

MANILA BULLETIN:

Most of PH bearing brunt of El Niño—task force

BY RAYMUND ANTONIO

Apr 24, 2024 01:41 PM

The Task Force El Niño admitted on Wednesday, April 24, that almost the entire Philippines is being affected by the El Niño phenomenon, which brings extreme heat and drought.



(File Photo/MANILA BULLETIN)

Citing reports from the Office of Civil Defense (OCD), Task Force El Niño spokesperson Joey Villarama said that 103 cities and municipalities—including the provinces of Occidental Mindoro, Antique, Sultan Kudarat, Basilan, and Maguindanao del Sur—are in a state of calamity.

“Halos buong Pilipinas na ang apektado (Almost the entire Philippines is affected),” he stressed, citing President Marcos’ earlier remark on El Niño, during the Bagong Pilipinas briefing.

The official added that based on the figures of the Department of Social and Welfare Development (DSWD), around 2,116,420 individuals are affected by El Niño.

“So, ito iyong mga magsasaka, mangigisda, pati na rin ‘yung kanilang mga dependents o kanilang mga pamilya (These are the farmers, fisherfolk, and their dependents or families),”

Villarama said, adding that these are also the individuals being assisted by the DSWD, Department of Agriculture (DA), and other government agencies.

The assistance being extended to farmers and fisherfolk range from cash assistance, rice subsidy, fuel assistance to food packs, he shared.

However, Villarama also admitted difficulties in extending help to far-flung areas.

“Iyong naging main directive, ang difficulty ngayon is mayroon tayong lugar na hirap maabot dahil sa proximity or sa distance so ang sinasabi ng Pangulo iyong national agencies lumapit sa LGU (local government units) para malaman kung ano iyong pangangailan ng kinasasakupan nila (That’s the main directive, the difficulty now is there are places that we can’t reach because of proximity or distance so the President said national agencies should reach out to the LGU to be guided with what they need),” he explained.

Noting the impact of El Niño phenomenon is minimal compared to historical data, the task force spokesperson cited the “preventive measures, intervention, and mitigating measures” the government put in place.

He also said there are short-, medium-, and long-term solutions for irrigation currently being planned, such as the solar-powered irrigation pumps and the building of more dams.

Villarama likewise assured that water security issues are being addressed as high dams project may be operation from this year until 2028.

According to the DA, the damage and losses incurred by the agriculture sector due to the El Niño phenomenon has already reached P3.94 billion.

This translates to 66,065 hectares of farmland that that have been affected, equivalent to 162,793 metric tons of production volume.

About 78 percent of those 66,000 hectares have a “chance of recovery,” Villarama added.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/4/24/most-of-ph-bearing-brunt-of-el-nino-task-force>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Romualdez worried for farmers, orders probe on gap between farm gate and retail prices

BY ELLSON QUISMORIO

Apr 24, 2024 05:08 PM

AT A GLANCE

- Citing the plight of Filipino farmers, House Speaker Martin Romualdez has ordered an immediate inquiry in aid of legislation into the widening gap between farm gate and retail prices of rice and other basic goods.
- Farm gate prices are defined as the prices received by farmers for the sale of their crops at the location of farm.



House Speaker Martin Romualdez (Speaker's office)

Citing the plight of Filipino farmers, House Speaker Martin Romualdez has ordered an immediate inquiry in aid of legislation into the widening gap between farm gate and retail prices of rice and other basic goods.

Romualdez, the leader of the 300-plus strong House of Representatives, is eyeing the conduct of the probe as soon as the chamber resumes its session on Monday, April 29.

“I would ask Chairman Mark Enverga of the Committee on Agriculture to immediately start the ball rolling for an investigation into the disconnect between farm gate and retail prices of basic goods,” said Romualdez.

"The discrepancy between farm gate and retail prices of basic goods is alarming and warrants immediate attention. We cannot ignore the plight of our farmers who are struggling to make ends meet, nor can we turn a blind eye to the burden placed on consumers," he added.

The Speaker made this commitment after attending a meeting with representatives of producers, retailers, and grocery stores on Tuesday, April 23.

Farm gate prices are defined as the prices received by farmers for the sale of their crops at the location of farm. The higher these prices, the more they get paid for their produce.

During the meeting, which was called by Deputy Majority Leader ACT-CIS Party-list Rep. Erwin Tulfo, the retailers and other attendees denied making any substantial price changes on basic goods.

Jayson Cainglet of Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura (SINAG) informed the Speaker that farm gate prices of rice, poultry, pork, and even onions have been maintained for the past three months so there should be no spike in the prices of these items.

Romualdez says the upcoming investigation is part of the House's oversight function.

He also committed to conduct a thorough review of existing laws to protect the interest of both consumers and producers and deter profiteering.

"It is imperative that we conduct a comprehensive review of our laws to ensure that they effectively safeguard the interests of our farmers and consumers. We must take proactive measures to prevent profiteering and promote a fair and transparent trading environment," said Romualdez, president of the Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats (Lakas-CMD) party.

"At the end of the day, we want to make sure that all the stakeholders in whatever industry or sectors are viable, if they are in the business side of it, so that it becomes sustainable so that we can continue delivering basic goods and services to the consumers at sustainable, affordable prices," he said.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/4/24/romualdez-worried-for-farmers-orders-probe-on-gap-between-farm-gate-and-retail-prices>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Central Luzon posts highest agricultural contributions

BY XANDER DAVE CEBALLOS

Apr 24, 2024 05:11 PM

AT A GLANCE

- The total value of production in agriculture and fisheries reached P1.76 trillion last year, with Central Luzon contributing the largest share among regions.
 - Central Luzon shared the most gains from the production, contributing 13.5 percent, followed by Northern Mindanao and Western Visayas with 10.1 percent and 9.4 percent shares, respectively.
 - Livestock value production reached P260 billion in 2023 as the top three regions with the highest contribution were seen in CALABARZON, Central Visayas, and Northern Mindanao.
 - For poultry and fisheries, their production gains were valued at P260 billion and P240 billion, respectively.
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The value of production in agriculture and fisheries reached P1.76 trillion last year, with Central Luzon contributing the largest share among regions, data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) showed.

However, this was slightly lower compared to the P1.77 trillion output recorded in 2022.

The PSA said in a report that Central Luzon shared the most gains from agriculture and fisheries production, contributing 13.5 percent, followed by Northern Mindanao and Western Visayas with 10.1 percent and 9.4 percent shares, respectively.

If looking at the fastest annual growths, Central Visayas topped the list at 7.6 percent and was followed by MIMAROPA Region at 7.0 percent and Eastern Visayas at 3.4 percent.

Meanwhile, the biggest decline in the value of production in agriculture and fisheries was seen in the Bicol Region at 7.6 percent, as Western Visayas and SOCCSKSARGEN also declined to 5.7 percent and 4.3 percent.

On the other hand, crop production value was recorded at P1 trillion last year with Northern Mindanao accounting for the highest share at 11.7 percent.

Cagayan Valley and Central Luzon completed the second and third places with shares of 10.6 percent and 9.7 percent, respectively.

In terms of annual growth, Central Visayas recorded the highest growth in the value of crop production among all regions at 24.3 percent, the PSA said.

For livestock production, its value reached P260 billion in 2023 as the top three regions with the highest contribution were seen in CALABARZON with 13.1 percent share, Central Visayas with 12.7 percent share, and Northern Mindanao with 11.3 percent share.

As for the year-on-year growth, Central Luzon had the highest growth at 30 percent and was followed by MIMAROPA Region at 16.9 percent, Ilocos Region at 14.1 percent, and CALABARZON at 12.2 percent.

For poultry and fisheries, their production gains last year were valued at P260 billion and P240 billion, respectively.

The top three regions with the highest contributions for poultry were Central Luzon with 27.0 percent share, CALABARZON with 19.3 percent share, and Northern Mindanao with 9.5 percent share, while for fisheries, Central Luzon had the highest contribution at 18.1 percent.

Four provinces from Central Luzon, namely Bulacan, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija, and Bataan, entered the top 10 list that had large contributions to the country's gross domestic product in 2022.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/4/24/central-luzon-posts-highest-agricultural-contributions>

MANILA BULLETIN:

USAID expands responsible seafood sourcing program in Iloilo

BY TARA YAP

Apr 24, 2024 02:39 PM

ILOILO CITY – The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has expanded its Responsible Seafood Sourcing Program in Iloilo.



BLUE crab farmers in Iloilo are supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). (US Embassy in the Philippines)

“Through the responsible seafood sourcing program, businesses can consistently provide quality seafood products while ensuring the health of the marine environment and supporting the livelihoods of local fishing communities,” said USAID Philippines Mission Director Ryan Washburn.

The program aims to reduce illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing in Iloilo while finding sustainable markets.

The Responsible Seafood Sourcing Program is part of the Fish Right Program supported by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) of the Department of Agriculture (DA), the Iloilo provincial government, and the local seafood industry.

Through the program, blue crab farmers from Igbon Island in Concepcion, Iloilo are supplying blue crabs to the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel in Iloilo City.

“This is the way to go as we endeavor to achieve conservation and sustainability of our fisheries resources while ensuring that livelihood and welfare of fishing communities are appropriately taken care of,” said DA Undersecretary for Fisheries Drusila Bayate.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/4/24/usaid-expands-responsible-seafood-sourcing-program-in-iloilo>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Victorias City unveils P7-M Carabao Pen, Dairy Box

BY GLAZYL MASCULINO

Apr 24, 2024 07:02 PM

BACOLOD CITY – Victorias City in Negros Occidental inaugurated a Dairy Box and a P7-million Carabao Pen to boost its local carabao dairy production industry.



MAYOR Javier Miguel Benitez (left) and Sen. Mark Villar inaugurate the Dairy Box in Barangay I Satellite Market, Victorias City, Negros Occidental on April 18. (Photo courtesy of Mayor Javi Benitez Facebook)

Mayor Javier Miguel Benitez and Sen. Mark A. Villar led the unveiling of these two projects in Barangay I Satellite Market and Hacienda San Antonio, Barangay 14, respectively.

These infrastructure projects were turned over to the San Antonio Farmers Multi-Purpose Cooperative (SAFMPC), the conduit partner of the local government unit (LGU) that will manage and operate the Dairy Box.

“Today marks the beginning of our Great Victorias Carabao Moo-vement with the inauguration of the first Dairy Box in the province of Negros Occidental,” Benitez said. It is a first one-stop outlet for carabao dairy products in the province.

A Carabao Pen is a facility for animals and livestock raisers of SAFMPC which will maximize potential and minimize losses in the local farming industry.

Benitez said that the carabao pen stands as a testament to their dedication to improving livestock management and agricultural practices.

It will enhance the livelihood of local farmers, providing them with the resources and training they need to thrive in an increasingly competitive market, he added.

The Dairy Box and Carabao Pen are part of the Carabao-Based Business Improvement Network (CBIN) Project under the Office of Sen. Cynthia Villar, chairwoman of the Committee on Agriculture and Food, with the Department of Agriculture (DA)-Philippine Carabao Center (DA-PCC).

Benitez said that these projects are not merely infrastructural achievements but also beacons of hope, adding that they symbolize their commitment to nurturing their land, animals, and most importantly, the people.

He stressed that they are not just launching facilities but also laying the foundation for a future of prosperity and health in the city.

Villar commended the local government for these initiatives and underscored the impact of Dairy Box in the local community.

He said the Dairy Box will serve as support infrastructure for the processing and marketing of carabao's milk.

"We are looking forward to this becoming an additional income for our carabao farmers because this will be a one-stop shop for various products made from buffalo milk such as flavored milk, yogurt, cheese, and others," he added.

Dr. Caro Salces, DA-PCC deputy executive director, stressed the collective effort needed to support local farmers and promote economic growth.

"Let us reaffirm our commitment to supporting our local farmers, empowering our rural communities, and fostering economic prosperity. Together, we can cultivate a brighter future for Victorias City and pave the way for a thriving dairy sector in the region," Salces said.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/4/24/victorias-city-unveils-p7-m-carabao-pen-dairy-box>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Sumilang Festival of Silang, Cavite shines spotlight on local farmers, agriculture

BY CARLA BAUTO DEÑA

Apr 24, 2024 08:02 PM



Winners of the biggest harvested pineapples awarded at Sumilang Festival in Silang, Cavite, on April 24 (Carla Bauto Deña/MANILA BULLETIN)

SILANG, Cavite – The local government unit (LGU) of Silang officially opened the Sumilang Festival 2024 at the New Municipal Hall Grounds in Barangay Biga 1 on Wednesday, April 24, to honor farmers and showcase local agriculture.

The program was led by Mayor Kevin Amutan Anarna, Department of Agriculture (DA) Usec. Alvin John Balagbag, guest of honor former senator Francis Pangilinan, and local officials.



Guest of honor former senator Francis Pangilinan at Sumilang Festival in Silang, Cavite, on April 24 (Carla Bauto Deña/MANILA BULLETIN)

During his speech, Anarna expressed appreciation for local farmers and their contribution to food production.

“Napaka-importante po ng role ng bawat isa sa atin sa pagbibigay ng makakain sa atin pong mga kakabayan sa Silang at sa buong Cavite (Our role in providing food to our fellow citizens here in Silang and throughout Cavite is very important),” the mayor said.

“Salamat po sa sakripisyo (Thank you for your sacrifice).”

The LGU awarded Silang’s three oldest farmers, as well as the winners of the Sumilang Harvest contest, which recognized the biggest harvested bananas, purple yams, cassavas, eggplants, and pineapples in the municipality.



Winners of the biggest harvested cassava awarded at Sumilang Festival in Silang, Cavite, on April 24 (Carla Bauto Deña/MANILA BULLETIN)

Silang Cacao Growers Association, meanwhile, was awarded as Most Outstanding Farmer Association.

The festival also featured a bonsai exhibit, a trade fair exhibit, and an art exhibit.

Supporting farmers amid the threat of El Niño

Anarna says the municipal government is doing its best to help local farmers as they deal with the effects of El Niño.

“Ngayon, mamimigay tayo ng iba’t ibang tulong sa mga magsasaka, P12.6 million pesos, kasama yung crop insurance from DA na worth P1.6 million. Sana makatulong kahit papano para maibsan yung epekto ng El Niño (Now, we will be distributing various assistance to the farmers, amounting to P12.6 million, including the crop insurance from the Department of Agriculture worth P1.6 million. Hopefully, this will somewhat help alleviate the effects of El Niño),” the mayor said.

“Pero dito naman, very resilient naman 'yung mga crops ng Silang, hindi masyadong apektado ng El Niño (But here, the crops in Silang are very resilient, not heavily affected by El Niño).”



Mayor Kevin Amutan Anarna and former senator Francis Pangilinan at Sumilang Festival in Silang, Cavite, on April 24 (Carla Bauto Deña/MANILA BULLETIN)

Pangilinan, meanwhile, encouraged the municipal government to be a model LGU by fully implementing Republic Act No. 11321 or Sagip Saka Act, which provides an opportunity for farmers and fisherfolk to directly supply agricultural and fishery products to government agencies and LGUs without going through public bidding.

“Ang pinakamalaking buyer ng pagkain sa ating bansa sa kabuuan ay ang gobyernong nasyonal at gobyernong lokal (The biggest buyer of food in our country as a whole is the national government and the local government),” the former senator stated during his speech.



Farmers showcase their produce at the Sumilang Festival in Silang, Cavite, on April 24 (Carla Bauto Deña/MANILA BULLETIN)

“Hindi sila babaratin, tama ang kanilang kita, dadami ang ani, dadami ang huli, dadami ang supply ng pagkain sa ating mga merkado, babagsak na ang presyo ng pagkain, lahat tayo makikinabang (They will not be haggled down, their earnings are right, there will be more harvests, there will be more catches, the food supply in our markets will increase, food prices will drop, and we will all benefit).”

According to the Cavite Ecological Profile 2020, Silang has the largest agricultural area and has consistently been the highest producer of pineapple in the province. The municipality also produces other agricultural products, including coffee, cacao, and bananas, among other fruits, vegetables, and crops.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/4/24/article-2209>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Agriculture losses due to El Niño hit P4B

By: [Jean Mangaluz](#) - Reporter / [@JMangaluzINO](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 04:05 PM April 24, 2024

MANILA, Philippines — The El Niño phenomenon has so far caused about P4 billion in agriculture losses, said a Palace official on Wednesday.

According to Task Force El Niño spokesperson and Presidential Communications Office Asst. Secretary Joey Villarama, the amount represents the damage inflicted by the dry spell on 66,000 hectares of farmland.

“Sa huling datos na galing sa Department of Agriculture, nasa P3.94 billion na po ang danyos sa agrikultura—that’s equivalent to about 66,065 hectares,” said Villarama during the Bagong Pilipinas Ngayon public briefing.

(According to the latest Department of Agriculture data, damage to agriculture has reached P3.94 billion, equivalent to about 66,065 hectares.)

Villarama said that of the damaged agricultural land, 78 percent could still be recovered once the drought is over.

The size of ‘264 Luneta Parks’

He said the “totally” damaged’ land was about the size of “264 Luneta Parks.”

For context, one of the country’s largest parks, Luneta Park, is 58 hectares. The agricultural land rendered unrecoverable by the El Niño is more than 14, 500 hectares.

“The crops in those areas are totally damaged so they can no longer be used for human consumption and the land is too dry and no longer viable for planting during the current planting season or until water can be regularly made available,” said Villarama.

“76.87 percent (50, 785 hectares) has a chance of recovery. It means the produce in that area is salvageable, although the yield may be lesser. Meanwhile, the produce in the remaining percentage of affected land which can’t be recovered can be used for forage,” Villarama told INQUIRER.net in a Viber message.

“Gusto po nating sabihin na kahit papaano po ay nakatulong po yung preventive measures, interventions at saka iyong mitigation measures kaya po kahit papaano eh maliit pa po iyon compared to what we have experienced in terms of damage historically po,” said Villarama.

(We want to say that somewhat, the government’s preventive measures, interventions, and mitigation measures have helped keep the damage smaller than what we have experienced in terms of damage historically.)

Citing data from the Department of Social Welfare and Development, Villarama said that 2,116,420 individuals have been affected by the El Niño.

<https://business.inquirer.net/456135/agriculture-losses-due-to-el-nino-hit-p4b>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Heat nearing 50°C like death sentence for pets, livestock

By: [Kurt Dela Peña](#) - Content Researcher Writer / [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 02:51 PM April 24, 2024



Heat vs animals composite image from INQUIRER stock photos

MANILA, Philippines — Extreme heat, which is expected to exceed dangerous levels next month, is not only exacting a heavy toll on humans, but on animals as well.

Based on the study “Effects of Heat Stress on Animal Physiology, Metabolism, and Meat Quality: A Review” in Science Direct, “heat stress is one of the most stressful events in the life of livestock with harmful consequences for animal health, productivity and product quality.”

The study, written by Paula Gonzales-Rivas, Surinder Chauhan, Minh Ha, Narelle Fegan, Fran Dunshea, and Robyn Warner, said that ruminants, pigs and poultry are susceptible to heat stress because of their fast metabolic rate and growth.

Even their high level of production and species-specific characteristics such as rumen fermentation, sweating impairment, and skin insulation are factors to consider, too.

Last week, the president of the Philippine Egg Board Association, Francis Uyehura, told Teleradyo Serbisyo that “farm producers are already experiencing problems because of the extreme heat,” pointing out that egg production is affected as a result of feed-intake reduction.

The problem, he said, is that eggs are getting smaller.

According to the study “Impact of Heat Stress on Poultry Production” that was published by the US National Center for Biotechnology Information, a 12-day heat stress period caused a daily feed intake reduction of 28.58 grams per bird, resulting in a 28.8 percent decrease in egg production.

The researchers, Lucas Lara and Marcos Rostango, referring to previous studies, said that a 31 percent decrease in feed conversion resulted in a 36.4 percent and 3.41 percent decrease in egg production and egg weight, respectively.

Even eggshell thickness is affected by extreme heat.

As for meat, the study “Effects of Heat Stress on Animal Physiology, Metabolism, and Meat Quality: A Review” stated that acute heat stress immediately before slaughter can result in pale, soft and exudative meat characterized by low water holding capacity.

Chronic heat stress, meanwhile, can result in dark, firm and dry meat. Heat stress likewise leads to oxidative stress, lipid and protein oxidation, and reduced shelf life and food safety because of bacterial growth and shedding.

Based on the government’s 2023 El Niño National Action Plan, the phenomenon can cause a wide range of consequences on agriculture such as a decline in food production, increase in food prices, and drop in farm incomes.

As the Department of Agriculture (DA) stated in its bulletin as of last week, April 16, losses and damage to agriculture already reached P4 billion, including P6.95 million in livestock and poultry sectors.

Based on data from Veterinaria Digital and the USDA, which was compiled by wellness brand Dr. Shiba, in the US, heat stress generates a 0.5 percent to 7.2 percent decrease in egg production and costs the dairy industry \$1.2 billion yearly.

‘Look out for signs’

As Dr. Shiba said, considering how heat indices often exceed safe thresholds, it would be significant to shed light on the effects of extreme heat on critters, who are really defenseless against heat waves.

“Initially, it can be seen with increased salivation and faster breathing, and as it progresses with no medical intervention, animals become lethargic and immobile. They can vomit, as well, and in extreme cases, animals experiencing heat stress can have a seizure attack,” he said.

Based on the Australian government website Agriculture Victoria, increased respiration rate, loss of appetite, increased water intake, and loss of consciousness are signs of heat stress in animals, too.

It was stated in the study by Rivas R. et al that pigs and poultry are specifically prone to heat stress because of the lack of functional sweat glands and skin insulation provided by the subcutaneous fat in pigs and by feathers in birds.

However, Almera said other animals are vulnerable, too, with amphibians and reptiles considered to be at greatest risk. “But if we are to focus on small animals such as dogs and cats, old, thick coated and short nose breeds are the most vulnerable to extreme heat,” he said.

This, as “old pets have less capability to thermoregulate, while thick coated breeds collect more heat but have less capability to remove them from the body.” Short

nose breeds, meanwhile, are prone to some breathing problems when having heat stress.

‘Keep them safe’

For Almera, it is important to keep animals hydrated, saying that water should always be available and that exercises should be minimized, especially when it is already beyond 8:00 a.m.

He said animals should be kept cool, as well, by placing them in a well-ventilated area throughout the day. “Keep their fur short and clean, too,” he said, as he stressed the need for caretakers to always be on the lookout for signs of heat stress and heat stroke.

As the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said, temperature could reach over 40 degrees Celsius in the coming weeks, or next month.

That would usually translate to heat indices of plus two to three degrees Celsius so when the temperature reading is 40, the usual heat index is between 40°C to 43°C.

Likewise, as weather specialist Dr. John Manalo told GMA Integrated News, some areas in the Philippines may hit extreme danger levels, or temperatures at 52°C or higher, in May.

“Based on Pagasa’s ongoing monitoring of the discomfort index or heat index, there is a possibility that some areas in the country will experience levels of extreme danger, which is 52 degrees or higher,” said Ana Liza Solis, officer in charge of Pagasa’s Climatology and Agrometeorology Division.

“With this heat level, heatstroke is imminent or probable [for] people who are directly exposed to sunlight, which is why we need to take precautions,” she said.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1933117/heat-nearing-50c-like-death-sentence-for-pets-livestock>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

El Niño crop damage now at P3.9B

By: [Melvin Gascon](#) - Reporter / [@melvingasconINO](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:50 AM April 25, 2024



ALL DRY A farmer in Pagadian City in Zamboanga del Sur province visits her rice farm, now all dried up due to the absence of rain amid the El Niño weather phenomenon. The Zamboanga Peninsula is among the 11 regions in the country worst hit by the dry spell and drought. **PHOTO COURTESY OF PAGADIAN CITY AGRICULTURE OFFICE**

MANILA, Philippines — The damage to crops due to the prolonged drought caused by the El Niño phenomenon has already reached P3.9 billion, covering about 66,000 hectares nationwide, the spokesperson of Task Force El Niño said on Wednesday.

In a television interview, Asst. Sec. Joey Villarama said a total of 103 cities and towns, including five provinces, had already declared a state of calamity due to El Niño damage, mainly shortage of water for irrigation.

“Based on the latest data from the Department of Agriculture, the damage to agriculture has reached P3.94 billion—that’s equivalent to about 66,000 hectares,” he said.

According to him, while El Niño has affected almost the entire country, five provinces are now under a state of calamity due to severe drought: Occidental Mindoro, Antique, Sultan Kudarat, Basilan and Maguindanao del Sur.

“The President has mentioned that the whole country is now affected albeit in varying degrees, so the focus and assistance that the government is giving to the localities is also dependent on the need of each province,” Villarama said.

‘Negligible’

But he added that the government remained optimistic that farmers could still recover up to 78 percent of the 60,000 hectares of damaged farmlands.

“The rice farms may look dried up or burnt, but their crops may still be recovered; for those that are already unrecoverable, the dried-up plants can be given as feeds for farm animals,” he said.

According to Villarama, the agricultural damage wrought by El Niño is still considered “negligible.”

“Based on those figures, we would like to state that somehow, the preventive measures and interventions that we have put in place somehow helped, because the damage is considered negligible compared to what we have experienced in terms of damage historically,” he said.

The government is working on short and long-term solutions to solve the water shortage, mainly to irrigate farmlands.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1933327/el-nino-crop-damage-now-at-p3-9b>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

DA: Philippines to import 25,000 MT fish

[Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

April 25, 2024 | 12:00am



Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu-Laurel Jr. signed Memorandum Order 17, which provided the guidelines for the issuance of certificate of necessity to import 25,000 MT of frozen pelagic fish for wet markets from Oct. 1 to Dec. 21, 2024. *STAR / File*

MANILA, Philippines — Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu-Laurel Jr. has allowed the importation of 25,000 metric tons of frozen fish, days after President Marcos issued Administrative Order No. 20 removing the non-tariff barriers on imported agricultural products.

Tiu-Laurel signed Memorandum Order 17, which provided the guidelines for the issuance of certificate of necessity to import 25,000 MT of frozen pelagic fish for wet markets from Oct. 1 to Dec. 21, 2024.

The memorandum states that 80 percent of the maximum importable volume (MIV) totaling 20,000 MT will be given to registered importers belonging to the commercial fishing sector.

“The MIV will be allocated based on fish landings of each of commercial fishing operator, (those) who have valid commercial fishing vessel and gear licenses and have contributed to the production in the past three years, as well as participated during the last importation period,” Tiu Laurel said.

He said the remaining 20 percent of the authorized importation totaling 5,000 metric tons would be allocated to fisheries associations and cooperatives.

“Importable volume will be based on their performance, taking into consideration the percentage arrival of fish imported from the preceding importation period. The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources will assess the financial capacity of importers under this category. Only fisheries associations and cooperatives affected by the closed fishing season and have the financial capacity to import will be qualified to participate in this importation period,” Tiu Laurel said in the memorandum.

He said an initial volume of 112 MT, or equivalent to four shipping containers, would be awarded to each qualified importer belonging to the commercial fishing sector.

“The remaining volume will be distributed proportionately based on their percentage share from the total volume of fish landings in the past three years immediately preceding an importation period,” he added.

Sanitary and phytosanitary import clearances will be issued from Sept. 1 to Nov. 30.

“The fish to be imported must arrive not later than Jan. 15 of the succeeding year or 2025,” Tiu Laurel added.

The fish to be imported should be reported to the BFAR, which should encourage importers to immediately trade the fish to ensure it will not overlap with the local catch by the end of the closed fishing season, he added.

The BFAR has declared the fishing season closed to allow spawning periods for mature sardines from October to January.

The volume of fish imports this year is 29 percent lower than the 35,000 MT imported in 2023.

Latest monitoring by the Department of Agriculture showed retail prices of round scad ranged between P150 and P220 and Indian mackerel between P260 and P360 per kilo.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/04/25/2350281/da-philippines-import-25000-mt-fish>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

House to probe farmgate, retail prices gap

[Delon Porcalla](#) - The Philippine Star

April 25, 2024 | 12:00am



Speaker Martin Romualdez.

STAR / File

MANILA, Philippines — The House of Representatives will conduct an inquiry into the spiraling cost of basic commodities amid low farmgate prices when session resumes on April 29.

Speaker Martin Romualdez said he would lead an “investigation in aid of legislation” into the widening gap between farmgate and retail prices of rice and other basic goods.

Romualdez made the statement after meeting with producers, suppliers, retailers and grocery store owners recently.

“I would ask chairman Mark Enverga of the House committee on agriculture to immediately start the investigation into the discrepancy between farmgate and retail prices of basic commodities,” Romualdez said.

Enverga represents the first district of Quezon province.

“The discrepancy between farmgate and retail prices of basic goods is alarming and warrants immediate attention. We cannot ignore the plight of our farmers who

are struggling to make ends meet, nor can we turn a blind eye on the burden placed on consumers,” he added.

During the meeting, Jayson Cainglet of the Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura informed Romualdez that farmgate prices of rice, poultry, pork and onions have remained the same in the past three months, and therefore retail prices should not have gone up.

Romualdez assured producers and retailers that the House would look into the discrepancy. He committed to thoroughly review existing laws “to protect the interest of both consumers and producers, and prevent profiteering.”

He urged stakeholders, including government agencies, industry representatives and consumer advocacy groups to participate in the investigation and contribute to the formulation of effective policy interventions.

Romualdez said the review should identify and address loopholes that contribute to profiteering and unfair pricing practices within the supply chain.

As the process of instituting reforms to ensure stable supply and affordable prices, Romualdez said the House remains committed to supporting safety nets, even expanding them, to protect vulnerable sectors from the effects of rising food prices.

GMO crops

Meanwhile, environmental group Greenpeace lauded a ruling of the Court of Appeals (CA) prohibiting commercial propagation and activities relating to genetically modified crops, including the Bt eggplant and the Golden Rice.

Greenpeace Southeast Asia campaigner Wilhelmina Pelegrina said the CA ruling was a people’s victory.

“This decision is a monumental win for Filipino farmers and people who have, for decades, stood up against genetically modified crops. Greenpeace commends this decision and is honored to be part of the movement that supported the work of Filipino farmers, who will ultimately benefit from the court ruling,” Pelegrina said.

In a 143-page decision promulgated on April 17, the CA’s Fourth Division stopped the field-testing and use as well as importation of genetically modified organisms (GMO) until strengthened risk assessment and monitoring procedures are put in place.

“The Appellate Court essentially put a moratorium on these genetically modified crops. The CA has upheld the constitutional rights of the Filipinos and the government’s duty to serve the interests of the people than of agrochemical companies,” Pelegrina said.

She said Greenpeace has constantly noted that genetically modified crops have been approved in the Philippines despite the lack of adequate data on safety assessments from its proponents.

These crops were never proven to be safe and hindered the progress of a climate-resilient ecological agriculture, which keeps the control of seeds on our farmers, she said.

Pelegrina said the Department of Agriculture should promote sustainable agricultural solutions that would prioritize nutrition, provide ample resources for farmers and ensure resiliency as the country is reeling from the worsening impacts of a climate crisis.

In stopping the commercial propagation of Golden Rice and Bt eggplant, the CA cited potential risks to the environment and public health.

The appellate court granted a writ of kalikasan to the Magsasaka at Siyentipiko para sa Pag-unlad Agrikultura, Greenpeace Southeast Asia-Philippines and other concerned groups. – **Bella Cariaso**

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/04/25/2350237/house-probe-farmgate-retail-prices-gap>

BUSINESS WORLD:

Fish import quota for Q4 set at 25,000 MT

April 24, 2024 | 8:32 pm



The

Department of Agriculture (DA) approved the importation of 35,000 metric tons (MT) of frozen fish for wet markets in the fourth quarter. — PHILIPPINESTAR/ WALTER BOLLOZOS

THE Department of Agriculture said it will take in applications to import 25,000 metric tons (MT) of frozen small pelagic fish for wet markets in the fourth quarter.

In Memorandum Order No. 17, the DA outlined the procedures for obtaining sanitary and phytosanitary import clearances (SPSICs) for fish imports arriving no later than Jan. 15, 2025.

The DA said that at least 80%, or 20,000 MT, of the import allocation will go to commercial fishing companies, while the remaining 20%, or 5,000 MT, will be awarded to fisheries associations or cooperatives.

“The SPS Import Clearance under Certificate of Necessity to Import (CNI) 25,000 MT shall be issued on Sept. 1, 2024 until Nov. 30, 2024 and the fish to be imported must arrive no later than Jan. 15 of the succeeding year,” the DA said.

It said an initial volume of 112 MT will be awarded to commercial fishing companies, equivalent to four containers.

“The remaining volume shall be distributed proportionately based on their percentage share from the total volume of fish landings for the past three years immediately preceding an import period,” the DA said.

For fisheries associations, the 20% quota will be allocated based on the percentage of arrivals they delivered before the import period.

“An initial volume of 56 MT which is equivalent to two containers will be distributed to all qualified associations/ cooperatives in this period,” it added.

The DA also instructed the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) to report and consolidate all imports.

“The importer is to source supply from respectable sources not derived from (illegal, unreported, and unregulated) fishing,” it said.

In addition, BFAR should also encourage importers to avoid releases to the market that compete with the domestic catch.

“Importers shall submit their complete and updated documentary requirements within seven working days from the issuance of the CNI,” the DA added. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/04/24/590661/fish-import-quota-for-q4-set-at-25000-mt/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

PHL dairy imports drop 17% in 2023 — FAO

April 24, 2024 | 8:39 pm

PHILIPPINE DAIRY imports declined to 2.32 million metric tons (MT) milk equivalent in 2023 due to a drop in exports from major dairy producing countries, the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said.

In a report, the FAO said that imports declined 17.7% from 2.81 million MT a year earlier.

It added that dairy importing economies like China, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Japan saw significant volume drops.

It said the decline in global dairy exports was led by the US, whose shipments fell to 12.56 million MT, down 11.3% from a year earlier.

“Several other large producers, such as Australia, Türkiye, and Argentina, reported significant export drops, while New Zealand and the European Union gained the most,” the FAO said.

Imports of skim milk powder to the Philippines also declined due to higher prices.

“Currency depreciations induced some countries to lower (skim milk powder) purchases, such as the Philippines, where imports reached an eight-year low in 2023,” the report added.

Skim milk powder is mainly used in condensed milk, evaporated milk and other dairy products.

The Philippines can meet less than 1% of its milk demand from domestic production, with the rest needing to be imported.

In 2023, Philippine dairy production was 17,850 MT, or about 0.8% of milk consumption of 1.94 million MT. The dairy cow herd was 75,798 head in 2023.

The government is aiming to increase dairy production to 80 million liters of milk per year by 2028. —
Adrian H. Halili

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/>

BUSINESS WORLD:

PhilRice reviewing response to Golden Rice court ruling

April 24, 2024 | 8:46 pm



PHILSTAR FILE PHOTO

THE Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) said it will review its courses of action after a Court of Appeals (CA) ruling revoking the biosafety permit of Golden Rice.

“We acknowledge the Court of Appeals’ decision regarding the Writ of Kalikasan proceedings against Golden Rice, and we are reviewing the implications of this to prepare our response,” PhilRice Executive Director John C. de Leon said in a statement.

Last week, the CA canceled the biosafety permits for the commercial propagation of Golden Rice, as well as those for Bt Eggplant, due to possible risk to the environment and public health.

In a decision dated April 17, the court stopped field testing and use of the crops. Imports were also halted until all measures are taken to ensure they are safe.

The biosafety permit for Golden Rice’s commercial propagation was granted by the Bureau of Plant Industry in July 2021.

The genetically modified crop is intended to help address vitamin A deficiency (VAD).

“It has the potential to double the vitamin A intake of children in the lowest 40% of the income distribution,” PhilRice added.

Golden Rice, whose Philippine branding is Malusog Rice, was developed with enhanced levels of beta-carotene to help tackle VAD.

It has received food safety approvals from regulators in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the US.

PhilRice runs the project in partnership with the International Rice Research Institute. — **Adrian H. Halili**

<https://www.bworldonline.com/economy/2024/04/24/590659/philrice-reviewing-response-to-golden-rice-court-ruling/>

Speaker to lead investigation on retail, farmgate price gap

By Rio N. Araja April 25, 2024, 12:40 am

Speaker Martin Romualdez on Wednesday said he would spearhead an investigation in aid of legislation into the widening gap between farmgate and retail prices of rice and other basic goods once the House of Representatives resumes its session on Monday.

Romualdez and House Deputy Majority Leader Rep. Erwin Tulfo of ACT-CIS party-list Rep. Erwin Tulfo recently met with representatives of producers, retailers and grocery stores, who denied making any substantial price changes.

“I would ask Quezon Rep. Mark Enverga, committee on agriculture chairman, to immediately start the ball rolling for an investigation into the disconnect between farmgate and retail prices of basic goods,” said Romualdez.

“The discrepancy between farmgate and retail prices of basic goods is alarming and warrants immediate attention. We cannot ignore the plight of our farmers who are struggling to make ends meet, nor can we turn a blind eye to the burden placed on consumers,” the House Speaker added.

During their meeting, Jayson Cainglet of Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura (Sinag) informed Romualdez that the farmgate prices of rice, poultry, pork and onions have been maintained in the past three months, so there should be no increase in their prices.

Romualdez assured the producers and retailers that Congress would look into the price discrepancy in the exercise of its oversight function as he also committed to conduct a thorough review of existing laws to protect the interest of both consumers and producers and deter profiteering.

“It is imperative that we conduct a comprehensive review of our laws to ensure that they effectively safeguard the interests of our farmers and consumers. We must take proactive measures to prevent profiteering and promote a fair and transparent trading environment,” the Speaker said.

Romualdez called on all stakeholders, including government agencies, industry representatives and consumer advocacy groups, to actively participate in the probe and contribute to the formulation of effective policy interventions.

The review aims to identify and address loopholes that may contribute to profiteering and unfair pricing practices within the supply chain, he noted.

“We want to make sure that all the stakeholders in whatever industry or sectors are viable, if they are in the business side of it, so that it becomes sustainable so that we can continue delivering basic goods and services to the consumers at sustainable, affordable prices,” Romualdez stressed.

The Leyte representative said the House remains committed to supporting safety nets and even expanding them to cushion the impact of the rising food prices on the most vulnerable sectors of society.

Editor’s Note: This is an updated article. Originally posted with the headline Romualdez to lead House probe on widening gap between farmgate, retail prices of rice

<https://manilastandard.net/news/314439220/romualdez-to-lead-house-probe-on-widening-gap-between-farmgate-retail-prices-of-rice.html>

Managing our fisheries, marine environment key to food security

By Ray S. Eñano April 24, 2024, 8:10 pm

“But implementing the vessel monitoring system, or VMS, backfired amid accusations that it was tainted with corruption and overpricing.”

An archipelago like the Philippines has its hands full in scouring the seas surrounding it. The waters of the Pacific Ocean in the east, West Philippine Sea, and the Sulu Sea and Celebes Sea in the south are so vast and rich in marine resources that they pose an enormous challenge to monitor them.

The Philippines needs an effective technology to actively monitor the marine environment and ensure its long term sustainability and legal use.

For starters, the seas around the Philippines are a critical source of food. Each and every vessel roaming our waters has to be surveilled to discourage overfishing and protect the marine environment.

Tracking vessel ownership operators and their crew, for instance, will give fishing authorities a lead in their job and help in the preservation of aquatic environment dynamics. It will also determine if all players in the open seas are complying with international, regional and local regulations.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. earlier had sensed the critical role of the Department of Agriculture (DA) and Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) in addressing the problems on illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUUF) fishing.

As the DA chief last year, Mr. Marcos ordered to the Department of DA and BFAR to implement Fisheries Administrative Order (FAO) No. 266, which requires commercial fishing boats to install vessel monitoring devices that could track them and serve as the mechanism to report their catch.

But implementing the vessel monitoring system, or VMS, backfired amid accusations that it was tainted with corruption and overpricing.

Sure enough, the Office of the Ombudsman ordered the dismissal from service of BFAR National Director Demosthenes R. Escoto over his involvement in the allegedly anomalous awarding of a P2-billion contract for the VMS project in 2018.

In a 22-page decision written by Graft Investigation and Prosecution Officer I Cezar M. Tirol II and approved by Ombudsman Samuel R. Martires, the anti-graft body found Escoto guilty of grave misconduct. Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. appointed career official Isidro Velayo Jr. as officer-in-charge of BFAR following the ruling.

The dismissal order on Escoto could lead to the cancellation of his civil service eligibility, forfeiture of retirement benefits, perpetual disqualification to hold public office and prohibition from taking civil service examinations.

If the dismissal cannot be executed due to separation from service, it will be converted into a fine equivalent to one year's salary for the respondent. This fine is payable to the Ombudsman and may be deducted from the respondent's retirement benefits, accrued leave credits, or any other receivables from his office.

The administrative case against Escoto originated from his actions as chairman of the BFAR's Bids and Awards Committee. The Ombudsman ruled that there was "substantial evidence that Escoto committed grave misconduct and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service."

The anti-graft body said Escoto's actions as BAC chair culminated in the award of a "very favorable contract" to United Kingdom-based SRT Marine Systems Solutions Ltd.

SRT-UK obtained the contract to supply technology and equipment for the Integrated Marine Environment Monitoring System Project Phase 1, also known as the PHILO Project.

The PHILO Project aimed to enhance marine resource protection and combat illegal fishing by instituting VMS for commercial vessels above 30 gross tons operating within the country's exclusive economic zone, including procurement of transmitters and transceivers.

The project was initially set to be funded through a loan from the French government, with a contracted budget of P1.6 billion, requiring bidders to either be French or part of a joint venture with a French entity.

In 2017, SRT-France, a subsidiary of SRT-UK, was declared the winning bidder by the DA-BFAR. However, the French government later disqualified it due to its British ownership.

It turned out that SRT-France was only a month-old company with no manufacturing or engineering facilities in France, causing the collapse of the French loan agreement.

In the following 2018 bidding, SRT-UK won the contract, although the project's budget increased to P2.09 billion, financed locally.

The Ombudsman said Escoto, while in the exercise of his official function as BAC chair, "clearly gave unwarranted benefit or advantage to SRT-France and SRT- UK."

"Although the award of the contract to SRT-France was cancelled, the unwarranted benefit they gave to SRT-France to participate in the bid and to be post-qualified despite its ineligibility constitutes a willful violation of the law and established rule," the Ombudsman said.

The Ombudsman noted that instead of procuring the originally planned 3,736 units of VMS transceivers, Escoto obligated the government to purchase 5,000 units.

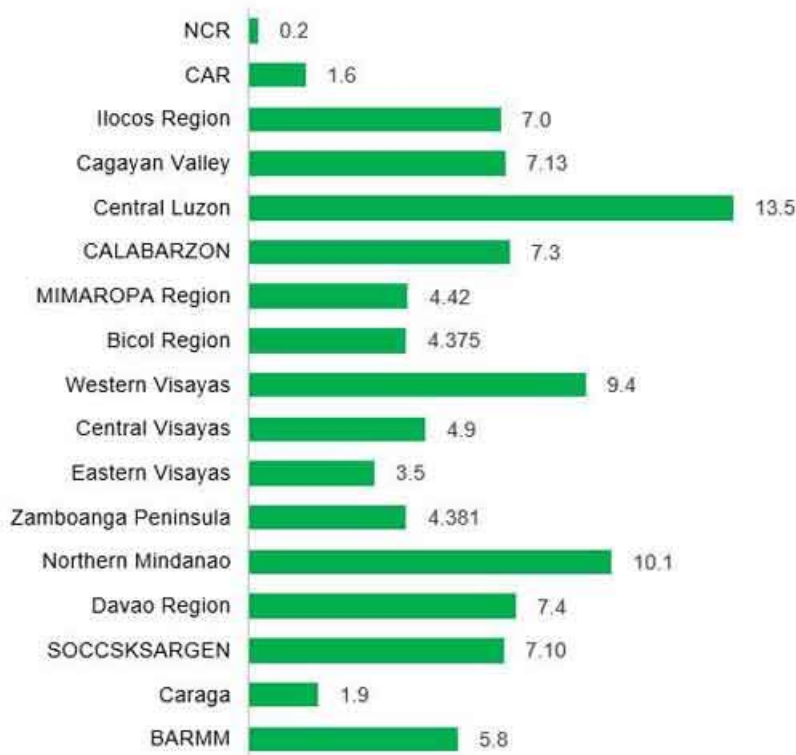
"This is a contractual obligation that is grossly disadvantageous to the government and unreasonably beneficial to SRT-UK," it said.

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<https://manilastandard.net/business/314439521/managing-our-fisheries-marine-environment-key-to-food-security.html>

Central Luzon leads agri, fishery output *— PSA*

Figure 1. Percent Distribution of Value of Production in Agriculture and Fisheries at Constant 2018 Prices by Region, 2023



Note: NCR includes fisheries data only.

Source: Philippine Statistics Authority

By Manila Standard April 24, 2024, 7:25 pm

Central Luzon emerged as the top contributor to the Philippines' value of production in agriculture and fisheries in 2023, accounting for 13.5 percent of the total at constant 2018 prices, data from the Philippine Statistics Authority showed Wednesday.

It said the national value reached P1.76 trillion.

Northern Mindanao and Western Visayas followed Central Luzon with shares of 10.1 percent and 9.4 percent, respectively.

Central Visayas, meanwhile, posted the fastest annual growth in the sector at 7.6 percent. MIMAROPA Region and Eastern Visayas followed at 7.0 percent and 3.4 percent, respectively.

Bicol Region registered the steepest decline in the value of agricultural and fishery production at 7.6 percent. Western Visayas and SOCCSKSARGEN also saw reductions of 5.7 percent and 4.3 percent, respectively.

The total value of crop production reached P1.00 trillion in 2023.

Northern Mindanao held the top spot with a share of 11.7 percent, followed by Cagayan Valley and Central Luzon at 10.6 percent and 9.7 percent, respectively. Central Visayas recorded the highest annual growth in crop production at 24.3 percent.

Livestock production, valued at P0.26 trillion, was led by CALABARZON (13.1 percent), Central Visayas (12.7 percent), and Northern Mindanao (11.3 percent). Central Luzon exhibited the highest year-on-year growth at 30.0 percent, followed by MIMAROPA Region (16.9 percent), Ilocos Region (14.1 percent), and CALABARZON (12.2 percent).

Poultry production, also valued at P0.26 trillion, was dominated by Central Luzon (27.0 percent), CALABARZON (19.3 percent), and Northern Mindanao (9.5 percent). Eastern Visayas (24.2 percent), BARMM (11.24 percent), and MIMAROPA Region (11.19 percent) saw the most significant annual increases.

The total value of fisheries production amounted to P0.24 trillion. Central Luzon again emerged as a leader, contributing 18.1 percent. MIMAROPA Region (28.9 percent), NCR (19.3 percent), and Caraga (6.3 percent) registered the highest annual growth in fisheries output.

<https://manilastandard.net/business/314439497/central-luzon-leads-agri-fishery-output-psa.html>

FFCCCII supports gov't move to ease agricultural imports to stabilize food prices

By Manila Standard April 24, 2024, 6:45 pm

The Federation of Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Inc. (FFCCCII), expressed support for President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr.'s decision to ease agricultural imports.

FFCCCII president Dr. Cecilio Pedro said these measures would ensure affordable food prices and stabilize inflation. He emphasized the need for such actions to be temporary, urging the government to focus on long-term reforms and modernization initiatives to enhance agriculture and uplift the livelihoods of local farmers and fishermen.

FFCCCII also expressed support to Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel's leadership and reform initiatives to improve agriculture productivity and growth in the country.

President Marcos's directive, outlined in Administrative Order No. 20 dated April 18, aims to remove non-tariff barriers and streamline administrative procedures related to agricultural imports. It is intended to address the constraints that contribute to increased importation costs and limited farm goods supply, ultimately leading to higher domestic prices of agricultural commodities.

The order, effective immediately, includes directives on the processing and issuance of sanitary and phytosanitary import clearances, guidelines for sugar and fishery product importation and instructions to expedite the processing of agricultural imports.

A surveillance team will be formed to monitor importation and distribution, prevent illegal practices, and ensure the effective implementation of the order.

The Department of Agriculture said it is investigating the cause of the recent price movements, while also noting a decrease in the forecast for rice importation.

Tiu-Laurel advocates for increased budget allocation in 2025 to support agriculture sector plans, focusing on irrigation systems, modernization, and post-harvest improvements.

Despite challenges, the government remains committed to addressing food security concerns and supporting initiatives to stabilize prices and improve agricultural productivity for the benefit of all Filipinos.

<https://manilastandard.net/binondo/314439375/ffccii-supports-govt-move-to-ease-agricultural-imports-to-stabilize-food-prices.html>

THE MANILA TIMES

CLSU pitches 15 agri-based technologies

By [Jerry M. Hernandez](#) April 25, 2024

FIFTEEN agri-based technologies were pitched by Central Luzon State University's (CLSU) Agriculture and Food Technology Business Incubator during the 2024 Annual Launch of Knowledge Products for Adoption and Commercialization (ALOK).

ALOK is a platform for innovation, collaboration and development which fosters a dynamic ecosystem for advancing agricultural and entrepreneurial endeavors in the country.

Pitched agri-based inventions were nine technologies in the food cluster and six in the nonfood cluster developed by the consortium member institutions of the Regional Agri-Aqua Innovation System Enhancement (Raise) Program Batch 2 of the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCAARRD) of the Department of Science and Technology.

Among the food cluster are Aglibut sweet tamarind ice cream, process of producing rough puff pastry with rabbit filling, composition of rabbit canned meatloaf, method of preparing instant mushroom noodles, Tibig leaf extract-based meat tenderizer, Kardeli, process of making eggplant luffa longanisa, method of preparing mushroom bulgogi and composition of nutri-chips from mushroom, seaweeds and malunggay leaves.

Under the nonfood cluster were the mechanized bamboo stick polisher, method of producing multi-nutrient lick block as feed supplement for ruminants, production, field-testing and commercialization of boton, mechanical cacao sheller with winnowing mechanism, multipurpose seeder and multi-crop reduce till planter.

"The 2024 ALOK Annual Regional Pitching activity is a platform to present the technologies to potential investors to facilitate commercialization," said CLSU President Evaristo Abella.

Edgar Orden, Central Luzon Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development consortium director, and

CLSU vice president for research and extension, emphasized the crucial role of commercialization in driving the development of innovative products, urging everyone to be aware of it to attract potential investors to support these creative ventures.

The program also featured an open forum where judges shared their observations and reminders for the improvement of the presenters' pitches.

One of the judges was the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Provincial Director Richard Simangan, who praised the presenters, particularly for identifying their expected market and the cost of production as a basis for cooperators and other potential adopters.

"DTI would always advocate that whenever you have projects or proposals, the critical aspect of the business would be the market," Simangan added.

Cooperators like Amante Esguerra of Citrus Alley and Sheila Melissa Maniego of BiliNE expressed interest in the mechanized bamboo stick polisher of President Ramon Magsaysay State University.

During the program, Gella Patria Abella of CLSU was declared 1st in Best Presenter, followed by Marielle Gamboa of Bulacan Agricultural State College in 2nd place while Ma. Luz Cabatan of Aurora State College of Technology and Kristine Pascual of the Philippine Rice Research Institute shared the 3rd spot.

The 2024 ALOK with the theme "Translating AANR Innovation to Viable Enterprises" is an initiative under the Raise Program in Central Luzon of PCAARRD. It was the first pitching activity conducted among seven participating regions.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/04/25/regions/clsu-pitches-15-agri-based-technologies/1943163>

THE MANILA TIMES

KSK equips farmers with modern techniques

By [The Manila Times](#) April 25, 2024

JAYSON Garcia and Juanito de la Cruz from Pampanga have benefited from the training provided by the SM Foundation's Kabalikat sa Kabuhayan (KSK) to farmers to increase their crop yield and income.

"Before, it was a challenge to farm. What I knew was the old way of farming — just plant and wait for it to produce a yield," Garcia said in Filipino.

"It was like relying on chance before, and sometimes you get good yield and you get good earnings. But sometimes, there is almost none," he added.



Jayson Garcia (left) and Juanito de la Cruz have benefited from the training provided by the SM Foundation's Kabalikat sa Kabuhayan to increase their yields. SM FOUNDATION PHOTO

When Garcia learned that the SM Foundation was conducting training focused on high-value crop cultivation, he knew this was the breakthrough he needed to update his farming techniques.

During the training, Garcia learned a range of farming techniques including selecting the best seeds and caring for them, as well as strategic planting schedules. He was also introduced to innovative methods for utilizing the space in his rice field, allowing him to cultivate a diverse range of vegetables and fruits.

Aside from modern agricultural strategies, the Pampanga-based farmer also said that he gained invaluable lessons in business and marketing from his time at KSK. He added that he has since discovered alternative sales channels that have enabled him to enhance his earning potential while extending fair prices to customers.

"Before joining KSK, the traders and other buyers took my harvests from my home. But I learned that I can distribute and sell my own harvest. I also managed to sell online," he said in Filipino.

Equipped with new knowledge from KSK, Garcia gained more confidence to expand his farm. And he now earns more than P25,000 a month.

Garcia's main crop is rice while a variety of vegetables — including lemongrass, malunggay and madre de cacao — are sold online to small businesses that process them into value-added products.

KSK has further opened Garcia's interest in attending other seminars that will introduce him to more good agricultural practices, which he actively shares with his fellow farmers in Pampanga.

Pursuing modern farming

Sharing the same story of progress is de la Cruz, another KSK-trained farmer from Pampanga. Despite his age, he actively pursued and adopted modern farming techniques.

De la Cruz cited the importance of farmers adapting to new practices. From a modest monthly income of P10,000, de la Cruz experienced a surge in his earnings, notably from his participation in the weekend market at SM City Clark in Pampanga, yielding around P30,000 weekly.

"Whatever skills in farming that were passed on to me are what I usually do before. But I know that was not enough, especially

during these times. So, there is a need for us to be open to new ways of farming so we can be updated on the demands of the current times — that is what KSK taught me," he said in Filipino.

SM Foundation said its KSK program has changed the lives of roughly 30,000 Filipino farmers. Through its initiatives, farmers who once lost hope have embraced modern farming techniques, enabling them to adapt to the evolving agricultural landscape.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/04/25/business/agribusiness/ksk-equips-farmers-with-modern-techniques/1943125>

THE MANILA TIMES

PHilMech backs RCEF extension

By [Leander C. Domingo](#) April 25, 2024

THE Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (PHilMech) supports the call of Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. to extend the effectivity of the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF).

PHilMech Director Dionisio Alvindia said the agency as a whole sees the need to extend RCEF by another six years "so that more farmers can become beneficiaries of farm machines."

Alvindia also noted that the distribution of farm machines to qualified farmers cooperatives and associations (FCAs), and local government units (LGUs) under the fund's Mechanization Program from 2019 to 2024 can cover only up to 20 percent of rice farms nationwide.

"The RCEF-Mechanization Program from 2019 to 2024 cannot cover even half of rice farms nationwide, hence we at PHilMech back the pronouncement of Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel [Jr.] to extend RCEF," he said.

Alvindia also noted that as for the period, "we believe that extending RCEF for another six years will be adequate."

In his call for the extension of RCEF, Tiu Laurel mentioned that tariff collections from imported rice reached P29 billion in 2023, indicating a P19 billion excess over the P10 billion allocated for RCEF annually.

In 2022, tariff collections from imported rice reached P22 billion, he said.

Sen. Cynthia Villar, chairman of the Senate Committee on Food and Agriculture, also supports the extension of RCEF by another six years and with P20 billion funding annually.

Villar authored Republic Act (RA) 11203, or the Rice Tariffication Law, that provides that P10 billion of the tariffs collected from imported rice are allocated for RCEF.

Of this amount, P5 billion is for the distribution of farm machines, P3 billion for the distribution of high-yielding rice seeds, P1 billion for credit support, and P1 billion for training and capacitating of rice farmers.

Alvindia affirmed that the senator's intention to extend RCEF with bigger funding will have a significant impact on the country's rice sector, especially for smallholder farmers of the staple.

"Both Senator Villar and Secretary [Tiu] Laurel have good intentions in seeking to extend RCEF, as this will result in improved competitiveness of the country's rice sector and enhancement of the productivity of smallholder rice farmers," he added.

Alvindia said PHilMech is ready to continue its mandate under RA 11203, as it was able to distribute 26,412 units of various farm equipment under RCEF from the start of distribution activities from mid-2020 to March 3, 2024.

He added that PHilMech also conducted training and capacitating activities for the recipients of the RCEF-Mechanization Program.

"Learning to properly operate and maintain the farm machines is equally crucial as PHilMech wants the farm machines distributed to FCAs and LGUs to serve them for many years and benefit the next generation of farmers who are younger," Alvindia said.

He also added that the extension of RCEF, including the mechanization component, "can attract more young people into farming which will help ensure the country's food security over the long term."

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/04/25/business/agribusiness/philmech-backs-rcef-extension/1943122>

THE MANILA TIMES

Aparri shifting to digital agriculture

By [Leander C. Domingo](#) April 25, 2024

SOME 30 farmer-members of the Dodan-Gaddang Irrigators Association (DGIA) in Aparri, Cagayan, have begun their journey to adopting digital agriculture.

Aileen Shaye Fontanilla of the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) at the Regional Training Center in Cagayan Valley said DGIA farmer-members have gone through the first phase of the Digital Farmers Program (DFP) Farm Learn program to become future-ready farmers.

Fontanilla said the training conducted in Barangay Dodan in Aparri from April 17-19 introduced the participants to basic and advanced agriculture applications (apps) and information communication technology (ICT) tools, social media marketing and e-commerce platforms.

"They also learned about the applications and ICT tools through hands-on activities and group work," she said.

In the training, one of the activities was the 24-hour activity profile where participants identified their productive roles and community work daily, taking into account gender.

"This gender analysis tool is used to understand the community where the participants belong to and whether the training will impact their various familial and community roles," Fontanilla said.

The ATI said this training was made possible with the full and active support of the local government of Aparri led by Mayor Bryan Dale Chan and Marites Robinion, Aparri municipal agriculturist, and the commitment of the DGIA headed by association president Eddie Malazzab.

One of the participants, Lorenza Cabalzo, said it was a great joy for her to attend this three-day training as "I was able to learn many things."

Cabalzo said she learned to access the internet, Facebook, Google, YouTube and many other social media platforms, and agri apps like Payong Pagasa.

Fontanilla said DFP is about making farmers adapt to Agriculture 4.0 and "to prepare Filipino farmers for the digitalization of the agriculture sector."

She noted that in its third year, the DFP follows Phases 1 and 2 with the first phase featuring basic and advanced topics on digital agriculture.

Fontanilla said Phase 2 will take place in May with the same participants in Phase 1, adding that the second phase covers more advanced agricultural apps and ICT tools along with agricultural drone technology.

Also, DFP Farm Connect, which aims to connect farmers to drone service providers and credit programs, will follow in June, she said.

Fontanilla explained that the DFP Farm Learn program focuses on organized farm groups such as the DGIA to encourage knowledge-sharing and learning within their association.

ATI said DGIA is one of its way to becoming one of the first farmer organizations in Region 2 (Cagayan Valley) to apply digital agriculture in their farming practices.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/04/25/business/agribusiness/aparri-shifting-to-digital-agriculture/1943118>

THE MANILA TIMES

NFRDI pushes fish cage culture

By Conrad M. Cariño April 18, 2024

A GROUP of fishers in Batangas has adopted cage culture technology developed by the National Fisheries Research and Development Institute (NFRDI) to successfully grow maliputo (giant trevally).

NFRDI is an agency under the Department of Agriculture (DA).

The NFRDI, through its Freshwater Fisheries Research and Development Center (FFRDC), serves as a central breeding facility for freshwater ornamental fish and a prime research center for

maliputo, a delectable and most popular Indigenous migratory fish and other nontraditional species. Maliputo thrives in Taal Lake.

"As a prime research center, the NFRDI-Freshwater Fisheries Research and Development Center in Butong, Taal, Batangas, pioneered the captive breeding [of] maliputo and has since then been conducting training activities to transfer the technology to interested fish farmers," it said.

From about 7,500 maliputo fingerlings distributed a year ago to 15 fishers from the Samahan ng Magmamaliputo ng Lemery, the fishers under the Samahan ng Magmamaliputo ng Lemery who used the cage culture developed by the NFRDI, partially harvested more than 900 kilos of the Indigenous fish in March. They were provided with around 7,500 maliputo fingerlings a year ago.

The maliputo harvest recorded an 83-percent survival rate and had an average body weight of 357 grams, according to the data gathered by the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist of Batangas during a harvest conducted in March.

In August and September 2023, the NFRDI said a total harvest of 1.33 metric tons of maliputo was made through an initiative that also involved the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), the local government of Talisay and project cooperators. BFAR is an agency under the DA.

The harvested maliputo had an average body weight of 1.1 kilogram, and it achieved a survival rate of 52 percent during a 14-month culture period. The harvest was sold for P500 per kilo.

Rodrigo Bautista Jr., Batangas provincial agriculturist, assured assistance for the fishing sector of Batangas as part of the Health, Education, Livelihood and Protection of Life, Environment and Properties Program of the provincial government.

"We, in our office, are pleased with the initial success of this project. You can expect that we will further strengthen the

agriculture sector in the province of Batangas, especially the fisheries sector. Assistance for our fisherfolk will not stop here and will further continue for the progress of each individual through collaborative efforts with other agencies," he said.

Brynne Mamauag, a fisherfolk and one of the program beneficiaries, was grateful for the assistance provided to them.

"We, in our organization, are grateful for the projects you have provided us, which have been helpful for us. Rest assured, we will continue to sustain and expand this project," he said.

For its part, the NFRDI said it will continue supporting the maliputo cage culture and expanding the application of the technology to more areas.

"We at the NFRDI are delighted because the technology on the 'grow out culture' of maliputo has advanced further. We initiated the study on maliputo breeding, and our goal is to further increase its population to supply cages and ponds. Since this can provide a good livelihood for our fisherfolk, NFRDI is here to serve as a venue for training and other livelihood projects," Maria Theresa Mutia of the NFRDI said.

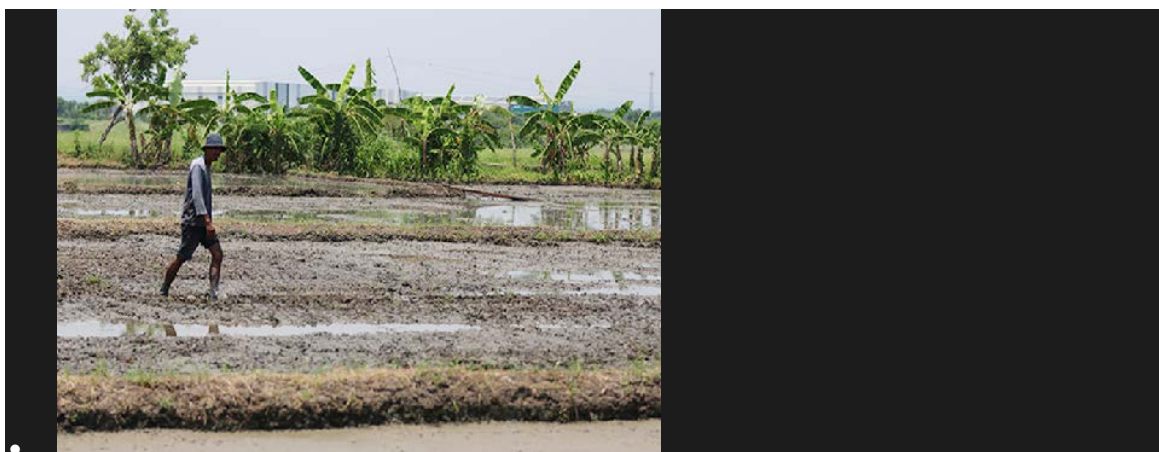
<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/04/18/business/agribusiness/nfrdi-pushes-fish-cage-culture/1942023>

BUSINESS MIRROR

Think tank: growth in 2024 likely below 6-7%

- Cai U. Ordinario

- April 25, 2024



- File photo; In Cavite, an industrial landscape looms in the background as a rice farmer walks across a nearly dried-up rice paddy, illustrating the challenges posed by industrial encroachment and climate change on agriculture. Efforts are under way to develop an El Niño mitigation strategy to address these challenges.
- THE country's economic growth will likely disappoint given the El Niño phenomenon and rising inflation, according to analysts of the US-based Global Source Partners think tank.
- In an economic brief, Global Source Partners analysts Diwa Guinigundo and Wilhelmina Manalac said the country's growth may be lower than the 6 to 7 percent full-year target range.
- This was based on their analysis of the results of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) latest Business and Consumer Expectation surveys. The results of these surveys, the analysts said, are good indicators to determine the country's national output.
- "Abstracting from the results of the BSP surveys of both business and consumer respondents, the first quarter is likely to sustain positive economy growth which may not necessarily approximate the official target of 6-7 percent at least for Q1 2024 due to the downside risks to economic growth, including the prolonged dry spell and the rising trend in inflation," the analysts said.
- They noted that the Confidence Index (CI) of consumers was less negative at -10.9 percent in the first quarter of 2024 from -19 percent in the fourth quarter of 2023.

This was largely due, they said, to expectations of additional and higher income; availability of more jobs and permanent employment; and additional working family members. The data, the analysts also pointed out, showed the country's business sentiment was less optimistic in the first quarter of 2024 as the Confidence Index (CI) of 33.1 percent dropped by 2.8 percentage points (ppts) from 35.9 percent in the last quarter of 2023.

- The analysts said the results were not surprising, however, as the previous BES reported that businesses expected some slowdown in the first quarter of 2024.
- “Consumption spending may receive an additional boost from better consumer sentiment but business’s less optimistic expectations may partially hold it back,” the analysts said.
- **Balisacan optimistic**
- Earlier, Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Arsenio M. Balisacan said higher-for-longer interest rates and current geopolitical risks that threaten to cause a spike in oil and food prices are not enough reasons for the national government to give up on its growth targets this year.
- The country’s chief economist noted the optimism of international observers who still believe the Philippine economy will grow around 6 percent or better and be among the fastest-growing economies in Asia this year.
- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecast that the country’s GDP will breach 6 percent this year and next year. The World Bank, meanwhile, expects Philippine GDP to grow 5.9 percent annually between 2024 and 2026. (*See: www.businessmirror.com.ph/2024/04/24/government-keeping-growth-goals-despite-risks/*).
- Earlier, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) said it could delay any rate cuts to the first quarter of 2025, pending improvements in the country’s economic performance, including cooler inflation. (*See: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/04/09/inflation-may-prompt-rate-cuts-delay-to-2025/>*)
- However, Balisacan said the hawkish stance of the Monetary Board is a given and has already been considered in the government’s growth assumptions.
- The National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) Secretary also said rate cuts are not expected anytime soon as inflation remained high.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/04/25/think-tank-growth-in-2024-likely-below-6-7/>

BUSINESS MIRROR

103 LGUs have declared state of calamity on El Niño

- Samuel Medenilla
- April 25, 2024

AS the effect of El Niño reached its peak this month, a total of 103 local government units (LGU) have now declared a State of Calamity due to droughts.

In a televised interview with PTV on Wednesday, Task Force El Niño spokesperson Jose “Joey” M. Villarama II disclosed the list includes cities, municipalities and provinces.

The list includes the five provinces which suffered from the brunt of El Niño, namely, Occidental Mindoro, Antique, Sultan Kudarat, Basilan and Maguindanao del Sur.

“Actually, the President mentioned yesterday almost the entire Philippines has been affected, but in varying degrees. That is why the focus of the government aid depends on the need of each province,” Villarama said.

LGUs which declared a State of Calamity can tap their calamity funds to mitigate the effects of disasters, including El Niño-induced droughts.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) reported El Niño has thus far caused P3.94 billion worth of damage to 66,000 hectares of agricultural lands.

“But I would like to emphasize 78 percent of the 66,000 hectares have a chance of recovery or salvageable – this means [that] whatever the state of the crops, even if they are dried out or shrivelled, 78 percent of the crops can still be used,” Villarama said.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) earlier said the impact of El Niño is expected to peak this month, putting 48 provinces under drought status and 24 others under dry spell conditions.

Citing the forecast from Pagasa, DA expects the drought-affected areas will experience rains next month as the impact of El Niño starts to wane.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/04/25/103-1gus-have-declared-state-of-calamity-on-el-nino/>

BUSINESS MIRROR

House to look into ‘yawning gap’ in commodity prices

- Jovee Marie N. de la Cruz
- April 25, 2024
- Upon the resumption of session on Monday, Speaker Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez announced plans to lead an investigation into the “growing disparity” between farmgate and retail prices of essential commodities.
- Romualdez also called for the implementation of a review process that seeks to identify and rectify any loopholes that could encourage profiteering and unfair pricing practices within the supply chain.
- This decision follows a meeting with Romualdez, Deputy Majority Leader Erwin Tulfo, and representatives from the producer and retail sectors, where denials of substantial price changes were made.
- Romualdez said there is a need to immediately address the discrepancy between farmgate and retail prices, highlighting the plight of struggling farmers and the burden faced by consumers.
- “I would ask House Chairman Mark Enverga of the Committee on Agriculture to immediately start the ball rolling for an investigation into the disconnect between farmgate and retail prices of basic goods,” he said.
- “The discrepancy between farmgate and retail prices of basic goods is alarming and warrants immediate attention. We cannot ignore the plight of our farmers who are struggling to make ends meet, nor can we turn a blind eye to the burden placed on consumers.”
- During their meeting last Tuesday, Jayson Cainglet of Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura (SINAG) informed the Speaker that farmgate prices of rice, poultry, pork, and even onions have been maintained for the past three months, so there should be no spike in the prices of these items.
- Romualdez assured the producers and retailers that the House would investigate the price discrepancy in the exercise of its oversight function, as he also committed to conducting a thorough review of existing laws to protect the interests of both consumers and producers and deter profiteering.
- “It is imperative that we conduct a comprehensive review of our laws to ensure that they effectively safeguard the interests of our farmers and consumers. We must take proactive measures to prevent profiteering and promote a fair and transparent trading environment.”
- The Speaker urged all stakeholders, including government agencies, industry representatives, and consumer advocacy groups, to actively participate in the investigation and contribute to the formulation of effective policy interventions.

- “At the end of the day, we want to make sure that all the stakeholders in whatever industry or sector are viable, if they are on the business side of it, so that it becomes sustainable so that we can continue delivering basic goods and services to consumers at sustainable, affordable prices.”
- Meanwhile, as the process of instituting reforms to ensure a stable supply and affordable prices of food is being undertaken, Romualdez said the House remains committed to supporting safety nets—and even expanding them—to cushion vulnerable sectors of society from the effect of rising food prices.
- “We would have to work toward widening the scope of these interventions while we are simultaneously working on the long-term solution or target of rice self-sufficiency, efficiencies are generated, and there is less dependence on expensive, imported rice.”
- Romualdez cited, among others, the Cash and Rice Assistance (CARD) program—a joint initiative of the House and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)—that provides qualified indigents with rice, along with cash for other food items.
- Likewise, he noted the DSWD’s Assistance to Individuals in Crisis (AICS) Program, which provides medical assistance, burial, transportation, education, food, or financial assistance for other support services or needs of a poor person or family in crisis; as well as the Ayuda para sa Kapos ang Kita Program, designed for those classified in the “near poor” segment to prevent them from spiraling down below the poverty line.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/04/25/house-to-look-into-yawning-gap-in-commodity-prices/>

DA issues rules for importing fish for wet markets in Q4

- BusinessMirror
- April 24, 2024
- The Department of Agriculture (DA) released guidelines for the importation of small pelagic fish, including roundscad and mackerel, for wet markets in October to December.
- Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr. issued Memorandum Order (MO) 17 Series of 2024 which specified the guidelines in implementing Fisheries Administrative Order (FAO) 259, which covered importation during the closed fishing season.
- “To provide for a clear and efficient implementation of Fisheries Administrative Order No.259 (FAO 259) in relation to the issuance of SPS Import Clearance (SPSICs) for the Certificate of Necessity to Import (CNI) 25,000 MT [metric tons] of frozen small pelagic fish for wet markets for the period of October 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024 (the ‘CNI 25, 000 MT 2024’), these guidelines are hereby issued,” MO 17 read.
- “The SPS Import Clearance under CNI 25,000 MT shall be issued on September 1, 2024 until November 30, 2024 and the fish to be imported must arrive no later than January of the succeeding year.”
- Under the rules, 80 percent of the maximum importable volume (MIV) under a CNI will be allocated based on the fish landings of each of the commercial fishing operator who has a valid commercial fishing vessel and gear license. Commercial fishers must have also contributed to the production for the last three years and has actively participated during the last importation period.
- “For the volume of landings outside of PFDA [Philippine Fisheries Development Authority] ports, only twenty percent [20 percent] of said volume shall be credited for the computation of the allocation,” MO 17 read.
- For the fisheries associations or cooperatives, MO 17 indicated that 20 percent of the MIV will be based on their performance, taking into consideration the percentage arrival of fish imported from the immediately preceding importation period.
- “Only fisheries associations and cooperatives affected by the closed fishing season and have the financial capacity to import shall be qualified to participate in this importation period.”
- For importers belonging to the commercial fishing sector, an initial volume of 112 MT, which is equivalent to four containers will be distributed to qualified commercial fishers.

- “The remaining volume will be distributed disproportionately based on their percentage share from the total volume of fish landings for the past three years immediately preceding an importation period,” MO 17 read.
- Under the guidelines, the final volume of allocation for each importer will be the sum of the initially allocated volume (112 MT) and their allocated volume based on the percentage share in the total volume of landings.
- Laurel also said an initial volume of 56 MT which is equivalent to two containers will be distributed to all qualified associations/cooperatives in this importation period.
- “The remaining volume shall be distributed to the importers proportionately based on their percentage share from the total arrivals of imported fish under FAO 259 by association/cooperatives from the immediately preceding importation period.”
- MO 17 specified that the total volume for each importer will be the sum of the initial
- allocated volume (56 MT) and their allocated volume based on their proportionate share in the volume of arrivals.
- “The BFAR [Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources] shall encourage the importers to immediately trade the imported fish to ensure that it will not overlap with the local catch by the end of the closed fishing season.”
- Traders must ensure that imports were not derived from illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/04/24/da-issues-rules-for-importing-fish-for-wet-markets-in-q4/>

BUSINESS MIRROR

China's distressed pig farmers eye turnaround as herd shrinks

- Bloomberg News
- April 24, 2024
- Chinese farmers are keeping the fewest pigs for breeding since 2020, offering hopes that the industry is on the cusp of sustained profitability after years of losses.
- The so-called pork cycle in China, where prices are driven by mismatches in supply and demand, has implications beyond farm incomes. Analysts look to the cycle for clues on inflation because the nation's favorite meat is an important element in the basket of goods used to measure price changes. Weakness in livestock markets has contributed to the deflationary pressures that have weighed on consumer spending in recent months, posing risks to Beijing's target for economic growth.
- Still, the moves are insufficient to herald a major turning point, according to Zhu Zengyong, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences. Rather, the market has entered "an upward cycle on a smaller scale," he said.
- "The fall in the sow herd, though continuous, is still not enough to restart a major new pork cycle," said Zhu. "In addition, demand has been weak since the second half of last year due to the macroeconomic environment."
- China's pork cycle is just another variant of the booms and busts that characterize commodities markets and typically lasts three or four years. The current one began with a steep drop in prices in 2021 after farmers expanded their herds to capture better margins.
- Fewer pigs now mean prices have once again turned higher, which is starting to entice speculators into the market, according to Cofco Futures Co. Hog slaughters are expected to fall further, by more than 5 percent in both the second and third quarters compared to the previous year, the brokerage said in a note this week.
- **Green shoots**
- The central bank's target of 3 percent annual growth in the consumer price index has long looked out of reach. CPI grew just 0.1 percent in March, while prices actually fell from October through January, so any green shoots of recovery in food markets will be welcome, even if the improvement is driven by supply rather than demand.
- While sentiment has undoubtedly improved, there are still obstacles to overcome if the rebound in the hog industry is to be maintained.

- China's sluggish economy could cap any further gains in price if cash-strapped households continue to penny-pinch. Some farmers may be too quick to restock their herds.
- Others are holding back pigs that are already ready for slaughter, fattening them further for bigger profits, the agriculture ministry said last week. That's likely to swell supply in coming weeks and months.
- And the structure of the market has changed in recent years. Previously, steep losses would wipe out smallholders, which in turn would deepen supply deficits.
- But consolidation has reduced the number of small farms, leaving more capacity in the hands of larger companies that are better able to ride out unprofitable periods.
- "With production more concentrated with big corporate players, continuous losses will lead to some output cuts, but they won't be as dramatic," said Zhu.
- **On the wire**
- A wide swath of consumer-related data reinforces the view China's recovery is more uneven than recent headline GDP figures might suggest.
- China's private oil refiners could seek to buy more cargoes whose origin has been obscured as they prepare for fresh US sanctions on Iranian exports, ensuring crude continues to flow to the world's top importer.
- Gold's record-setting rally this year has puzzled market watchers as bullion has roared higher despite headwinds that should have held it back. With prices sagging this week, the explanation may lie in China.
- This was supposed to be the year that Vietnam reaped the benefits from one of its largest natural gas discoveries.
- Russia's focus on boosting natural gas exports to China is proving less lucrative for the nation than its former reliance on westbound deliveries to European markets.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2024/04/24/chinas-distressed-pig-farmers-eye-turnaround-as-herd-shrinks/>

103 El Niño-hit areas under state of calamity

By **Jocelyn Montemayor** April 25, 2024

Class suspensions continue due to extreme heat

THE Task Force El Niño yesterday said more than 100 cities and municipalities in the country have been placed under a state of calamity due to drought caused by the El Niño weather phenomenon.

Task force spokesman Assistant Secretary Joey Villarama, citing data from the Office of Civil Defense (OCD), said 103 areas, including five provinces, are under a state of calamity.

“Base sa tala ng OCD, nasa 103 cities and municipalities, kasama sa bilang na ito ang limang probinsiya. Nandiyan ‘yung Occidental Mindoro na pinuntahan ng Pangulo (noong Lunes), Antique, Sultan Kudarat, Basilan at Maguindanao del Sur (Based on the OCD tally, there are 103 cities and municipalities [under a state of calamity]. These include Occidental Mindoro, which the President visited last Monday, and Antique, Sultan Kudarat, Basilan and Maguindanao del Sur),” Villarama said during the “Bagong Pilipinas Ngayon” interview.

The website of the National Disaster and Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) showed 101 cities and municipalities have declared a state of calamity as of April 24.

The OCD is the implementing arm of the NDRRMC.

“Actually, nabanggit ng Pangulo (noong Lunes) na halos buong Pilipinas na ang apektado.

Pero that is again in varying degrees (Actually, the President mentioned [Monday] that almost the entire Philippines is already affected. But again, that is in varying degrees),” Villarama said.

The declaration of a state of calamity enables local government units to access their calamity fund to assist affected communities and mitigate the impact of calamities, such as the El Niño.

Villarama said the type of assistance extended to affected areas depends on the seriousness of the situation or the needs of the communities, noting that some areas are experiencing drought, while some are under the less serious dry spell or dry condition.

Data from the NDRRMC said P509.444 million worth of assistance have been distributed to affected areas.

Latest data from the Department of Agriculture (DA) showed that agricultural damage due to El Niño is now at P3.94 billion, which is equivalent to about 66,000 hectares of crop areas.

Villarama said 78 percent of the crops in these areas are still salvageable or have a chance of recovery.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) said showed that 2.116 million people, or 492,985 families, are affected by the weather phenomenon.

These families are from 2,911 barangays in Regions II (Cagayan Valley), III Central Luzon), IV-B (Mimaropa), V (Bicol), VI (Western Visayas), VII (Central Visayas), VIII (Eastern Visayas), IX (Zamboanga Peninsula), XII (Soccsksargen), Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) and the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).

Villarama said the DSWD has already distributed more than P73.1 million worth of family food packs and other non-food relief items to the affected communities.

President Marcos Jr. the other day visited Occidental Mindoro and inspected areas affected by the El Niño and led the distribution of cash aid and other forms of assistance especially farmers and fisherfolks.

EXTREME HEAT

Amid the rising cost of agricultural damage due to drought and dry spell, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) yesterday said high temperatures would continue to affect the country.

It said 30 areas in Luzon and Visayas are expected to experience dangerous levels of heat index today, with Pili town in Camarines Sur feeling a heat index of 46 degrees Celsius, and Dagupan City in Pangasinan and Pasay City in Metro Manila forecast to sizzle at 45 degrees.

Tuguegarao City and Aparri town, both in Cagayan; and San Jose town in Occidental Mindoro are projected to have a heat index of 44 degrees, while eight areas will have a heat index of 43 degrees: Quezon City in Metro Manila, Munoz town in Nueva Ecija, Sangley Point in Cavite, Daet town in Camarines Norte, Roxas City in Capiz, Iloilo City and Dumangas town, both in Iloilo, and Guian town in Eastern Samar.

Meanwhile, 16 areas are forecast to have a heat index of 42 degrees based on the PAGASA forecast.

These are Echague town in Isabela, Iba town in Zambales, Clark Airport in Pampanga, Casiguran town in Aurora, Olongapo City in Zambales, Tanauan town in Batangas, Alabat town in Quezon; Puerto Princesa City and Aborlan and Coron towns, all in Palawan; Legazpi City in Albay, Virac town in Catanduanes, Masbate City in Masbate, Catarman town in Northern Samar, Catbalogan town in Samar, and Tacloban City in Leyte.

A heat index ranging from 42 to 51 degrees has been classified by PAGASA under the danger level. It said heat cramps and heat exhaustion are likely to be experienced by residents, while heat stroke is possible under this condition.

SUSPENDED F2F CLASSES

With Metro Manila simmering due to extreme heat, the Department of Education (DepEd) yesterday said close to 7,000 public and private schools nationwide have suspended face-to-face classes and are now implementing alternative delivery modes (ADM) of learning.

The latest DepEd data showed that 6,695 schools out of the 47,678 schools in the country are in ADM modes.

Of this, 1,731 are in Central Luzon; 1,091 in Western Visayas, 680 in the Ilocos region, 470 in Central Visayas, 450 in the Bicol region, 426 in Mimaropa, 415 in the National Capital Region, 395 in Calabarzon, 335 in SOCCSKSARGEN, 229 in the Cordillera Administrative Region, 164 in Zamboanga Peninsula, 117 in Eastern Visayas, 104 in Cagayan Valley, and 84 in the Davao region.

Only three schools have suspended in-person learning in Northern Mindanao and one in Caraga.

In a related development, Manila Mayor Honey Lacuna-Pangan suspended F2F classes in all public and private schools in the city until Friday, April 26.

“This is due to the forecasted danger heat index level of 44 degrees according to the Manila Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office,” Lacuna-Pangan said, adding that “schools are advised to shift to asynchronous classes.”

Manila City Schools Division Office Education Supervisor Nerissa Lomeda has earlier issued an order directing all public schools in Manila to implement morning-only classes from April 1 to May 28 due to the extreme summer heat.

However, teachers are still required to report to schools despite the adjusted class settings.

Meanwhile, the DepEd refuted a report that two teachers in Iloilo died supposedly due to heat stroke.

In a statement late Tuesday night, the DepEd said the report was “highly inaccurate and misleading” as their verification showed that one of the teachers died in February this year due to cardiovascular disease, while the other succumbed last month due to aneurysm.

The DepEd issued the clarification after an Iloilo-based radio station reported about two teachers in Sta. Barbara town who allegedly succumbed to heat stroke while conducting classes.

The DepEd said the Iloilo Schools Division Office has no report that any teachers in the province recently died due to heat stroke.

“It is unfortunate that certain news outlets resort to sensationalizing the death of our teachers at the expense of true and factual reporting,” it said.

It said that as the heat index in some areas in the country continues to rise to dangerous levels, DepEd and local officials have been suspending the conduct of F2F classes as a precautionary measure against the onset of any heat-related illnesses not only among students but teachers and other non-teaching staff as well.

Last week, the DepEd also relaxed its policy on school uniform worn by teachers and non-teaching staff, saying that they can wear any DepEd collared shirts they have used in previous national or local events as alternative uniforms. – ***With Victor Reyes and Ashzel Hachero***

https://malaya.com.ph/news_news/103-el-nino-hit-areas-under-state-of-calamity/

NFA buys palay at higher prices

By [Malaya Business Insight](#) April 25, 2024

EVEN with El Niño blasting its most scorching heat, rice farmers in the provinces are happy and hopeful that they will be able to weather the drought.

This is because the National Food Authority (NFA) has been allowed by its Council to start buying palay (unmilled rice) from farmers in an effort to further increase the agency's rice buffer stocks.

NFA Administrator Larry Lacson said on Monday that the NFA Council approved on April 11 a higher buying price for palay to improve the income of Filipino rice farmers, marking "new era for NFA palay buying." The new buying prices for palay now range from P17 to P23 per kilo (kg) for fresh or wet palay and P23 to P30 per kg for dry palay.

These farm gate prices are a bonanza for the farmers because compared to three years ago when the buying price of palay tanked to P7 to P10 per kilo, marginalizing many rice farmers, the current prices now of P17 to P30 per kilo give them hope and incentivize their labor. Since the rice industry's deregulation through the Rice Tariffication Law (RTL), farmers said they were rarely able to sell their palay produce to traders at P17 per kilo.

Asking then for an amendment in this law, rice farmers from Nueva Ecija and Laguna told the government they did not need the monetary and other subsidies promised by the RTL. What they need is for the government to raise the price of palay.

'Although on a small scale, the NFA palay procurement activities will be an important alternative to selling palay to private traders.'

No wonder that now, many highways and paved roads in the provinces are again converted by local farmers as drying spaces for their palay, since these farmers will profit from higher prices if their unmilled rice is completely dry. Many sympathetic motorists were seen ready to live with the added risk in driving just to help the farmers. It is sad that after so many decades, our rice farmers still do not have adequate drying facilities while war-ravaged Vietnam and Cambodia have overtaken us in this field.

While making farmers happy, some consumers have expressed concern over this latest move by the NFA. They are worried that the prices of rice in the market will reach the roof.

Lacson assuaged their fear, saying the buying volume being done by the NFA is just a small percentage of the market, and will not affect the prevailing prices of rice.

“The NFA Council had to raise buying prices for palay after prolonged high farm gate prices persist to secure supply,” the NFA said on Monday. The latest prices are higher than the previous prices of P23 per kg for dry and P19 per kg for wet. The NFA said that it ditched the single pricing system, and there will be no uniform price nationwide like before.

Another good thing that happened in the NFA’s rice procurement program is the policy that new buying prices will be on a per province basis as a consideration to the support price provided by some local government units to help improve farmers’ income.

“This is unique in a sense that various provinces will have different prices depending on the conditions in the province such as prevailing farm gate price, remaining harvest, and most importantly, the target palay procurement for the area,” Lacson said.

Lacson said they will issue a price bulletin for each province as prices of palay vary in different areas. Although on a small scale, the NFA palay procurement activities will be an important alternative to selling palay to private traders.

Aside from better prices, the rice farmers look forward to President Bongbong Marcos’ promise in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro last Monday that irrigation facilities such as solar pumps, small dams and impounding ponds will be constructed by the government, along with post-harvest facilities.

https://malaya.com.ph/news_opinion/nfa-buys-palay-at-higher-prices/

103 lugar nasa state of calamity sa El Niño

[Angie dela Cruz](#), [Gemma Garcia](#) April 25, 2024 | 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Umabot na sa 103 lugar sa buong bansa ang nagdeklara ng state of calamity dahil sa epekto ng El Niño.

Sinabi ni Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Assistant Secretary at tagapagsalita ng Task Force El Niño Joey Villarama na base sa ulat ng Office of Civil Defense (OCD) kasama sa naturang bilang ang cities, municipalities at limang probinsya kabilang dito ang Occidental Mindoro na pinuntahan ni Pangulong Marcos, Antique, Sultan Kudarat; Basilan at Maguindanao del Sur.

Batay din sa heat index forecast ng PAGASA, pumalo sa hanggang 46°C ang pinakamataas na heat index o init ng pakiramdam sa katawan ang naitala sa Pili, Camarines Sur kahapon.

Bukod dito, hanggang 42-46°C heat index din ang naitala sa 30 lugar sa bansa. Kabilang na rito ang Metro Manila na umabot sa 43-44°C.

Ayon sa PAGASA, pasok ito sa danger category kung saan maaaring mauwi sa heat cramps at heat exhaustion ang matagal na exposure sa araw ng isang indibidwal.

Una nang nagbabala ang PAGASA na mas titindi pa ang init na mararamdaman sa bansa pagdating ng buwan ng Mayo dulot ng summer season kasabay ng El Niño Phenomenon o tagtuyot.

Nitong Martes, umabot sa 48°C ang naitalang pinakamataas na damang init o heat index sa bahagi ng Cagayan habang sa Cavite ay 47°C.

Samantala, base sa pinakahuling datos na galing sa Department of Agriculture (DA) nasa P3.94 bilyon na ang danyos sa agrikultura na 66,000 ektarya ng lupain.

Nilinaw naman ni Villarama na ang 78% ng 66,000 ektarya ay may tsansa pa na marecover o masalvage ang mga pananim doon kahit tuyong tuyo na ang lupa at maaaring ipakain pa sa mga hayop.

<https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/bansa/2024/04/25/2350229/103-lugar-nasa-state-calamity-sa-el-nio>

REMATE:

Maguindanao Sur nasa state of calamity sa epekto ng tagtuyot

April 24, 2024 12:00

Inaprubahan ni Maguindanao del Sur Governor Bai Mariam Sangki-Mangudadatu ang isang resolusyon na nagdedeklara sa buong lalawigan ng state of calamity dahil sa malaking pagkalugi sa agrikultura na dulot ng tagtuyot.

“Naapektuhan ng tagtuyot ang 5,601 magsasaka at nasira ang mahigit P345.9 milyon na pananim. Apektado nang husto ang palay at maisan, taniman ng saging, bakahan at manok, at freshwater fish,” aniya sa isang pahayag nitong Martes.

Noong Lunes, Abril 22, nilagdaan ni Mangudadatu ang Sangguniang Panlalawigan Resolution No.

Kabilang sa mga apektadong bayan ang Ampatuan, Buluan, Datu Anggal Midtimbang, Datu Hoffer Ampatuan, Datu Montawal, Datu Paglas, Datu Salibo, Datu Saudi Ampatuan, at Datu Unsay.

Apektado rin ang mga bayan ng Gen. SK Pendatun, Guindulungan, Mangudadatu, Pagalungan, Paglat, Pandag, Rajah Buayan, Shariff Saydona Mustapha, South Upi, Sultan sa Barongis at Talayan.

Sinabi ni Mangudadatu na ang kawalan ng pag-ulan ay humantong sa pagliit ng mga pinagmumulan ng tubig, na nagdulot ng malaking hamon sa mga magsasaka sa patubig ng kanilang mga pananim, kabilang ang palay, mais, at mga gulay.

Noong nakaraang linggo, ang buong lalawigan ng Sultan Kudarat, katabi ng Maguindanao del Sur, ay isinailalim sa state of calamity ng provincial disaster risk reduction and management council at inaprubahan ni Governor Pax Ali Mangudadatu, anak ni Maguindanao del Sur Governor Mangudadatu. **RNT**

<https://remate.ph/maguindanao-sur-nasa-state-of-calamity-sa-pekto-ng-tagtuyot/>

REMATE:

ASF vax bibilhin na; rollout sa Hunyo

April 24, 2024 13:50



MANILA, Philippines – KASALUKUYAN nang pinoproseso ng pamahalaan ang pagbili ng African swine fever (ASF) vaccines at target na i- roll out ang immunization shots sa Hunyo o Hulyo.

“Namimili tayo... Magro-roll out na ng bakuna, siguro Hunyo o Hulyo, mailabas na namin. Dahil hinihintay pa natin ‘yung production ng bakuna sa Vietnam, doon tayo kumukuha at sila ang nakapag develop ng vaccine para sa swine flu,” ayon kay Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos Jr. sa isinagawang town hall consultation kasama ang mga magsasaka at mangingisda sa San Jose, Occidental Mindoro.

Nakikipagpambuno kasi ang bansa sa ASF simula nang makumpirma noong 2019 ang first outbreak ng animal disease.

Dahil sa ASF, nagresulta ito ng pagbabawas sa domestic hog population, sanhi ng karupukan sa pork market sa bansa.

Noong nakaraang taon, inirekumenda ng Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Animal Industry ang AVAC vaccine mula Vietnam para sa pagpapalabas ng certificate of product registration mula sa Food and Drug Administration kasunod ng positibong resulta ng ginawa nitong trial sa Luzon.

Ang testing ay ginawa sa anim na lugar sa Luzon mula Marso hanggang Mayo 2023, mayroontg 100-percent production ng antibodies at walang naiulat n side effects sa ‘four- to 10-week-old’ na baboy. *Kris Jose*

<https://remate.ph/asf-vax-bibilhin-na-rollout-sa-hunyo/>

REMATE:

Nasa 100 syudad, munisipalidad sapul ng El Niño

April 24, 2024 17:51



MANILA, Philippines – Hindi bababa sa 100 lungsod at munisipalidad sa Pilipinas ang naapektuhan ng El Niño phenomenon, ayon sa Task Force El Niño ng gobyerno.

”Base sa tala ng OCD, nasa 103 cities and municipalities, kasama sa bilang na ito ang limang probinsiya, nandiyan ‘yung Occidental Mindoro na pinuntahan ng Pangulo kahapon, Antique, Sultan Kudarat, Basilan at Maguindanao del Sur,” task force spokesman Assistant Secretary Joey Villarama sa isang interbyu.

Iginiit pa ni Villarama na umabot na sa P3.94 bilyon ang pinsalang dulot ng phenomenon sa sektor ng agrikultura.

”Sa huling datos na galing sa Department of Agriculture, nasa 3.94 billion na po ang danyos sa agrikultura, that’s equivalent to about 66,000 hectares pero I would like to emphasize na 78% noong 66,000 hectares na ‘yun, may chance of recovery or salvageable pa,” sabi niya.

Batay sa pinakahuling datos ng Department of Agriculture, nasa P3.94 bilyon ang pinsalang naitala na katumbas ng 66,000 ektarya ngunit nais kong bigyang-diin na sa mga apektadong ektarya, 78 porsiyento ang may tsansa na makabangon.

Tiniyak niya sa publiko na handa ang gobyerno na magbigay ng tulong sa mga apektadong pamilya, kabilang ang mga cash transfer.

Sinabi rin ni Villarama na maaaring mabawasan ang epekto ng El Niño sa katapusan ng Mayo.

Nauna rito, sinabi ng Department of Agriculture na nagbigay ito ng hybrid rice seeds na nagkakahalaga ng P7.87 milyon at mga pataba na nagkakahalaga ng P7.63 milyon sa mga lugar na hindi masusugatan sa Kanlurang Visayas; mga buto ng palay at mais na nagkakahalaga ng P3.51 milyon sa Rehiyon ng Ilocos upang mapakinabangan ang produksyon at mabayaran ang mga natamo na pagkalugi; at mga gamot, biologic, at high-density polyethylene hoses na nagkakahalaga ng P840,000 milyon sa Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR).

Para sa tulong pinansyal at kabuhayan, sinabi ng DA na nakapagbigay ito ng kabuuang 60,013 katutubong hayop sa 334 na grupo at 534 indibidwal na magsasaka sa buong bansa sa pamamagitan ng Philippine Native Animal Development Program nito. **RNT**

<https://remate.ph/nasa-100-syudad-munisipalidad-sapul-ng-el-nino/>

ABANTE:

ACT-Agri Kaagapay katuwang ni PBBM sa distribusyon ng ayuda sa Mindoro

- [Abante News](#)
- [April 24, 2024](#)



Katuwang ang ACT-Agri Kaagapay Organization ni Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos Jr. sa pamamahagi ng financial assistance at iba pang serbisyo sa mga magsasaka at mangingisda na apektado ng El Nino phenomenon sa San Jose, Occidental Mindoro.

Ang Pangulo, kasama sina Occidental Mindoro Gov. Eduardo Gadiano, San Jose Mayor Rey Ladaga at Act Agri-Kaagapay president Virginia Ledesma Rodriguez ay nagtungo sa Bgy. San Jose kung saan mahigit sa 1,500 benepisyaryo ang nabigyan ng financial aid, habang ang mga magsasaka ay nabiyayaan rin ng fuel subsidy.

Bukod sa pamamahagi ng ayuda sa mga magsasaka at mangingisda, nangako rin ang punong ehekutibo ng tulong sa lokal na pamahalaan upang makahanap ng solusyon sa krisis sa kuryente, gayundin ang problema ng mga magsasaka.

Sa nasabing aktibidad, personal namang binigyan ni Rodriguez, ng iniakda niyang librong “Leave Nobody Hungry”, si Pang. Marcos na malugod itong tinanggap.

Nagpasalamat rin ang pangulo kay Rodriguez sa kanyang kontribusyon sa pagkakaloob ng kaalaman at awareness sa mga magsasaka hinggil sa paggamit ng organic fertilizers at modern farming equipment para mapataas ang ani ng mga magsasaka sa bansa.

Ang Act Agri-Kaagapay organization ay non-government non-profit agency na nagkakaloob ng financial aid para sa mga indibidwal na kabilang sa mahihirap, marginalized, vulnerable, at disadvantaged sector.

“We are very thankful to President Marcos for giving his time to visit Occidental Mindoro despite the extreme heat just to meet and greet the farmers and ordinary people in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro,” ani Rodriguez.

Inatasan rin naman ng pangulo ang National Irrigation Administration (NIA) na maglagay ng irrigation systems para sakupin ang ilang munisipalidad sa Occidental, Mindoro, partikular na ang mga bayan ng San Jose at Magsaysay upang palakasin ang agricultural production.

Sa kanyang talumpati, sinabi ni Pang. Marcos na nagtungo sila roon upang magbigay ng tulong sa gitna ng nararanasang El Niño ng mga mamamayan.

“With our legislators, Cabinet secretaries, the local government and the private sector, we are all united to do everything that needs to be done, everything that we can do to help those affected by this El Niño and other problems,” dagdag pa ng pangulo.

<https://www.abante.com.ph/2024/04/24/act-agri-kaagapay-katuwang-ni-pbbm-sa-distribusyon-ng-ayuda-sa-mindoro/>