposal to slap a tax on sugary food and beverage products, the country may soon see the measures in place. Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno pointed out the "big difference" between domestic and world prices of sugar, with producers of sugary food items passing on the high cost to consumers.

Since last year, sky-high domestic sugar prices have refused to ease even slightly. This was despite the regular harvest plus the importation of 440,000 metric tons of refined white sugar earlier this year, under an apparent sweetheart deal still waiting for a credible probe, which was awarded by the **Department of Agriculture** to just three lucky handpicked companies.

The three firms surely made a killing, with the imports providing little benefit to consumers of sugary products such as soft drinks and juices, or to micro entrepreneurs who use a lot of sugar for products such as banana cue, rice cakes, *sago't gulaman* and neighborhood *panaderia* breads. Confectionery and other sugary items accounted for the largest chunk of food inflation, which in turn fueled high inflation in the past months.

A tax on sugary food and

drinks and an increase in the excise tax on sweetened beverages could drive soft drinks and juices beyond the reach of millions of poor Filipinos. As a compromise, Diokno is proposing that sugar importation be liberalized like rice imports, with institutional consumers in particular allowed to directly import sugar from their own sources.

Even when he was still the budget secretary of Rodrigo Duterte, Diokno had already been pushing for the liberalization of sugar importation. As in rice tariffication, Diokno had pointed out that "there are more consumers than sugar producers." This time, Diokno said that unlike the Rice Tariffication Law, legislation is not even needed to liberalize sugar importation.

Not surprisingly, domestic sugar producers opposed Diokno's proposal in the previous administration, and are strenuously opposing it again this time. The best way to persuade Diokno and consumers that sugar import liberalization is not needed, however, is for industry stakeholders to work together in significantly bringing down the retail prices of sugar. The industry players must dispel public perceptions that inefficiency and greed are keeping sugar prices in the stratosphere. Unless they can do this, Diokno's proposal will be the more attractive option.

Date: JUL. 03, 2023 Page: 2



LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Phl pork consumption cut by half - DA exec

By BELLA CARIASO

A ranking official of the Department of Agriculture (DA) yesterday confirmed a drop in the demand for pork in the market as the Philippine Statistics Authority pegged the total consumption for the second quarter to 403,000 metric tons.

In a radio interview, Agriculture Assistant Secretary and spokesman Kristine Evangelista said that traders complained that the volume of pork being procured by vendors from them was slashed by half.

"There is a low demand for pork. Vendors who used to buy at least two 'sabit ulo' from the traders, only get one *sabit ulo*. With that, we need to verify the data as based on the data from the PSA, the demand for the second quarter is at 403,000 metric tons, that is based on per capita consumption," Evangelista said.

In a text message to The STAR, Philippine Pork Producers Federation president Nonon Tambago attributed the drop in the demand for pork to the low purchasing power of consumers.

"Based on observations, pork demand was affected because of low purchasing power of low income bracket consumers as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic," Tambago said.

Evangelista added despite the reduction in the demand for pork, there is fear of possible shortage in the supply of pork amid the outbreak of African swine fever (ASF) in many areas in the country.

"At present, there is fear that there will be a shortage in the supply of pork, but we at the consumer affairs department are still vetting the data as we do not only rely on the locally produced (pork). We also have

inventory in the cold storage facilities of imported, or frozen pork," Evangelista added.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary for operations Arnel de Mesa has said that the country needs to resort to more importation of pork to address the shortage in the supply amid the outbreak of ASF in many areas in the country, particularly in Visayas.

Evangelista said that the DA is trying to determine the actual stocks of frozen imported pork products.

"What we are trying to do now is engage our inspectorate to help the National Meat Inspection Service who is in charge of the data on cold storage. However, what they have is the data from accredited cold storage. So with that, our position at the consumer affairs is we cannot come up with supply situation without knowing the real picture, so what we are trying to see now is how to get the data from non-accredited cold storage facilities to make sure we have the right data," Evangelista said.

Farmers' group Samahang Industriyang Agrikultura president Rosendo So has criticized plans to import more frozen pork products, noting that at present there are at least 75 million kilos of frozen pork still in the cold storage facilities.

Evangelista said that she plans to invite importers during the scheduled monthly price and volume watch meeting with the stakeholders.

"We will invite the importers to see the whole picture for our supply situation because it will serve also as guidance should they be aggressive in producing, should they slow down, same with our importers. We don't flood our markets," she said.

Date: JUL. 03, 2023 Page: 12



LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

DA to Negros LGU: Replace missing fertilizer

BACOLOD CITY—The provincial government of Negros Occidental has been told by the **Department of Agriculture (DA)-Western Visayas** to replace the 789 bags of fertilizers that were reported missing from a warehouse in Bago City.

Earlier, the DA endorsed 4,170 bags of fertilizer to the provincial government for distribution to local farmers affected by Typhoon Odette.

The bags of fertilizer were delivered for safekeeping in a warehouse in Barangay Tabunan.

Two employees of the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist assigned at the warehouse are being investigated by the provincial legal office over the missing items worth P2.3 million.

Following the investigation, provincial agriculturist Edmundo Causing resigned from his post, citing health reasons, according to provincial administrator Rayfrando Diaz.

In a letter to Gov. Eugenio Jose Lacson, DA-Western Visayas officer-in-charge Albert Barrogo said they received requests from the local governments of Bago, Cadiz, Cauayan and Kabankalan to release their fertilizer allocation as well as the remaining balance for those who received partial allocations.

Barrogo expressed hope that the provincial government would replace the missing bags of fertilizers, so the DA could release these to farmers in time for the cropping season. — **Gilbert Bayoran**



LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

NIA names 3 priority PPP projects

THE National Irrigation Administration (NIA) approved the first set of priority irrigation projects that will be pursued for public-private partnerships (PPP) this year.

NIA last week identified three projects worth P37.9 billion for PPP including the Ilocos Norte-Ilocos Sur-Abra irrigation project II (INISAIP II), Tumauni river multipurpose project (TRMP) and the upper Banaoang irrigation project.

The agency said INISAIP II is the most expensive at P22.7 billion which will irrigate approximately 11,100 hectares of agricultural land with water from the Palsiguan river to irrigate sub-areas of the province of Ilocos Norte such as Nueva Era, Cura, Madupayas, Pinili, Badoc-Sinait and Batac-Paoay through a network of link canals.

INISAIP II will also serve functions for culture, eco-tourism, hydropower generation and other recreational activities to help generate job opportunities for the community and its constituents.

The TRMP will cost P8.6 billion that will expand the coverage of the existing Tumauni irrigation system (TIS) to 32 barangays located in the municipalities of Tumauni, Cabagan, and the city of Ilagan, Isabela.

NIA said the project is being pursued as TIS was originally designed to potentially irrigate an area of 6,100 hectares but only around 3,000 hectares are currently being irrigated due to insufficient water-river runoff, especially during the summer season.



EDITORIAL

A member of the
PPI Philippine
Press
Institute
The National Association of Philippine Newspapers

PBBM admin after one year

ONE year is but a short time in national governance and it would be almost an injustice to judge the overall performance of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on the basis of what he did during the last 12 months. After all, one year is just one-sixth of his term of office and Marcos will have a full 5 years moving forward to prove what he can do for the Filipino people.

The first year, however, of any president's administration is an occasion for assurances, expression of support and cooperation, and of course, criticisms. That is how we do it in Philippine politics, and tradition does not bestow an exemption to Bongbong Marcos.

It is interesting to note that PBBM's allies in the Senate, starting with Senate President Juan Miguel Zubiri, are all praises for the Chief Executive.

'While one year is short in judging performance, it is enough time for a new president and his team to adjust and acclimatize to the environment of power. The nation will be expecting much more from President Bongbong in his second year.'

Statements of praise and recognition coming from the senators is one thing, but similar statements coming from the President's Cabinet

members is another — one that could evoke laughter. This is because these Cabinet secretaries are supposed to be alter-egos of the President, and so praising him is synonymous to Marcos praising himself.

PBBM humbly said that he agreed with an observer that his grade for the first year is "incomplete." He admitted that he still has many things to do, especially in the Cabinet portfolio that he holds, the Department of Agriculture (DA). Actually, it is in the area of agriculture and food security that his performance has been found wanting. Lackluster agri production coupled with rampant smuggling of crops, livestock, and poultry products has saddled the economy with colossal challenges that call for immediate solutions.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel III is baffled why the President continues to head the DA, noting the administration has had two controversies in sugar importation in less than a year in office.

While the Marcos administration boasts a supermajority in Congress, only four of the 42 priority bills have been passed into law in the first 12 months -- including on SIM registration, postponement of the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections (BSKE).

Even the implementation of these two new laws has met unique snags, as the government had to move the deadline for SIM registration to July this year. The BSKE postponement -- the third postponement in the last couple of years -- has been declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, although the high tribunal allowed the polls to be held this October.

While one year is short in judging performance, it is enough time for a new president and his team to adjust and acclimatize to the environment of power. The nation will be expecting much more from President Bongbong in his second year.



LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

4K hog raisers to receive P2K assistance in 1st half of July

BACOLOD CITY, Negros Occidental: The provincial government of Negros Occidental will release its financial assistance to the 4,000 hog raisers affected by hog deaths during the first half of July, Rayfrando Diaz, provincial administrator, said over the weekend.

Diaz also said the Provincial Veterinary Office has been tasked to validate the list of hog raisers qualified to receive the financial assistance.

"We will ensure that it will be released before the banning period for the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections," he added.

Earlier, the provincial capitol allocated P10 million for the assistance to the affected hog raisers in the province.

Each beneficiary will receive P2,000 cash assistance.

Diaz said hog raisers who did not follow biosafety protocols like those throwing their dead pigs into waterways will not qualify to receive the assistance.

Data showed that as of June 30, losses of hog raisers from hog deaths had already reached P171,340,900.

A total of 148 barangay (villages) in 18 local government units in Negros Occidental have been affected.

Total pig deaths have reached 15,175 or 10.03 percent of the province' hog population and affected 3,088 hog raisers.

Meanwhile, the regional office of the Department of Agriculture (DA) in Western Visayas said the agency is not giving any cash assistance to hog raisers affected by the African swine fever (ASF) and hog cholera.

DA Agricultural Engineering chief Jose Albert Barrogo said that if a hog raiser is insured, he can immediately get assistance from the PCIC.

EUGENE Y. ADIONG



LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Japan empowers Benguet farmers through cold chain system



■ The project enables the development of a cold chain system.

EMBASSY of Japan's First Secretary and Agriculture Attaché Tachikawa Jumpei led the inauguration ceremony for the solar-powered cold storage facility in Buguias, Benguet on June 21.

The event was also graced by Benguet Governor Melchor Didas, Buguias Mayor Ruben Tinda-an, DA, ATI Training Center Director Remelyn Recoter, Japan Agricultural Exchange Council Executive Director Sakamoto Ryoji and other LGU and ATI officials.

Farmers in Benguet frequently face the challenge of earning

low income despite harvesting competitive and high-quality produce. Despite being known as the "Salad Bowl of the Philippines" and having favorable climate for growing vegetables, Benguet suffers from an unstructured production system, subpar post-harvest handling procedures, and unstable product prices.

To aid the farmers in Benguet, the Japan Agricultural Exchange Council (JAEC), a Japanese NGO, has been implementing the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Grassroots Cooperation



■ The inauguration ceremony for the solar-powered cold storage facility in Buguias, Benguet.

Project since 2007.

Among other things, JAEC carried out dissemination activities for safe vegetable farming techniques and improved post-harvest procedures.

However, the activities for this initiative were suspended in 2019 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2021, through the funding support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) of Japan, JAEC commenced the Safe Vegetable Production Technology Dissemination and Vegetable Distribution System Improvement Project.

The farmers were equipped

with various Japanese farming technologies under this initiative. This project will also enable the development of a cold chain system through the completed solar-powered cold storage facility in the Municipality of Buguias, Benguet, as well as the other cold storage supplies and equipment.

By enhancing the quality of the produce through an effective distribution system, farmer's income are expected to improve and their losses to decrease, while consumers may benefit from buying healthy, fresh, and quality vegetables.



LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Onion, rice prices up as of mid-June

THE average retail price of red onions and well-milled rice increased in June, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported on Friday.

Data from the PSA showed that prices of red onions climbed by P0.13 to P25 per kilogram (kg) in six trading centers during the second phase of June 2023 (June 15 to 17), relative to the price levels in the first phase of the same month.

Meanwhile, the prices of red onions declined by P2.50 per kg in Tuguegarao City and by P15 per kg in Calapan City during the period.

Six trading centers also posted an increase in the retail prices of well-milled rice, ranging from P0.11 to P1.50 per kg. Prices per kilogram went down by P0.17 in Tuguegarao City and by P1.61 in Iloilo City.

The highest price of well-milled rice was observed in Batanes at P67 per kg.

The price monitoring of the Department of Agriculture (DA) showed that prices of well-milled rice ranges from P39 to P48 per kg, while prices of local red onion is P130 to P200 per kg as of June 30, 2023.

Average retail prices of vegetables, including carrots and tomatoes, increased in the majority of the trading centers, up to P12 and P20 per kg, respectively.

Tomatoes are sold from P27.50

to P75 per kg, while carrots are priced between P52.50 and P150 per kg.

Prices of fish, such as galunggong (round scad), also went down by P10 to P40 per kg, as recorded in seven trading centers during the same period.

However, its average retail prices per kilogram increased by P5 to P30 in five trading centers during the period — Baguio, Cabanatuan, Calapan, Tacloban and Butuan City.

The highest price of galunggong reached P330 per kg as recorded in Batangas City.

Prices of tilapia also went down by up to P25 per kg and can be bought from P120 to P205 per kg.

Decreases in prices of dressed chicken were also noted in eight trading centers by P2 to P10 per kg. While its average retail price was higher by P5 per kg in Iloilo City during the period.

Price of beef (pure meat) remains stable in the majority of the trading centers, priced between P340 and P474 per kg. Cabanatuan and Butuan City were the only provinces that posted increases by P5 and P15 per kg, respectively.

The DA price monitoring showed that prices of beef ranged from P340 to P550 per kg, while whole chicken cost P160 to P200 per kg. **JANINE ALEXIS MIGUEL**



LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

PHilMech to deliver rice processing systems

THE Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (PHilMech) has set the distribution of P151.8 million worth of rice processing systems (RPS) to be distributed under the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF)-Mechanization Program.

PHilMech Director Dionisio Alvindia said that qualified farmers cooperatives and associations (FCAs) or the local government units (LGUs) can enter the rice value chain and directly market their milled rice through the RPS given under the program.

"The last three years of the RCEF-Mechanization Program, or from 2022 to 2024, will focus more on the distribution of more post-harvest or drying equipment and milling facilities, which will allow qualified FCAs and

LGUs to enter the rice value chain," he said.

As part of its mandate to provide post-harvest technologies under the program, PHilMech has set three types of RPS to be distributed to rice farmers.

This includes the RPS-1 that has a multi-pass rice mill that has 1.5 tons per hour capacity, and two units of recirculating dryer with a capacity of 6 tons that cost P17.5 million.

The RPS-2 is worth P61.7 million and has a capacity of 2 to 3 tons per hour, and the RPS-3 that costs P72.6 million and has a capacity of 4 to 5 tons per hour.

Both RPS-2 and RPS-3 have a multi-pass rice mill and two units of recirculating dryer with a capacity of 12 tons.

According to PHilMech, seven sets of RPS

1 were already delivered and installed. While 15 sets of RPS 1, 11 sets of RPS 2 and 5 sets of RPS 3 are due for delivery and construction.

The agency also provides training to FCAs and LGUs who will be recipients of the processing systems.

Among those already trained were 11 FCAs and three LGUs from Regions 11 (Davao Region), 13 (Caraga Region) and the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Roselyn Dugang of Municipal Local Government Unit of Rosario, Agusan del Sur shared her insights on the relevance of the workshop.

"Conducting a feasibility study (FS) is essential because from this, we can determine what

aspect we should improve on, [such as] implementing the rice milling business — there are several factors to consider about it, and we can only identify these through FS," she said.

The recipients of the RPS are thankful to PHilMech.

"All I can say to PHilMech is that we are honored to be a recipient of the RPSI," said Constancio Dalanon, chairman of Avanceña Beneficiaries and Farmers Multi-Purpose Cooperative.

As of the end of May 2023, PHilMech has completed a total of seven RPS, and is constructing another 31 RPS. Meanwhile, another 63 have been set for post-qualification evaluation.

JANINE ALEXIS MIGUEL

Date: JULY 03, 2023 Page: C4



LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

DA, Livestock Philippines 2023: Valuable partnership towards a vibrant livestock, poultry, aquaculture industry



A GROUP photo with Ms. Rungphech Chitanuwat, Engr. Arnel De Mesa and the members of the press.

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) extends its full support to Livestock Philippines 2023 which will be held from July 5 to 7, 2023, at the World Trade Center in Pasay City. Relative to this, the DA and Informa Markets, the organizers behind the Livestock Show series in ASEAN and Taiwan, invited the media for a press conference on June 26, 2023, at Novotel Manila Araneta City.

Updates on the livestock and poultry industries were the highlights of the event which was attended by Agriculture Assistant Secretary for Operations Engineer Arnel de Mesa and Rungphech "Rose" Chitanuwat, Regional Portfolio Director – ASEAN of Informa Markets. Chitanuwat shared the show's newest endeavors this year. Also present were the department heads of the Bureau of Animal Industry, National Meat Inspection, Philippine Carabao Center, National Dairy Authority of the Philippines, and the Philippine Council for Agriculture and Fisheries. They were there to show their support for the forthcoming Livestock Philippines.

In recognition of the valuable contribution of the local aquaculture sector to the country's economy, Livestock Philippines 2023 will also hold the Aquaculture Philippines. Industry professionals and experts will lead various seminars, industry updates, and other important discussions on aquaculture on July 6, 2023.

Now on its sixth edition, Livestock Philippines, previously a bi-annual show, has become the main venue for state-of-the-art technologies, knowledge exchange, and innovative solutions for the livestock, aquaculture, and poultry industries. As the show coincides with the country's celebration of nutrition month in July, Ms. Chitanuwat emphasized the importance of food safety and security with the initiatives of the DA and its affiliated participating agencies. To further underscore the health and well-being of consumers, the Batangas Egg Producers Cooperative (BEPKO) will have its Eggcellent Corner and Egg Forum wherein they invited the National Nutritional Council, SUN Business Network, and other poultry practitioners.

An agricultural cooperative registered under the Cooperative Development Authority, BEPKO is composed of egg farmers operating small to commercial-scale layer farms and is the leading group towards innovative egg products such as liquid eggs, pasteurized eggs, and many others. During the event, BEPKO will discuss the future of the industry through the Philippine Egg Roadmap as well as showcase new and healthy preparations of egg-based products.

Livestock Philippines will also recognize individuals for their exemplary work in their respective livestock, aquaculture, and poultry

industries through Livestock Philippines Recognition 2023. This special accolade aims to uplift the farming community by paying tribute to their unwavering efforts to help improve the local agriculture industry.

A special business arrangement will also be conducted during the Match & Meet where suppliers and buyers will directly meet and discuss trade opportunities. This segment will give local and international stakeholders the opportunity to specifically discuss the needed market information such as pricing, quotation, and many others, paving the way for building lifelong business partnerships.

Livestock Philippines is the International Trade Fair for Innovative Production and Processing for Poultry and Livestock that brings together local and foreign exhibitors, as well as trade visitors including industry professionals, key stakeholders, owners, and integrators, farmers, feed millers, pre-mixers, meat processors, slaughterhouses, veterinarians, distributors, retailers, and others.

As the country's highly regarded international trade fair for feed, livestock, and aquaculture since 2011, the show is expected to gather guests from 30 different nations aside from the scores of local visitors coming across the Philippines.

Visit www.livestockphilippines.com for more information about the event.

Date: JULY 03, 2023 Page: A5



LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

NIA to undertake big-ticket irrigation projects via PPP

THE National Irrigation Administration (NIA) has given its nod to irrigation projects worth P37.9 billion that will be undertaken under the public-private partnership (PPP) scheme.

The NIA's Board has approved the Ilocos Norte-Ilocos Sur-Abra Irrigation Project II (INISAIP II), Tumauni River Multipurpose Project (TRMP), and Upper Banaoang Irrigation Project.

The INISAIP II worth P22.7 billion intends to irrigate approximately 11,100 hectares of agricultural land with Palsiguan River as the main source of irrigation water.

The project will irrigate sub-areas of the Province of Ilocos Norte such as Nueva Era, Cura,

Madupayas, Pinili, Badoc-Sinait and Batac-Paoay through a network of link canals.

Meanwhile, the TRMP is worth P8.6-billion proposed project to expand the coverage of the existing Tumauni Irrigation System (TIS) to 32 barangays located in the Municipalities of Tumauni, Cabagan and the city of Ilagan, Isabela.

TIS was originally designed to potentially irrigate an area of 6,100 hectares. However, only around 3,000 hectares are currently being irrigated.

This is because of insufficient water-river runoff, especially during the summer season, according to the NIA.

The agency also said the Upper Banaoang Irrigation Project worth P6.6 billion aims to construct an

impounding dam with Malapaao River as its water source.

With a potential service area of 5,000 hectares of agricultural land, the project is also designed to engage in fish culture and develop hydroelectric power projects.

NIA has set its sights on developing climate-smart, multi-purpose irrigation systems. The agency believes that PPP will fast-track and expand irrigation development through private sector expertise.

In March, the NIA and the PPP Center signed an agreement that will allow the agency to maximize the utilization of its irrigation's assets.

Guillen and PPP Center Executive Director Ma. Cynthia Hernandez signed a memorandum of

agreement (MOA) to obtain the optimal value of NIA's resources through PPP.

The partnership is to engage on other financial and revenue-generating activities that will strengthen the agency's viability as a government-owned and -controlled corporation.

With around 1 million hectares remaining to be developed, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. aims to revitalize the country's irrigation sector.

NIA data showed that the agency has identified 50 potential projects for PPP with seven revenue streams, namely, hydroelectric power, solar power, aquaculture, wind energy, bulk water supply, water treatment and carbon credits. **Raadee S. Sausa**

Date: JUL. 03, 2023 Page: 84



LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Feed maker Vitarich faces ASF risks in foray into hog production

Jordeene B. Lagare
[@jordeenelagare](#)

Animal feed and food product manufacturer Vitarich Corp. has entered the hog production business even as threats from the African swine fever (ASF) remained.

With the expected recovery of the industry next year, Vitarich president and CEO Ricardo Manuel Sarmiento said the listed firm has "reestablished

efforts to get into hog [production] primarily through piglet production."

Sarmiento said diversification into hog production was originally planned for 2021 but the spread of the animal disease hampered full-scale efforts.

"We're looking for a site now [where we can] put the sows in our current farm," he told reporters, adding the hogs should be available before July 2024.

The listed firm's target is to have up to 200 sows per site in multiple, but smaller areas in green zones. These zones have no reported cases of ASF such as Central Luzon and North Luzon.

"Central Luzon is mostly [in the] red [zone] but ... we have a farm in Bulacan that got hit, but after a year, it became free of the disease. We sent sentinel animals and they didn't die, so we're [producing there] now," he said.

"So, it's the offsprings of that farm which we will use to expand into another site," he added, noting they would start with small sites and not big ones because if "they're hit, we don't want to lose everything."

Tremendous help

He said the current plan was not contingent on the approval of the anti-ASF vaccine, but its entry would help the swine industry "tremendously."

"With or without the vaccines, we have plans to ramp up output by next year. If the vaccines come, we can be more aggressive," Sarmiento said.

Avac ASF live vaccine manufactured in Vietnam has been endorsed to the Food and Drug Administration for the latter's review and approval. The Bureau of Animal Industry recently said the vaccine may cost around P600 per dose.

In the meantime, Vitarich is

beefing up and redesigning its biosecurity measures by initiating campaigns to raise awareness and support on-farm biosecurity practices.

Vitarich is a manufacturer of animal feeds and food products that operates in three industry segments: feeds, foods and farms. It has numerous production facilities, including feed mills, hatcheries and dressing plants, across the country. **INQ**



LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Well-milled rice prices up in six regional centers

SIX regional trading centers reported higher average retail prices of well-milled rice at mid-June, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

In a report, the PSA said prices rose on June 15-17, which it refers to as the second phase of June, compared with the prices from June 1-5, or the first phase.

Higher prices were recorded in Cabanatuan City where they increased by P1.50 to P40.50 per kilogram. Prices rose by P0.50 in both Legazpi City and Digos City to P45.75 and P46.50, respectively.

Retail prices also increased in Kidapawan City by P0.42 to P43.50, in Pagadian City by P0.25 to P43.25, and in the National Capital Region (NCR) by P0.11 to P43.25.

Well-milled rice prices fell P0.17 to P40.33 in Tuguegarao City. In Iloilo City they fell P1.61 to P50.89.

The PSA estimated the average retail price of red onion increased in six regional trading centers during the period.

Red onion prices rose by P25 to P207.50 per kilo in Tacloban City, by P22 to P228 in Iloilo City, and by P15 to P265 in Pagadian City.

Increases were also monitored in Batangas City where prices rose by P10 to P145, in Baguio City by P10 to P211.50, and in the NCR by P0.13 to P170.17.

Retail prices declined in Calapan City by P15 to P215, in Tuguegarao City by P2.50 to P162.50, and in Cagayan de Oro City by P0.27 to P224.73.

The average retail price of dressed chicken declined in five trading centers during the second phase of June.

Prices fell in Cabanatuan City by P10 to P162.50, in Digos City by P9 to P188.00, and in Pagadian City by P5 to P197.50.

Chicken prices also dropped in the NCR by P2.59 to P180.64, and in Kidapawan City by P2 to P219.50.

Meanwhile, the average retail price of dressed chicken in Iloilo City rose by P5 to P175. — **Sheldeem Joy Talavera**

Farmers urged to grow purple corn

The demand for healthier food options is on the rise, driven by an increasing number of health-conscious consumers. According to a survey by *Food Industry Asia*, eight out of 10 Filipino consumers are becoming more health conscious and would prefer healthier food choices as long as they are tasty.

This growing awareness of the importance of a healthy diet presents a substantial market opportunity for unique, tasty, and nutritious crops like East-West Seed's hybrid Morado F1 purple sweet waxy corn.

With its vibrant color, anthocyanin content, sweetness, and potential to increase income, Morado presents an enticing opportunity for Filipino farmers.

Morado can provide farmers with a consistent income opportunity throughout the year as it is suitable to be planted all year round. It is also an early-maturing corn variety – farmers can harvest within 60 to 62 days



Levi Llaneta shows the fruit of his Morado corn plant

after planting, enabling them to sell their produce to the market sooner.

Morado stands out not only for its vibrant purple hue, but also for its ear quality. The kernels are soft, tender, and stay sweet even two days after harvest.

Another remarkable attribute of Morado is its high anthocyanin content. Anthocyanins are the natural compounds responsible for the purple color of Morado. Studies have shown that anthocyanins possess antioxidant properties, offering numerous



Mike Paragozo in his Morado corn field in Agusan del Sur

health benefits.

These include reducing inflammation and preventive potential against cancer. Research also suggests that anthocyanins may be beneficial to the gut, which can contribute to overall improvement of health. Morado's anthocyanin

content makes it an appealing choice for health-conscious consumers.

Levi Llaneta, a farmer from Albay who planted Morado shared, "Morado is very easy to sell in the market. Our buyers always look for Morado because it's sweet, sticky, and

has health benefits."

Mike Paragozo, a farmer from Agusan del Sur, also attests to Morado's potential to increase income. He shared that the market value of Morado commands a premium, with prices ranging from 50 to 80 pesos per kilo, compared to other corn varieties.

Moreover, because of its unique purple color, farms planted with Morado have the potential to attract tourists, offering an additional income opportunity for farmers. Mike is establishing Morado as a trademark in his farm in Agusan del Sur to attract tourists who are intrigued by this distinct purple corn.

"At East-West Seed, we aim to improve the lives of our farmers by offering them innovative and high-yielding vegetable seed varieties that are suitable to the local growing conditions and needs of the local market," said Jay Lopez, general manager of East-West Seed Philippines.



LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

US connects Butuan City farmers to the internet

In celebration of National Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Month, the United States government, through the US Agency for International Development (USAid), launched three community internet networks in Butuan City that enabled more than 600 farmers to access the internet for the first time.

In partnership with Kacific Broadband Satellites and local internet service provider Stellarsat Solutions, Inc., USAid on June 1 deployed three satellite terminals valued at P355,000 to benefit the members of the KM7 Farmers Producers Cooperative (KFPC) in

Sitio Kauswagan, Sitio San Roque, and Sitio Tud-ol in Butuan City.

"The internet will allow our farmer members to access information, participate in online training, and communicate with other members of the cooperative," said KFPC Chairman Samuel Calawigan, Jr.

"We thank USAid and other partners for this opportunity, and we commit to give our very best to make this project successful and sustainable." KFPC is a multipurpose cooperative with more than 2,000 member farmers, mostly former rebels and members of indigenous communities producing rice, vegetables, corn, banana, and cacao.

The cooperative consolidates and markets the farm produce of 13 cluster associations across the region. "Without connectivity, many of our projects would not be successful and inclusive," said Butuan City Vice Mayor Lawrence Lemuel Fortun.

"It is important for us to ensure that all communities, including cooperatives such as KFPC, will

be able to take part in our development projects. We are eager to work with USAid for the replication of community networks in other areas across Butuan City."

Under its five-year, P1.65 billion Better Access and Connectivity (Beacon) program, USAid and its partners have established five community internet networks in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas across the country, with the first two launched earlier this year in the provinces of Quezon and Aurora.

USAid will continue collaborating with its partners to deploy community networks that will address the connectivity needs of other unserved and underserved communities throughout the country.



■ KFPC Chairman Samuel Calawigan Jr. accesses the internet with his mobile phone through the community internet network.



■ Kacific Broadband Satellites representative Gino Belgira demonstrates the features of the community WiFi network to Butuan City Councilor Cherry May Busa, Department of Information and Communications Technology Caraga Regional Director Mario Cuñado, and other members of the Caraga ICT Council.
PHOTOS FROM THE US EMBASSY IN MANILA



June inflation likely slower at 5.4%

BY NIÑA MYKA PAULINE ARCEO

INFLATION probably moderated for a fifth straight month in June following price drops for food and fuel items, economists told *The Manila Times*.

The median forecast in a poll of 11 analysts was 5.4 percent, down from the May result of 6.1 percent and near the lower end of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' (BSP) 5.3- to 6.1-percent estimate.

While still above the central bank's 2.0- to 4.0-percent goal, the rate is expected to fall within the range by the fourth quarter of this year.

The BSP on Friday said that

lower prices of meat and fruits as well as a rollback in liquefied petroleum gas prices could have led to inflation slowing further.

However, it was noted that higher rice, vegetable and fish prices, along with fuel and electricity price hikes and a weaker peso, could have kept consumer price growth elevated.

June inflation data will be released by the Philippine Statistics

Authority on Wednesday, July 5.

Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. chief economist Michael Ricafort, who said inflation could have hit 5.3 percent, said this would be due to price drops for a number of agricultural commodities.

ANZ Research economist Debalika Sarkar also held the same view, pointing to a further easing of food prices and likely softer core inflation, which strips out volatile food and energy items.

Sarkar, however, warned that "while inflationary concerns have largely dissipated, growth concerns have been aggravated, led by export weakness and advancing monetary policy transmission."

China Banking Corp. chief economist Domini Velasquez, meanwhile, had a slightly higher inflation forecast of 5.4 percent, which was still premised on lower prices for key commodities.

A wave of minimum wage hikes following a just-approved adjustment for Metro Manila, she warned, would be an upside risk for prices moving forward.

"A similar increase in the minimum wage in other regions could push up annual inflation by 0.1 ppt (percentage point) to 5.7 percent this year," Velasquez said.

"We also expect the impact of the higher minimum wage to be more pronounced in 2024 but lower-than-target inflation projec-

tion will likely soften the blow."

While the BSP may have paused from hiking interest rates due to slowing inflation, Velasquez said that a further peso drop in the wake of expected Federal Reserve (Fed) rate hikes could prompt a resumption of tightening.

Mitzie Irene Conchada of the De La Salle University also forecast a slowdown to 5.4 percent.

While "food prices are expected to slow down on stable supply ... risks to inflation include the looming effects of El Niño on the supply of agricultural products and higher utility prices," she said.

Pantheon Macroeconomics Chief Emerging Asia economist Miguel Chanco also offered a

5.4-percent estimate.

"The ongoing decline in the headline rate should persist for many more months, but I think the government should be on standby to open the country's borders for imports if El Niño leads to real agricultural shortages both domestically and internationally," he added.

The BSP could begin reducing rates in the fourth quarter should inflation fall comfortably within the target range, Chanco continued.

Oxford Economics Japan assistant economist Makoto Tsuchiya, who had the same 5.4-percent forecast, said the downtrend for

► **Slower B2**

Date: JUL. 03, 2023 Page: A4



LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

PHL food supply slightly higher in 2022—PSA

By ANDREA E. SAN JUAN
@andreasanjuan

THE per capita food available for human consumption in the Philippines in terms of calories was recorded at 2,914 kilocalories in 2022, 0.4 percent higher than the level recorded in 2021, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

The PSA said in its latest report that cereals and products accounted for 63.4 percent of the total per capita supply of calories.

The agency's Food Balance Sheets (FBS) showed that the annual per capita supply of cereals and products (excluding beer) available for food was recorded at 269 kilograms in 2022. This was an increase of 0.4 percent from the previous year's level of 268 kilograms.

"This increase was attributed to the increase in imports. The increase in the

supply of sweeteners at 4 percent from 25 kilograms in 2021 to 26 kilograms in 2022 was also attributed to imports," PSA said.

Increments in per capita food supply were also noted in pulses and products at 100 percent, oilcrops (excluding products) at 11.1 percent, alcohol (including beer and wine) at 9.1 percent, and meat (slaughtered) and products at 6.1 percent.

In contrast, PSA said the per capita supply of food available for consumption recorded contractions in the following food groups: beverage crops by 50 percent; vegetable oils and products by 25 percent; fruits and products (excluding wine) by 4.7 percent; vegetables and products by 4.5 percent; and fish, seafood and products by 3.6 percent.

As for increases in calories, the PSA data showed that in 2022, the total per capita supply of calories available from all the food products was recorded at

2,914.3 kilocalories per day. This indicates a 0.4 percent increase compared with the 2,901.3 kilocalories per day in 2021.

The increases were contributed by the higher supply of calories from the commodity food groups as follows: pulses and products by 56.5 percent; beverage crops by 31.1 percent; oilcrops (excluding products) by 18.1 percent; milk and products by 13 percent; meat (slaughtered) and products by 8.8 percent; eggs and products by 6.3 percent; edible offals by 4.3 percent; sweeteners by 3.4 percent; alcohol (including beer and wine) by 1.5 percent; cereals and products (excluding beer) by 0.4 percent; vegetables and products by 0.3 percent and starchy roots and products by 0.1 percent.

In contrast, reductions in the supply of calories were noted in the following: spices at 36.3 percent; vegetable oils and products, 26.2 percent; tree nuts and products, 23.6 percent; sugar crops (excluding products),

11.9 percent; animal fats and products, 5.8 percent; fish, seafood and products, 4 percent and fruits and products (excluding wine) at 2.9 percent.

For protein, PSA noted the available per capita supply of proteins went up by 2.4 percent to 86 grams per day.

Higher supplies of proteins were recorded in the following food groups: alcohol (including beer and wine) by 83.3 percent; pulses and products, 56.7 percent; oilcrops (excluding products, 26.4 percent; beverage crops, 16 percent; milk and products, 8.8 percent; meat (slaughtered) and products, 8.2 percent; eggs and products, 6.4 percent; edible offals, 4.3 percent; animal fats and products, 4.3 percent; and cereals and products (excluding beer), 0.4 percent.

The FBS also showed that the total per capita supply of fats reached 40 grams per day in 2022, or 0.6 percent lower compared with the previous year's level.



LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Soy soars, corn dives

CHICAGO- US soybean futures surged about 6 percent after the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) reported much lower-than-expected 2023 soy plantings and June 1 inventories, while corn futures tumbled on larger-than-expected acreage.

Wheat futures fell in sympathy with corn, despite a smaller-than-expected quarterly wheat stocks figure.

On the Chicago Board of Trade, November soybeans settled up 77-1/2 cents at \$13.43-1/4 per bushel. CBOT December corn fell 33-3/4 cents to finish at \$4.94-3/4 a bushel and

September wheat fell 16-1/2 cents at \$6.51 a bushel.

Soybean futures soared after the USDA said US farmers planted 83.5 million acres of the oilseed, down 4 million acres from the government's March forecast and below the lowest in a range of analyst estimates. The reduced acreage implies smaller new-crop supplies of the oilseed.

"For beans, if the yield falls to 50 (bushels per acre), instead of the expected 52, then that's tight, really tight," said Craig Turner, commodities trader at Daniels Trading. - *Reuters*



China's hybrid rice boosts Africa's food security

CHANGSHA, China: Since growing hybrid rice from China in 2017, Dina's family living in Mahitsy, a town 35 km northwest of Madagascar's capital Antananarivo, has not only been able to feed themselves, but also saved enough money to build a new house and finance three college students.

"This year has seen the best harvest. Chinese experts have been very responsible, teaching us techniques and knowledge to help us increase production," said the 44-year-old woman.

Hu Yuefang, from the Hunan Academy of Agricultural Sciences, is one of the experts Dina talked about.

Hu arrived in Madagascar a year after China and the country launched a cooperation project on growing hybrid rice in 2007, and has been working there ever since, doing research on hybrid rice varieties suitable for local conditions.

"Rice is an important crop in Madagascar. Due to factors such as technological and infrastructure backwardness, the country's rice production was not able to fully meet the needs of its population," said Hu.

In order to find the hybrid rice varieties most suited to local conditions, Hu and his team visited almost all rice-growing areas of the island country.

So far, the total hybrid rice growing area in Madagascar has exceeded 50,000 hectares, with an average yield of some 7.5 tons per hectare. Hybrid rice varieties developed with Chinese expertise have an average yield two to three times higher than local varieties.

Life in Ninga, a small village in Bubanza Province in northwestern Burundi, has also changed with the help of Chinese expertise over the last five years.

In 2018, a group of Chinese experts came to the village and guided 134 households in large-scale demonstration production of hybrid rice. And now, the village has successfully cultivated eight seasons, with a cumulative planting area of 380.64 hectares, a total yield of 4,104 tons, and a net income of 1.32 million US dollars.

Chinese agricultural experts have helped Burundi achieve many successes, particularly in the introduction of hybrid rice, said Diomede Ndayirukiye, director general of the Territory Planning, Irrigation and Heritage Protection at Burundi's Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock.

"Thanks to the Chinese technology, our rice production has increased from 3-4 tons per hectare to 10-11 tons," Ndayirukiye said.

Currently, more than 20 African countries are cultivating hybrid rice, and China continues to provide technological support to those

countries to increase their hybrid rice output.

Yuan Longping High-tech Agriculture Co., Ltd. (LPHT), dedicated to promoting hybrid rice worldwide, has implemented 179 foreign aid training programs since the 1990s.

"Africa is a key region for our technological assistance," said Chen Xiaoliang, planning manager of LPHT's foreign aid training department.

From 2020 to 2022, the LPHT held 24 agricultural training sessions for Africa, with a total of 977 participants. To ensure the continuity of agricultural assistance to Africa during the Covid-19 pandemic, the LPHT helped some African countries set up online agricultural

training platforms and provided translators for different languages.

Meanwhile, with an aim to draw on China's hybrid rice technology to help Africa achieve the goal of eradicating hunger and ensuring food security, the China National Hybrid Rice Research and Development Center officially inaugurated its Africa subcenter in Madagascar in May 2019.

The Africa subcenter focuses on developing and promoting hybrid rice varieties suitable for local needs while providing training to local farmers on advanced expertise, said Zhang Lijun, executive director of the subcenter.

After three years of disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, exchanges between China and African countries in the field of hybrid rice are returning to normal.

At the third China-Africa Economic and Trade Expo being held in Changsha, capital city of central China's Hunan Province, more African countries are eyeing opportunities to advance agricultural cooperation with China.

"Many African countries have already made appointments with us in advance," said Wei Ran, director of international cooperation at the Hunan Hybrid Rice Research Center, adding that agricultural ministers and ambassadors from various African countries, including Malawi and Egypt, have contacted the center for more guidance on local hybrid rice planting.

China has always been committed to helping Africa develop and alleviate poverty, said Tahiana Razanamahefa, director of communication and public relations of the company Societe Trading de l'Ocean Indien, which has been collaborating with the Chinese side in promoting hybrid rice in Madagascar.

"We hope to engage in more cooperation with China in the fields of agricultural mechanization, hybrid rice seed production, and others," she said.

XINHUA

Date: JULY 03, 2023 Page: A5



LIBRARY

DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

FAO, partner agencies to lead \$115-M program to protect oceans

THE Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), along with four partner agencies, will lead the Clean and Healthy Oceans Integrated Program.

The program is a source-to-sea initiative that will direct up to \$115 million in grants to help countries curb land-based pollution of coastal environments and Large Marine Ecosystems.

The decision was made at the 64th Council Meeting of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), a family of funds dedicated to confronting biodiversity loss, climate change, pollution, and strains on land and ocean health.

FAO will co-lead the program together with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), in a strategic partnership with the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO).

"Transforming agrifood systems on land, in order to transform agrifood systems in our seas, is a win-win solution for people and the planet. We need to work collectively to protect marine biological diversity, and this new partnership will harness our strengths to safeguard our resources on land and under water," FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu said in a statement.

FAO noted oceans have lost nearly 2 percent of their oxygen since the 1950s, resulting in "dead zones"—known as hypoxia—that cannot support marine life. Pollution from land-based sources, including the overuse of fertilizer,

organic waste from livestock, and untreated municipal and industrial wastewater, typically drive hypoxia worldwide.

Land-based pollution puts marine biodiversity, ecosystems, coastal economies and industries reliant on fisheries and the oceans' resources at risk. Under long-term hypoxia, coral reefs may experience mass mortalities, valuable coastal fish species migrate to higher oxygen areas, and the growth and reproduction rates of many marine species plummet.

The Clean and Healthy Oceans Integrated Program aims to curb land-based pollution of the world's oceans through policy and regulatory innovation, infrastructure investments, and nature-based solutions. It will also map land-based sources of ocean pollution to better understand the impacts on hypoxia and apply ocean science to develop solutions that improve human and ocean health.

Specifically, the program aims to improve sustainable practices on 200,000 hectares of landscapes and 14.3 million hectares of marine habitats (an area roughly the size of all of Thailand's cultivable land). Additional aims include reducing pollution and improving management in more than three large marine ecosystems and mitigating 5.6 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions.

This is the first time that FAO, ADB, CAF, EBRD and IOC-UNESCO have teamed up under one program to deliver global environmental benefits, according to UN.

The partnership leverages the global and regional leadership of each organization in reducing ocean pollution from the source.

For example, the program will benefit from FAO's expertise and convening power in the agricultural, fertilizer, livestock, and fisheries sectors. It will also build on initiatives and the investment portfolios of regional multilateral development banks on the Blue Economy, the Green

Economy, marine conservation, and wastewater infrastructure.

"The global ocean science and services of IOC-UNESCO will bolster the scientific basis of the program and strengthen linkages to the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development [2021-2030]."