

CLIPPINGS FOR SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2022

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THE PHILIPPINE STAR

SRP on chicken being studied amid retail price spike

B. DA FAMILY

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Shellfish Bulletin No. 27 (Series of 2023): November 24, 2023

THE PHILIPPINE STAR

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SRP on chicken being studied amid retail price spike

By **BELLA CARIASO**

The Department of Agriculture is studying the possibility of imposing a suggested retail price (SRP) on chicken amid the spike in the retail cost after it reached as high as P210 per kilo, a ranking official of the Department of Agriculture (DA) said yesterday.

In an interview over *dzBB* radio, Agriculture Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa said that Agriculture Secretary **Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.** had already ordered a study on how to strengthen the implementation of an SRP amid previous experiences where there was non-compliance on the part of the traders.

"The DA continues to study (the imposition of an SRP) because that is an instrument or tool within our disposal, but we know the effect of the SRP as it is not being followed. That's the reason why the secretary directed us to study on how to strengthen it," De Mesa added.

In an earlier interview with *The STAR*, poultry raisers' group United Broiler Raisers Association and Philippine Egg Board chairman Gregorio San Diego said the retail price of chicken went up to P210 per kilo amid the drop in local production as poultry raisers suffered losses amid the flooding of imported frozen products.

De Mesa said that aside from the SRP, Laurel had directed concerned DA officials to review all the laws and policies currently affecting the agricultural sector and to draft recommendations to Congress or to amend the issuances at the department.

He maintained that the retail price of chicken should not reach P200 per kilo, stressing that beyond P190 per kilo is already overpriced.

At the same time, he maintained that there is enough production of local chicken, saying that despite small broilers stopping their operations, the commercial farms continue to operate.

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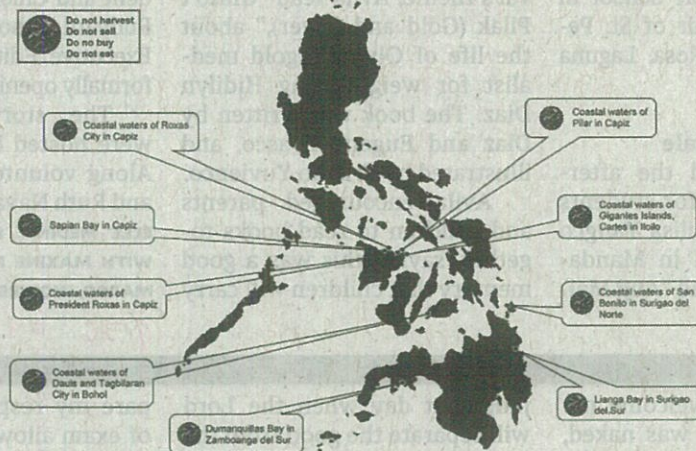
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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture
BUREAU OF FISHERIES AND AQUATIC RESOURCES
Fisheries Building Complex, BPI Compound,
Brgy. Vasra, Visayas Ave., Quezon City
| do@bfar.da.gov.ph | records@bfar.da.gov.ph |
+63(2) 8539-5685

Shellfish Bulletin No. 27
Series of 2023
24 November 2023

Shellfishes collected and tested from **Sapian Bay (Ivisan and Sapian in Capiz; Mambuquiao and Camanci, Batan in Aklan); coastal waters of Pilar; President Roxas; Roxas City in Capiz; coastal waters of Gigantes Islands, Carles in Iloilo; coastal waters of Daus and Tagbilaran City in Bohol; Dumanquillas Bay in Zamboanga del Sur; Lianga Bay in Surigao del Sur; and coastal waters of San Benito in Surigao del Norte** are still **positive** for Paralytic Shellfish Poison (PSP) or toxic red tide that is beyond the regulatory limit.



All types of shellfish and *Acetes sp.* or alamang gathered from the areas shown above are NOT SAFE for human consumption. Fish, squids, shrimps, and crabs are safe for human consumption provided that they are fresh and washed thoroughly, and internal organs such as gills and intestines are removed before cooking.

The following areas continue to be **FREE from toxic red tide**: coastal waters of Cavite, Las Piñas, Parañaque, Navotas, Bulacan, and Bataan (Mariveles, Limay, Orion, Pilar, Balanga, Hermosa, Orani, Abucay, and Samal) in Manila Bay; mariculture areas in Infanta, coastal waters of Bolinao, Anda, Alaminos, Sual, and Wawa, Bani in Pangasinan; mariculture areas in Rosario, and Sto. Tomas in La Union; coastal waters of Pampanga; Masinloc Bay in Zambales; Pagbilao Bay, Pagbilao, and coastal waters of Walay, Padre Burgos in Quezon; Honda, and Puerto Princesa Bays, Puerto Princesa City, and coastal waters of Inner Malampaya Sound, Taytay in Palawan; coastal waters of Milagros, and Mandaon in Masbate; Sorsogon Bay, and Juag Lagoon, Matnog in Sorsogon; coastal waters of Borongan, San Dionisio in Iloilo; coastal waters of Altavas, Batan, and New Washington in Batan Bay, Aklan; coastal waters of Panay in Capiz; coastal waters of E.B. Magalona, Talisay City, Silay City, Bacolod City, Hinigaran, and Victorias City in Negros Occidental; Tambobo, and Silit Bays, Siaton; and Bais Bay, Bais City in Negros Oriental; coastal waters of Daram, Calbayog, and Zumarraga, San Pedro, Maqueda and Villareal Bays in Samar; coastal waters of Leyte, Calubian, Ormoc, Sogod, Carigara Bay, and Cancabato Bay, Tacloban City in Leyte; coastal waters of Biliran Island; Tantanang Bay in Zamboanga Sibugay; Murcielagos Bay in Zamboanga del Norte and (Sapang Dalaga, and Ballangao) in Misamis Occidental; Panguil Bay, Tangub City, and coastal waters of Ozamiz City in Misamis Occidental; coastal waters of Baroy in Lanao del Norte; Taguines Lagoon, Benoni, Mahinog in Camiguin; Balite, and Pujada Bays, Mati City in Davao Oriental; Malalag Bay in Davao Occidental and Davao del Sur; and coastal waters of Hinatuan, and Cortes in Surigao del Sur.

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Department of Agriculture
BUREAU OF FISHERIES AND AQUATIC RESOURCES
Fisheries Building Complex, BPI Compound, Brgy. Vasra
Visayas Ave., Quezon City
| do@bfar.da.gov.ph | records@bfar.da.gov.ph |
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**Do not harvest
Do not sell
Do not buy
Do not eat**

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THE overview of steps in the optimized protocol for DNA extraction of milkfish fry gut. DOST-PCAARRD PHOTO

Milkfish fry research to aid in boosting supply, quality

THE milkfish fry in the Philippines is currently suffering from insufficient supply caused by high importation rate and low survival of hatchery-produced fry.

But milkfish, or "bangus," farmers no longer have to worry. Researches from the University of the Philippines Visayas (UPV) are targeting to address these concerns.

Milkfish is one of the most important food commodities in the country. Recognized as the Philippines' national fish, bangus has been providing communities with sources of food, livelihood and income.

The project, "Improvement of Milkfish Larval Rearing and Nursery Culture through Gut Metagenome, Transcriptome Analysis, and Gut Microbial Community Manipulations," primarily aims to explain the microbiotic factors and their roles in the physiology of

milkfish larvae and juveniles using metagenomic and transcriptome techniques, the researchers said.

Its objective is to employ this knowledge in designing improved rearing protocols to significantly boost milkfish hatchery productivity.

The project is made possible through the funding of the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST-PCAARRD).

The project highlighted that the country's requirement for milkfish fry is close to 4 billion yearly, but hatcheries can produce only 800 million fries per year at most because of insufficient broodstock to produce the fry, the DOST-PCAARRD said.

As such, the Philippines is importing a substantial 75 percent of the country required milkfish fry from Indonesia.

UPV has been observing industry challenges in milkfish production, particularly deformities and low survival rates of hatchery-produced milkfish fry in nursery ponds, in contrast to the better survival and yield of wild-caught milkfish fry, the researchers said.

This difference is attributed to the potential lack of maintenance in genetic quality and genetic degradation of hatchery-reared milkfish fry.

Recognizing the importance of gut microbiota in fish, the project seeks to study this further to potentially aid in selecting probiotics, prebiotics, and chemical compounds to enhance gut health and overall physical functionality of fish.

Seen as significant alternatives, these can possibly reduce the reliance on antibiotics and can be a useful tool in developing rearing protocols for efficient hatchery

production of milkfish larvae.

This will be facilitated through a metagenomics approach.

Metagenomics is a study of the genetic material of a species to understand the connection of microorganisms to the environment and their health.

By examining the gut metagenomic composition of milkfish fry and juveniles, along with evaluating the influence of the gut microbiome on overall larval physiology through transcriptome analysis, the project aims to uncover the mechanisms behind the physiological fitness of milkfish larvae, the UPV researchers said.

The information gathered by the project will be useful to the management of hatcheries and nurseries to boost the quality and supply of milkfish fry. Such improvements are expected to benefit farmers, leading to increased yields in milkfish production.

Rizza B. Ramoran/S&T Media Services

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Searca photo tilt deadline on Nov. 30

THE Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) calls on photographers in Southeast Asia, including the Philippines, to participate in the 17th Searca photo contest, which closes on November 30.

Themed "Regenerating Agri-Ecosystems, Lowering Global Boiling," the competition drew inspiration from the impactful words of United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who declared in July the advent of "global boiling," emphasizing the urgency of the climate crisis.

Searca Director Dr. Glenn Gregorio said "global boiling" serves as a metaphorical depiction of the escalating climate crisis, which resonates with Searca's priority focus on climate change and its impacts on agriculture.

The photo contest seeks submissions that showcase agricultural technologies and practices combating climate change while alleviating the strain on natural resources.

Gregorio specified that the images may feature farming methods supporting recycling, waste reduction, and a minimal carbon footprint.

Moreover, they could highlight sustainable approaches promoting water conservation, soil enhancement, reduced post-harvest losses, or the use of renewable energy.

"We invite photographers to capture farmers, farming families, researchers, inventors, students, and youth actively engaged with these technologies and practices in the field, encompassing various agricultural activities like crop cultivation, livestock management, and fisheries," Gregorio said.

Open to both professional and amateur photographers, the contest allows participants to submit an unlimited number of entries as long as they adhere to the specified contest guidelines. All photo submissions must be original, unaltered, unpublished in any prior competition and free from digital enhancements.

"We invite passionate photographers to seize this chance to demonstrate the potency of visual storytelling in tackling the worldwide issue of climate change," urged Gregorio.

Cash rewards await the champions, with \$1,000 for the first prize, \$800 for the second prize, and \$500 for the third prize.

Special prizes include the Searca Director's Choice and the Philippine Department of Education Secretary's Choice, each recipient receiving \$500.

The People's Choice Award winner, determined through Facebook voting, will receive \$400.

Photographers are urged to upload their entries to the contest via the Searca website before the November 30 deadline.



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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS + FEARLESS VIEWS

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SUNDAY FEATURE

Former activist turned farm-to-market entrepreneur

By BERNIE CAHILES-MAGKILAT

Orly Manuntag used to be a student leader during his university days and was a regular fixture in the League of Filipino Students' rallies, exposing him to the plight of farmers.

He also grew up with his parents, who ran a small rice retailing store in Baclaran during the 1990s as the sole source of income for the family.

As he became a Customs licensed broker, Orly only wanted to stay away from the family business and far from the wet markets or a retailing store. But when his parents passed on, he was forced to take up the family business.

Little did he know that his calling to entrepreneurship could have been borne out of his exposure to those rallies and engagements with the farmers.

"My history of working with farmers during my college years as an activist made me care for the livelihood that has sustained our family for many years," he said.

He envisioned a rice trading business that would integrate the

ordinary rice farmers. The idea is to establish a stable and integrated rice supply chain in the country and he believes this can be done by doing backward integration.

From a simple retailer, he was able to scale-up the business to become a wholesaler, creating a network of retailers under a separate brand, the Aling Grasya Rice.

He incorporated the family business under the OCM trademark in 2006 and rebranded as Goldmine Farm to Market to pursue a farm to market business model.

Initially, Orly adopted contract growing scheme with some rice farmers in Nueva Ecija. He provides all the needs for a rice farmer, including fertilizer, seeds, pesticides, post-harvest facilities, among others. When harvest comes, they sell their rice to Goldmine.

"Most farmers have no access to banks so we provide them with this kind of arrangement," he said.

"The advantage of contract farming is that farmers are assured of stable income from planting to harvest season," Orly added.

Initially, he contracted 28 hectares, including his own four hectares, involving 50 rice farmers. Now, he is talking to more farmers to gather 100 hectares of ricefields for economies of scale. Cluster farming makes it more efficient and productive.

BACKWARD INTEGRATION

By bringing the total hectareage to 128 hectares, Orly said they could



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easily quadruple production and create a more stable supply chain while contributing to the government's goal of achieving food security.

With enough volume of palay, Orly invested ₱50 million for a rice milling facility located in Bulacan. It has a milling capacity of 2,500 sacks of rice a day.

The rice harvested by its farmers are processed and milled at the Goldmine Farm to Market rice mill. Once the desired quality is achieved, the rice will be made available to consumers

throughout its Goldmine outlets.

Orly also imports as much as 25 percent of their supply from Vietnam to augment supply, especially during the lean months.

With that, Goldmine has achieved a complete supply chain of rice from the farm to the market. It has become the most integrated rice production venture in the country.

FRANCHISE

Having established a stable supply chain, Orly thought of putting up his own farm to market rice retailing franchise. With the help of Francorp Philippines, the franchise authority in the country, he launched just his year his farm to market rice franchise. Orly mustered his courage to go mainstream at the recent Franchise Asia Philippines Expo.

The Goldmine franchise fee is ₱388,000 plus the 10 percent VAT or a total of ₱400,000 for a 20-square meter store. The package includes an inventory of 70 sacks of 25-kilogram rice consisting of 12 rice varieties from red, brown, glutinous to an assortment of premium white rice.

The franchise store is furnished with two rice dispensers with six slots each, a POS hardware and software system, digital and dial type weighing scale, metal shelves for display, metal palettes

TARGETS

Prior to the expo, GoldMine has five franchisees located in Trece Martirez City in Cavite; Banay-Banay in Cabuyao, Laguna; Ususan, Taguig; Marcos Alvarez Ave. in Las Piñas; and Brgy. 592 in Sta. Mesa.

According to Orly, one of its franchisees has attained return-on-investment in seven months, but most are within eight to ten months.

Given the robust line of interested entrepreneurs, Orly targets at least

for product storage, backlit signage, auxiliary items and market peripherals including operations and financial management training.

Goldmine was one of the most affordable franchise concepts introduced during the recent franchise expo.

10 franchises this year, and 100 next year. He aims to reach 1,000 franchises nationwide by 2028. So far, Goldmine has registered 76 interested potential franchisees.

"We are cheaper because the farm is ours, so we save on middle men. We also have our own milling facility," he said adding that his franchise is a good model for overseas Filipino workers wanting to start a small business back home.

"It's a win-win agreement for all of us," he said adding that more is in store for Goldmine. Orly is planning to make its store a one-stop-shop for basic goods.

FOOD SECURITY

The "farm to market idea" becomes more compelling at this time when the country's rice production and food security become a big challenge. "I saw the need of farmers, I witnessed the need of farmers and the need to improve their productivity," said Orly.

At this early, the astute businessman has already registered its trademark Goldmine with the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines.

"We want to make sure that our idea, our brand is protected and this goes down to every franchisee that registered with us. It gives us peace of mind that what we have painstakingly created is secured and safe," he said.

Goldmine has even become one of the leading brands in rice category in online platforms today.

"It was so gratifying that prospective franchisees notice that what we are offering is not just a business opportunity for them but also livelihood for hundreds of farmers involved in the business model," said Orly.

The integrated farm to market rice supply chain story did not end there. Aside from benefiting the small rice farmers, Goldmine now employs 70 people and 42 scholars, mostly children of their contract growers.

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BSP backs bill seeking easier credit for farmers

By LAWRENCE AGCAOILI

Monetary authorities are pushing for the immediate passage of a bill amending the old warehouse receipts law to help boost the access of farmers to financing.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) and the International Finance Corp. (IFC) rallied support for the immediate passage of the Warehouse Receipts (WR) Financing Bill during a round table discussion with over 40 representatives from banking

associations, government agencies and the private sector.

The bill, "An Act Providing for the Revised Warehouse Receipts Law of the Philippines" has already been approved by the House of Representatives and has

already been transmitted to the Senate.

Aside from tackling the legislative process for the bill, the participants exchanged knowledge on WR finance practice in developed markets, the needs and digitalization of the agriculture sector and the next steps for the country's lenders and policymakers to move forward with WR finance.

The bill aims to strengthen and modernize the Warehouse

Receipts Law of 1912 by establishing a central electronic registry where goods and products can be deposited in exchange for a warehouse receipt that can easily be traded, bartered or sold in order to obtain credit.

This would help boost the confidence of banks and other financial institutions on the viability of warehouse receipts as loan collateral.

Turn to B3

BSP From B1

Based on the experience of other countries, a well-functioning WR system could help raise farmer income and access to credit, reduce post-harvest losses, improve stability of market prices, and increase food security.

WR financing is also a priority initiative for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) under the National Strategy for Financial Inclusion 2022-2028.

According to the BSP, MSMEs and agriculture remain among the most

vulnerable sectors of the country's population, despite accounting for a large portion of employment in the Philippines.

It pointed out that households headed by fisherfolk and farmers are among the poorest and the least banked

in the country, with three out of 10 owning formal financial accounts.

Modernizing the Warehouse Receipts Law of 1912 could promote wider acceptance of warehouse receipts as credible collateral for bank loans, the BSP said.