

**CLIPPINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2023**

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## Ban on poultry products from Iowa back

BY JANINE ALEXIS MIGUEL

**T**HE Department Agriculture (DA) has reimposed the temporary ban on the importation of poultry products originating from the Iowa in the United States following outbreaks of the avian influenza or bird flu in the state.

A memorandum order issued and signed by Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. imposes a ban on the importation of domestic and wild birds, and their

products, including poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs and semen from Iowa.

A report submitted by the United States Department of Agriculture

to the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) said "there were several outbreaks of H5N1 high pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI) in the State of Iowa, United States of America, affecting domestic birds."

"In a short period of time since its first laboratory detection necessitates a wider coverage of trade restriction to prevent the entry of HPAI virus and protect the health of the local poultry population," the memorandum order stated.

Laurel also ordered the immediate suspension of the processing, evaluation of the application, and issuance of sanitary and phytosanitary import clearances for the aforementioned products from Iowa.

Meanwhile, shipments from Iowa that are already in transit and were slaughtered or produced before the issuance of the import ban will be allowed to enter the country.

In 2016, an agreement between the veterinary authorities of the US and Philippines said that a state-

wide ban shall only be imposed if there are three or more counties affected with HPAI in one state.

"The abovementioned states have three or more counties affected with HPAI as reflected in their official reports in the WOAH," the DA said.

The Agriculture department first imposed an import ban of poultry products from Iowa in April and other US states including Missouri, South Dakota, North Dakota and Minnesota due to several outbreaks of the bird disease.

The department then lifted the previous import ban of poultry products from Iowa and North Dakota state last July.

According to the Bureau of Animal Industry, the US shipped 130.50 million kilograms (kg) of chicken meat, 94,657 kg of duck and 211,648 kg of turkey into the country from January to October 2023.

Last year, a total of 123.16 million kg of poultry meat was shipped into the country from the US.



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# DA bans poultry imports from Iowa

By **Jordeene B. Lagare**  
@jordeenelagare

The Department of Agriculture (DA) has temporarily barred the entry of imported poultry from the state of Iowa in the United States to prevent the spread of bird flu in the country.

In a memorandum order, the DA said the temporary ban covers the importation of domestic and wild birds and their products including poultry meat, day-old chicks, eggs and

semen originating from Iowa.

This means the processing, evaluation of the application and issuance of the required sanitary and phytosanitary import clearance to these commodities are immediately suspended.

"All shipments coming from the mentioned areas of the [United States] that are in transit/loaded/accepted unto port before the official communication of this order to the American authorities shall be allowed provided the products were

slaughtered/produced 14 days before the first outbreak in the particular locality," it said.

The DA imposed the import ban after American authorities reported to the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) and USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspect Service (APHIS) that there are several outbreaks of high pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI) subtype H5N1 in Iowa affecting domestic birds.



"The rapid spread of H5N1

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in the [United States] in a short period of time since its first laboratory detection necessitates a wider coverage of trade restriction to prevent the entry of HPAI virus and protect the health of the local poultry population," it said.

Last month, the DA prohibited the importation of imported poultry coming from Minnesota and South Dakota as both states recorded cases of bird flu. **INQ**





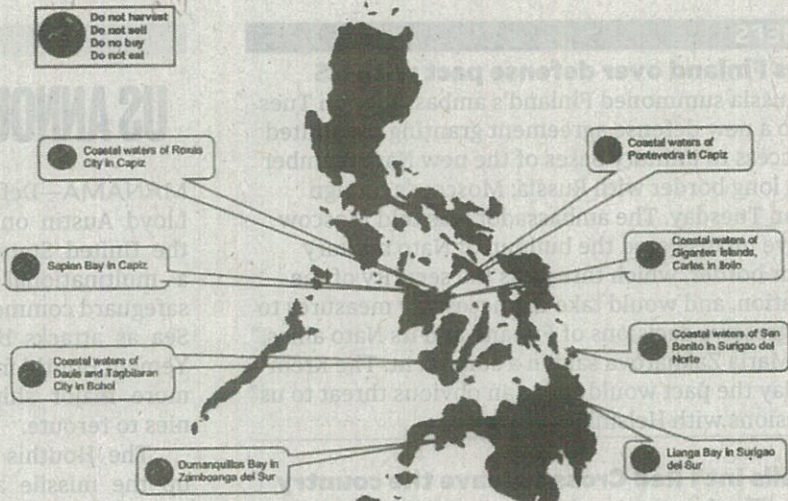


**BAGONG PILIPINAS**  
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**Shellfish Bulletin No. 29**  
Series of 2023  
18 December 2023

Shellfishes collected and tested from Sapián Bay (Ivisan and Sapián in Capiz; Mambuquiao and Camanci, Batán in Aklan); coastal waters of Pontevedra, and Roxas City in Capiz; coastal waters of Gigantes Islands, Carles in Iloilo; coastal waters of Dauis 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, Batán, and New Washington in Batán Bay, Aklan; coastal waters of Panay, Pilar; and President Roxas in Capiz; coastal waters of E.B. Magalona, Talisay City, Silay City, Bacolod City, Hinigaran, and Victorias City in Negros Occidental; Tambobo, and Silt Bays, Siaton; and Bais Bay, Bais City in Negros Oriental; coastal waters of Daram, Calbayog, and Zumarraga, Maqueda, and Villareal Bays in Samar; coastal waters of Leyte, Calubian, Ormoc, Sogod, Carigara Bay in Leyte; coastal waters of Biliran Island; Tantanang Bay in Zamboanga Sibugay; Murcielagos Bay in Zamboanga del Norte and (Sapang Dalaga, and Baliangao) 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; coastal waters of Hinatuan, Cortes, and Bislig Bay in Surigao del Sur.

ATTY. DEMOSTHENES R. ESCOTO  
Director

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**Do not harvest  
Do not sell  
Do not buy  
Do not eat**

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**ATTY. DEMOSTHENES R. ESCOTO**  
Director

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P.S. December 20, 2023





## Rice, meat prices up at start of December

PRICES of several agricultural commodities including rice and meat rose during the first five days of December, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported on Monday.

Well-milled rice averaged P54.15 per kilo (kg), up from the P52.92/kg posted on November 15 to 17 and the P52.26/kg a month earlier.

The highest price by region for well-milled rice was P57.75/kg in the Central Visayas. By province, it

went as high as P72/kg in Batanes and was cheapest at P45/kg in Capiz.

Regular milled rice also saw prices rise to an average of P48.84/kg, an increase from November 15-17's P47.42/kg and November 1-5's P46.61/kg.

By region, it was highest at P52.66/kg in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. By province, Batangas saw the highest well-milled rice

price average of P61.50/kg.

As for meat, beef with bones averaged P339.76/kg, up from P337.90 a month earlier; pure beef hit P416.93/kg from P414.29; pork kasim rose to P322.17/kg from P321.31; pork liempo was P341.02/kg from P339.68 previously; pork with bones increased to P290.91/kg from P287.62/kg; but dressed chicken cost slightly less at P194.60 from P195.27.

Chicken eggs were a bit more

expensive at P8.89 per piece compared to P8.78 during the first five days of November.

Fish prices, meanwhile, fell for bangus (P214.93/kg from P215.51/kg), galunggong (P204.12/kg from P207.10), and tilapia (P167.37/kg from P167.44/kg).

Prices were also lower for ampalaya, cabbages, carrots, tomatoes and white potatoes but rose for string beans, native pechay, Baguio

► **Meat B3**

### ■ MEAT FROM B1

## Rice, meat prices up at start

beans and eggplant.

Onions, which were in short supply last year, saw its average price balloon to P206.85/kg from P181.03 a month earlier for the red variety.

Banana prices were higher for the lakatan variety at P83.47/kg but were relatively unchanged at around P49/kg for latundan. Calamansi and papaya prices were also relatively stable, and carabao mangoes were slightly cheaper.

Cooking oil prices were also stable at some P160/liter, and both brown and refined sugar were slightly cheaper at P80/kg and almost P91/kg.

The Department of Agriculture has said that prices of agricultural commodities would remain stable until the end of the year.

**JANINE ALEXIS MIGUEL**



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## 600K ha of farms hit by 'Kabayan'

BY JED MACAPAGAL

AS much as 625,963 hectares (ha) of rice and corn crops may be affected by tropical depression (TD) "Kabayan," according to the Department of Agriculture's

(DA) Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) operations center.

The DA's bulletin issued on 3 p.m. on Monday collated data from the regions of Mimaropa, Western Visayas, Central Visayas, Eastern

Visayas, Zamboanga Peninsula, Northern Mindanao, Davao, Soccsargen and Caraga.

Around 424, 673 ha are for rice and 201,290 ha are for corn.

DA said it is coordinating with the Philippine Atmospheric, Geo-

physical and Astronomical Services Administration in monitoring the movement of TD Kabayan, in partnership with other national and regional DRRM-related offices as well as local government unit counterparts.





## EDITORIAL

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### El Niño mitigation concerns all

**T**HE Philippines must thank science for correct and timely forecasts on the El Niño phenomenon, allowing government, the private sector, and the citizenry to pool their resources and confront this potentially disastrous weather phenomenon.

According to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., El Niño is forecast to last until the second quarter of 2024, so that “we must prioritize the repair of water pipes to prevent leakages and the completion of ongoing water supply projects to ensure that we have adequate supply.”

The President must have been thinking of Metro Manila’s critical water needs, since he made his comment at the inauguration recently of Maynilad’s Poblacion Water Treatment Plant (WTP) in Muntinlupa City.

During the ceremony, Marcos called upon “pertinent government agencies to intensify their vigilance in overseeing the construction of water supply facilities, particularly in regions grappling with water scarcity.”

**‘Government preparations are never enough to counter the wrath of nature as manifested in catastrophic floods, searing drought, super typhoons and scorching temperatures.’**

Unlike former President Rodrigo Duterte before him, Bongbong Marcos is friendlier with water concessionaires, inviting the private sector to further explore opportunities to collaborate with the government in addressing the country’s water supply challenges. He noted that the P11-billion Poblacion WTP is Maynilad’s third facility that taps into Laguna Lake

as an alternate raw water source. It aims to supply an additional 150 million liters per day (MLD) of water to consumers in Parañaque, Las Piñas, Muntinlupa, and Cavite.

The facility is part of Maynilad’s P220-billion Service Enhancement Program from 2023 to 2027 that aims to promote enhanced water sustainability and climate resilience.

The Marcos administration’s move to fight El Niño was pressed further by two more consecutive events both held last Wednesday, December 13. The President led the inauguration of the P893-million Balbalungao Small Reservoir Irrigation Project (BSRIP) in Barangay San Isidro, Lupao, Nueva Ecija in the morning, and in the afternoon he witnessed the turnover of 141 brand-new excavators for the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) held at the Subic Freeport in Zambales.

The dam in Lupao town is part of continued efforts of the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the NIA “to boost rice productivity in Nueva Ecija, which is known as the Rice Bowl of the Philippines. It shows this administration’s steadfast commitment to develop modern infrastructure systems that will enhance our agriculture sector,” the President said.

The National Irrigation Administration project, which began in July 2020, has a 27-meter-high embankment dam that will provide irrigation to close to 1,000 hectares of agricultural land and will benefit about 560 farmers. Irrigation water from the small reservoir will greatly help the government’s food sustainability program attain success, even if only in Central Luzon.

Meanwhile, the NIA received 141 units of excavators worth P776 million from the President. This batch of equipment is part of the P2.58-billion re-fleeting program of the irrigation agency, which will run for three years, to benefit all its 17 regional offices. Marcos expressed hope that the acquisition of new excavators would speed up the irrigation development and improvement of all agricultural canals and water systems in the country.

Government preparations are never enough to counter the wrath of nature as manifested in catastrophic floods, searing drought, super typhoons and scorching temperatures. But at least, it is reassuring that the government is doing something to solve these climate challenges, and is inviting everyone to pitch in. After all, fighting El Niño concerns all.





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## Luzon planters join call for gov't action on sugar farmgate, retail price disparity

By Adrian H. Halili

Reporter

LUZON sugar planters have weighed in with their own appeal for government intervention to narrow the gap between sugar farmgate and retail prices.

The Luzon Federation of Sugar Producers, Inc. said on Tuesday that high retail prices coupled with the low prices obtained by farmers for their harvest "gives rise to concern (about) our farmers' ability to sustain themselves in this perilous time and their capacity to maintain their farm's productivity in the coming crop year."

The remarks were made by LUZONFED President Cornelio V. Toreja in a letter addressed to President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr.

Mr. Toreja said the market prices for raw and refined sugar remains unaffected by the decline in farmgate prices.

"We urge the government to take a direct hand in ensuring that our

farmers get fair, reasonable and sustainable returns on their hard work and provide enough incentives to continue sugar production in the interest of food security," he added.

He said government intervention should be "considered seriously" to keep farming viable during the current crop year.

Earlier, the United Sugar Producers Federation of the Philippines urged the government to intervene due to the continued decline of raw sugar prices compared to retail prices, according to its President Manuel R. Lamata.

Mr. Lamata added that sugar prices have declined to P2,300-P2,500 per 50-kilogram bag, which is below production cost levels.

The Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) had projected that trading prices for raw sugar would stay at P3,000 per 50 kilo bag.

Separately, planters from the Sugar Council also urged the government to adopt measures to arrest the drop in sugar farmgate prices and "bring retail prices to more reasonable levels."

It added that traders have been preferring to withdraw imported sugar from warehouses rather than deal in domestically refined sugar.

According to the SRA, out of the 209,408 metric tons (MT) of sugar withdrawn from stocks, 32% (66,608 MT) consisted of domestically refined sugar and 68% (142,800 MT) imported.

"When there is weak demand for local refined sugar brought about by the abundance of cheaper imported sugar... it leads to weakened demand for raw sugar, which ultimately results in low sugar prices (obtained by farmers)," the group said.

SRA Administrator Pablo Luis S. Azcona has said that the regulator is seeking to impose a suggested retail price for refined sugar of P85 per kilo.

The council is composed of the Confederation of Sugar Producers Associations, Inc., the National Federation of Sugarcane Planters, Inc., and the Panay Federation of Sugarcane Farmers, Inc.





'TO ENSURE FAIR, REASONABLE, SUSTAINABLE RETURNS'

## SUGAR GROWERS CALL FOR GOV'T INTERVENTION TO ARREST SLIDING PRICES

By **Jordeene B. Lagare**  
@jordeenelagare

The Department of Transportation (DOTr) is set to work on P115-million worth of port projects in Davao Occidental as it aims to improve mobility of both goods and passengers in the countryside.

The DOTr and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH)-Davao Occidental District Engineering Office recently signed a memorandum of agreement for six

port projects in the province.

According to the agreement, the DOTr will allot P20 million each to five projects and P15 million in one port project.

The projects are situated in Manila, Tubalan, Balut Island, Balangonan, Poblacion and Sta. Maria.

The Philippine Port Authorities said it was set to complete additional 19 seaport projects this year, which include construction and rehabilitation of back-up areas, breakwaters and roll-on, roll-off (Ro-Ro) ramps.

The general cargo berth upgrade at the Port of Sasa in Davao City is among the projects. It has a price tag of P902 million, which is the most expensive undertaking in the roster.

Apart from these, the DOTr is set on building and expanding 14 Ro-Ro ports across the country.

Transportation Assistant Secretary for Maritime Julius Yano previously said the Ro-Ro port projects—which will be located in northern and eastern Luzon, Central Visayas and Mindanao—would cost P100 million each.

These include San Vicente Roro Port, Maconacon Port and Palanan Port in northern Luzon; Dilasag Port, Baler Port, Infanta Port and Catanauan Port in eastern Luzon; Cadiz Port, Ajuy Port and San Fernando Port in Central Visayas; Lupon Roro Port and Sta. Ana Roro Port in Mindanao.

Passenger traffic in January to September surged by 21 percent to 53.08 million from 43.92 million a year ago. In the same period, cargo throughput improved by 4 percent to 201.87 metric tons from 194.4 million a year ago. INQ



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## El Niño sparks rise in prices of rice, other agri products in December

By XANDER DAVE CEBALLOS

Amid the ongoing El Niño phenomenon, the prices of agricultural commodities, such as regular milled rice, posted an increase in the initial days of December.

Based on a Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) survey, the average retail price of a kilogram of well-milled rice rose to ₱48.84 between Dec. 1 and 5, from ₱46.61 in the early part of November. It is also one peso higher than the ₱47.42 average price during the last days of November.

The Department of Agriculture had earlier said crops such as rice and corn may be the most impacted during the drought caused by El Niño, which was seen to become stronger next year. ➤

## El Niño sparks rise in prices of rice, other agri products in December 1◀

Meanwhile, the Marcos administration has extended the reduced tariff rate for rice, which ensures its adequate supply and stable price.

The rice's tariff rate was maintained at 35 percent for both shipments within the minimum access volume (MAV) quota and for those exceeding the quota.

Further, a kilogram of red onions, which was priced at ₱181.3 during the

first phase of November, increased by ₱25 to ₱206.85 in the first days of December. During November's last days, it had an average price of ₱192.18.

A kilogram of pork meat swelled to ₱290.91 during the period. This was higher compared to ₱287.62 and ₱288.72 recorded during the first and second phases of November, respectively.

Likewise, banana lakatan noted

an average retail price of ₱83.47 per kilogram during the period, higher than the ₱81.03 recorded in the first phase of November and ₱81.77 recorded in the second phase.

On the other hand, tomato, galunggong, and refined sugar all saw decreases during the period. It was notably seen in tomatoes whose average retail price was brought down from hundreds to ₱89.69 per kilogram.





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## PH COMPANIES EYE AGRI PARTNERSHIP WITH ISRAEL FIRM

SEVERAL Philippine companies have explored partnerships with one of Israel's giant agriculture firms that specializes in farming technologies.

Companies which are part of the Kapatid Angat Lahat sa Agri Program (Kalap) of Go Negosyo founder Jose Maria "Joey" Concepcion 3rd met with Israel's Innovative Agro Industry (IAI), which aims to establish a "long-term investment" in the Philippines.

IAI already has a local project team in place in the country.

Israel's Ambassador to the Philippines Ilan Fluss and IAI Chief Executive Officer Lior Crystal led

the group from Israel. Fluss said that the Philippines "is a country whose potential in agriculture is unbelievable."

The IAI specializes in agricultural technologies for rural development, including water, energy, telecom, health and construction.

It is an affiliate of the LR Group, which has undertaken over 100 projects worldwide and has over \$2.5 billion in capital investments in sustainable project development.

"This is about helping MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises). And among the MSMEs, the biggest challenge is really with those in agriculture. We are push-

ing for access to technology and access to markets," Concepcion said in a statement.

He added that unless agricultural production in the country achieves scale, it would be difficult to entice banks to lend to small farmers.

"It is the dilemma that we face. Scale is important, and how to achieve scale is the challenge," he said.

Fluss said that the Philippines might do much better in agriculture than Israel did because of its tropical climate.

He said that despite its challenging geography, Israel has used science to grow a thriving agricultural

sector, making it a global leader in agricultural technologies and a significant exporter of fresh produce.

"If you do it scientifically, if you do it commercially, [Philippine agriculture] has the potential to succeed big time," the ambassador said.

Kalap was created to address challenges in making agriculture viable in the Philippines by bringing sustainable and inclusive business models to microfarmers and forging partnerships and collaborations between the government and the private sector.

IAI's core strength, said Lior, is bringing in Israeli technologies

and implementing them in developing countries.

"Our strategy in the Philippines is also to come in as equity partners and invest in places where we believe would make sense. We put our money where our mouth is," he said.

In the meeting were top executives of the big-brother companies participating in Kalap — Toby Gatchalian of Metro Pacific Agroventures, James Amparo of Yovel East, Christian Moeller of Lionheart Farms, Francisco Dizon of Dizon Farms, Kennemer Foods' Simon Bakker, Mat Maderazo of Planters Products and Jojo Ocol

of Agrabah, as well as Go Negosyo senior advisers Merly Cruz and Dr. William Dar.

Among the areas discussed for possible collaborations were dairy production, fertigation and distilling systems.

The meeting also touched on sustainable and inclusive business models in the agriculture sector.

They also tackled technologies for high-value crops and commodities such as rice, corn, cut flowers, cacao, seaweed, and fruits and vegetables; water management; solar-powered desalination technologies and regenerative farming.

**BERNADETTE E. TAMAYO**





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## Solutions sought on sugar price free fall

MORE sugar groups have appealed for state intervention on the free fall of millgate prices of sugar.

The Sugar Council, comprised of the Confederation of Sugar Producers' Associations, the National Federation of Sugarcane Planters and the Panay Federation of Sugarcane Farmers, said the government must "adopt measures to stop the decline in farmgate sugar prices and bring retail prices to more reasonable levels."

The group, which comprises more than half of national sugar

output, said the steep price drops threaten farmers' viability.

The Sugar Council said millgate raw sugar prices per 50-kilogram (LKG) bag dropped from an earlier average high of P2,825 per bag in week ending September 10 to an average of P2,552 in the week ending October 10 and to P2,564 in the week ending of November 19.

In November last year, mill gate averaged at P3,380.56 per LKG.

The group said retail sugar prices have remained high at P80

per kg for raw and P100 per kg for refined.

"The survival of the industry rests on our ability to jointly adopt measures that ensure the viability of all its stakeholders, especially the small farmers. Towards this end, the Sugar Council seeks earnest and genuine solution-seeking dialogue with government and other stakeholders at the earliest possible time," the group added.

In a separate letter, the Luzon Federation (LuzonFed) of sugar producers have urged the gov-

ernment "to take a direct hand" in ensuring that farmers get a "fair, reasonable and sustainable" returns.

"We submit this concern as our farmers perceive that whatever gains that are derived from these low prices are channeled to entities other than the farmers themselves and inordinate profits are being generated elsewhere at the peril of their livelihood," said Arnel Toreja, LuzonFed president, in a letter addressed to President Marcos Jr.





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## Halal food standards sought

COTABATO CITY — An official of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in the 80-seat Bangsamoro parliament and 26 others have filed a bill aiming to set comprehensive regional halal food standards in all provinces and cities in the autonomous region.

Romeo K. Sema, principal author Bill 268, the proposed Bangsamoro Halal Consumers Act, said the measure seeks to protect Muslims from non-permissible food and merchandise.

Halal, meaning permissible in Arabic, follows Islamic norms for food selection, preparation, and livestock slaughter. The measure would address issues such as misleading labeling and sets high-quality standards for agricultural products and slaughterhouses.

In a statement on Tuesday, the Bangsamoro Parliament's Public Information, Publication and Media Relations Division (PIPMRD) also underscored the "scientific wisdom" and health benefits of enforcing halal standards.

Mr. Sema clarified that the bill does not impose restrictions on non-Muslim food consumption but safeguards Muslims' rights to permissible goods. — **John Felix M. Unson**





## Pagbuhay sa industriya ng asin abot-kamay na

INAASAHAN na ang tuluyang pagbuhay at pagpapalakas sa naghihingalong industriya ng asin sa bansa.

Ito ang ipinahayag ni Bicol Saro Party-list Rep. Brian Raymund Yamsuan matapos na ratipikahanan na ng dalawang kapulungan ng Kongreso ang pinal na bersiyon ng proposed Philippine Salt Industry Development Act.

Ayon kay Yamsuan, sa pamamagitan ng panukala ay makakapagtatag ng 'five-year roadmap' na layong buhayin at isasalalim sa modernisasyon ang industriya ng pag-aasin sa bansa.

"Our key goals in approving this measure is to make the Philippines self-

sufficient in salt, and subsequently, a net exporter of this vital commodity," ayon kay Yamsuan, isa sa may-akda ng panukala.

Kumbinsido ang kongresista na ito ang magiging daan upang mabaligtad ang kasalukuyang sitwasyon na kung saan ang Pilipinas ay umaangkat ng 92 percent ng pangangailangan nitong asin.

Bukod dito, ayon kay Yamsuan, ang panukala ay magbibigay din ng suporta sa mga small salt producer at cooperative upang palakasin ang kanilang

produksiyon kabilang dito ang pagbibigay ng 'inputs at equipment' para sa salt development; pagtatayo ng salt farm warehouses; at pag-develop ng modernong salt production at processing technologies.

"The timely enactment of this measure will revitalize the salt industry and create tens of thousands of jobs in the agriculture sector, especially if we are able to modernize the industry and export salt for industrial purposes," dagdag ni Yamsuan. (Eralyn Prado/Billy Begas)

**Abante**  
**NEGOSYO**





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## Soy eases; wheat firms

SINGAPORE- Chicago soybean futures edged lower on Tuesday, shedding some of the previous session's gains, on improved weather in top exporter Brazil, although strong demand for US exports curbed losses.

Wheat gained ground, recovering from Monday's deep losses, with prices under pressure from ample Russian supplies, while corn ticked higher.

"Weather for Brazilian soybeans has improved in some parts of growing areas," said one Singapore-based trader. "We have to see how it goes for rest of the season. Chinese demand for US beans will reduce if Brazilian crop outlook improves."

The most-active soybean contract on the Chicago Board of Trade (CBOT) was down 0.3 percent at \$13.22-3/4 a bushel, as of 0335 GMT, having closed almost 1 percent higher in the previous session.

Wheat added 0.7 percent to \$6.21-1/4 a bushel and corn gained 0.2 percent at \$4.78 a bushel.

Investors in the agricultural markets are monitoring weather forecasts for South America, where rains have aided recently planted crops in northern Brazil following a hot, dry start to the season. But parts of the region were missed by rains and may remain dry again through this month, forecasters said. - *Reuters*