

MANILA BULLETIN:

El Niño's damage to Philippines' agri swells to P4.39 billion; 85,232 farmers, fishers affected

BY JEL SANTOS

Apr 26, 2024 11:32 AM



(MARK BALMORES/MB PHOTO)

The scorching heat brought about by the El Niño phenomenon has resulted in a staggering P4.39 billion in damage to the Philippines' agricultural sector, the Department of Agriculture (DA) bared on Friday, April 26.

The agency said the dry spell has devastated a total of 85,232 farmers and fisherfolk in 11 regions in the country.

According to the DA, the 11 regions hit by El Niño were Cordillera Administrative Region, Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon), Mimaropa (Mindoro Occidental, Mindoro Oriental, Marinduque, Romblon, and Palawan), Bicol Region, Western Visayas, Zamboanga Peninsula, Davao Region, and Soccsksargen (South Cotabato, Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani and General Santos City).

The agriculture department said a total of 77,731 hectares (ha) of agricultural areas have been devastated by the phenomenon.

Based on the report of the DA, the most affected crop by El Niño was palay or rice with 61.71 percent, followed by corn which comprised 17.53 percent.

High-value crops (HVC), meanwhile, were only 19.80 percent.

“The production losses from the affected agricultural areas are estimated at 113,446 metric tons (MT) for palay, 45,995 MT for corn, 24,306 MT for high-value crops and 41 MT for cassava,” the agency stated.

The DA said the impacted rice area covering 50,511 ha constitutes 2.36 percent of the total target planting area of 2,137,046.77 ha.

Meanwhile, rice’s production loss of 113,446 MT translates to approximately 1.23 percent of the target production of 9,218,358.28 MT.

In terms of corn, the agency said the area affected by the dry spell spans 21,308 ha, representing 1.93 percent of the total target planting area of 1,101,695.90 ha. Its production loss of 45,995 MT accounts for 1.02 percent of the target production of 4,493,026.90 MT.

El Niño interventions

The DA said it has so far provided at least P2.16 billion worth of interventions to El Niño-devastated farmers and fisherfolk.

The agency said that DA’s regional field offices have distributed assistance totaling P637.21 million, including agri-inputs, fertilizers, planting materials, pumps and engines, HDPE hose, drugs, and biologics.

As such, the DA said it has provided financial support amounting to P1,065 million through the Rice Farmers Financial Assistance (RFFA) program in Regions II and IV-B.

In Region IV-B, the DA noted that various forms of assistance were extended, such as P8 million worth of rice machineries and equipment from DA-PHilMech, P77.50 million worth of Survival and Recovery (SURE) aid loans from ACPC, P5.19 million worth of coconut seedlings distributed by PCA, P65.35 million worth of composting facilities from the DA BSWM, P294.46 million worth of irrigation projects from the National Irrigation Administration, and P8.99 million worth of marine machinery and equipment.

The DA said it has been conducting cloud seeding operations in Southern Cagayan, Northern Isabela, Quirino Corn Areas, and Magat Reservoir in Region II.

To enhance water supply in Regions I, II, III, IV-B, VI, VII, and XI, the agriculture department said it has installed 616 water pumps.

The agency said it has also completed concreting 847.8 kilometers of irrigation canals to enhance water distribution in agricultural areas nationwide.

The DA has also desilted 3,167.9 kilometers of irrigation canals to improve water flow throughout the country.

Through the Philippine Native Animal Development (PNAD), the DA distributed 60,013 native animals to 334 groups and 534 individual farmers.

The agency added that it has provided 111 diversified alternative livelihoods and technologies to fisherfolk to mitigate potential losses in CAR, Regions V, VII, and IX.

Also, the DA reported that the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation has provided indemnity to farmers in CAR, Regions I, II, III, IV-A, IV-B, VI, IX, XI, and XII, totaling P67.91 million.

‘Almost entire PH affected’

On April 24, Presidential Communications Office (PCO) Assistant Secretary Joey Villarama, spokesperson of Task Force El Niño, said almost the entire country is affected by the dry spell.

Villarama, citing reports from the Office of Civil Defense (OCD), said that 103 areas, including 98 cities and municipalities, along with the provinces of Occidental Mindoro, Antique, Sultan Kudarat, Basilan, and Maguindanao del Sur, have been declared under a state of calamity.

He said that according to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) data, approximately 2,116,420 individuals, including farmers, fisherfolk, and their dependents or families, are impacted by El Niño.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/4/26/el-nino-s-damage-to-philippines-agri-swells-to-p4-39-billion-85-232-farmers-fishers-affected>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Bulacan declared bird flu-free by DA

BY GABRIELL CHRISTEL GALANG

Apr 26, 2024 04:41 PM

After the implementation of preventive measures, the Department of Agriculture (DA) declared that Bulacan province is now free from avian influenza.

In a statement on Friday, April 26, Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. said that the declaration was made as it has been 90 days since the cleaning and disinfection of poultry facilities.

“According to the Bureau of Animal Industry’s AI monitoring, the last reported H5N1 infection was in early May last year in a gamefowl farm in Santa Maria,” the DA reported.

The first record of the H5N1 infection in Bulacan began around January 2022 to February 2023, as the DA found several cases in Baliwag City, towns of Pulilan, Santa Maria, San Rafael, San Miguel, and San Ildefonso.

The strain was found on ducks, quail, native chickens, chicken layers, broiler breeders, and gamefowl during the 14th-month period.

Because of this, depopulation, disinfection, and transport bans were made to prevent the disease from spreading elsewhere. Tests revealed negative results following the careful procedure conducted on the infected zones.

Since March of this year, over 135 poultry facilities in Bulacan have been registered.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/4/26/bulacan-declared-bird-flu-free-by-da>

MANILA BULLETIN:

P15 billion disaster relief fund on standby for El Niño response

BY CHINO S. LEYCO

Apr 26, 2024 05:35 PM

The national government has standby funds worth P15.5 billion to mitigate the impact of El Niño, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) said on Friday, April 26.

Budget Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman said the amount forms part of the total allocation of P20.5 billion for the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund (NDRRMF) in 2024.

Out of the total standby funds, P14.85 billion is from the 2024 General Appropriations Act while the remaining amount of P653.7 million comes from the 2023 continuing appropriations.

Furthermore, Pangandaman said there is available balance of P1 billion under for the parametric insurance coverage of government facilities against natural calamities.

She added the standby allocations are in addition to the Quick Response Fund (QRF) of P7.9 billion already allocated to certain government agencies.

The Department of Agriculture's QRF budget amounts to P1 billion, while the Department of Education and the Department of Health have P3 billion and P500 million, respectively.

The Bureau of Fire Protection has a QRF budget of P50 million, the Philippine National Police has P50 million, and the Office of Civil Defense has a budget of P500 million.

Moreover, the Department of Public Works and Highways has a QRF fund of P1 billion, the Department of Social Welfare and Development has P1.75 billion, and the Philippine Coast Guard has P75 million.

"We are prepared to support all operations that seek to cushion the negative impacts of the dry spell affecting various provinces in the country. Our data shows that as of April 24 this year, the disaster relief fund stands at over P15 billion," Pangandaman said.

"Aside from that, several identified agencies may mobilize their QRF allocated in their respective budgets when necessary, in accordance with the respective special provisions for QRF. Malaking tulong po 'yan sa mga apektadong komunidad sa bansa," she added.

The NDRRMF is a financial allocation utilized for providing assistance, relief, and rehabilitation services to communities and areas affected by natural or human-induced calamities.

The approval of the President, however, is required for the allocation of the fund for repair, rehabilitation, and reconstruction works related to such calamities.

The NDRRMF also serves as an additional funding source for agencies whose budgets include provisions for the QRF, subject to the approval of the DBM, when the QRF balance has reached 50 percent.

The Task Force El Niño earlier reported that 103 cities and municipalities are now in a state of calamity due to the effects of El Niño.

Apart from the NDRRMF, the government has also allocated a total of P4.5 billion for the Crop Insurance Program of the Philippine Crop Insurance Corp.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/4/26/p15-billion-disaster-relief-fund-on-standby-for-el-nino-response>

MANILA BULLETIN:

COA questions Catanduanes over P41.2M 'undelivered' abaca suckers

BY CZARINA NICOLE ONG KI

Apr 27, 2024 12:06 PM

The Commission on Audit (COA) has questioned the provincial government of Catanduanes over the P41.26 million paid for abaca suckers which were not delivered by the contracted supplier who simply gave cash to farmer-beneficiaries to source out the planting materials themselves.

In its 2023 annual audit report, COA said that Catanduanes paid P41.26 million to a supplier despite non-compliance with the original terms of the supply contract..

It said that in 2022, Catanduanes entered into a memorandum of agreement with the Department of Agriculture (DA) for the revitalization of Typhoon-Damaged Abaca Farms in the province for P69.9 million. The project involved the procurement and distribution of abaca planting materials (suckers), digging bars, and backpack spray to qualified farmer-beneficiaries.

After two failed biddings, COA said that Catanduanes resorted to negotiated procurement on May 17, 2023 for the supply and delivery of abaca suckers. It was awarded to an unnamed supplier on May 23, 2023.

It said the supplier agreed to deliver 1,377,700 pieces of abaca suckers to Catanduanes for P41.26 million within 120 calendar days. There were two deliveries made on Sept. 4, 2023 and Oct. 5, 2023, and two payments amounting to P19,319,511.70 dated Sept. 14 and Oct. 23, 2023 were subsequently made to the supplier.

COA said its auditors discovered "inconsistencies" in the transaction.

"Audit of the transactions revealed that there was no actual delivery by the supplier of 1,377,700 pieces of abaca suckers to the Provincial General Services Office (PGSO), subsequently to the Provincial Agriculture Services Office (PASO), as opposed to the certification in the Inspection and Acceptance Report Nos. 09-715 and 10-947 signed by the inspectorate team and the head of the PGSO indicating complete delivery thereof," COA's report stated.

"The supplier did not actually perform the agreement stated in the contract for the supply and delivery of abaca suckers given that the abaca suckers were sourced from the abaca farmers/beneficiaries themselves, and not through the capacity of the supplier," it added.

It also said that state auditors questioned the Terms of Reference (TOR) entered into by the local chief executive (LCE) and the supplier since there was a clause that seemed to modify the original terms of the contract agreement.

"The TOR executed by the LCE could have impacted the fairness of the procurement process, particularly the clause requiring the winning supplier to source out the abaca suckers from beneficiaries and not through the individual capacity of the supplier, thus giving him undue favor," the report said.

"Had the TOR been disclosed and set forth to all potential suppliers throughout the bidding process, it could have altered the outcome of the procurement," it said

When the audit team questioned 2,234 farm beneficiaries and recipients to determine whether there was actual delivery made by the supplier, state auditors learned that all of them only received P1,700 cash payment for 100 pieces of abaca suckers to be planted in their respective farms. None of them received any actual delivery from the supplier, it said.

The COA said that P1,700 cash translated to P17 per abaca sucker. Had the province taken over the distribution of cash payment instead of relegating the task to a supplier, they could have saved P12.95 per piece or a total of P17,841,215, it pointed out.

"Granting that management's distribution of cash to buy the farmer-beneficiaries' planting materials in lieu of delivery and distribution of abaca suckers was made in good faith, there were no submitted documents to prove that the total number of 1,377,700 abaca suckers were actually and completely planted in the respective abaca farms of 13,777 recipients," COA pointed out.

COA reprimanded the provincial government for giving unwarranted benefits to the supplier and causing undue injury to the government due to the non-delivery of the abaca suckers resulting in the inability of the government to implement the project in accordance with the contract agreement.

On top of requiring the province of Catanduanes to justify the award of the contract, it sought an impartial investigation to determine liability of provincial officials and personnel responsible for the transaction.

"Consider blacklisting the supplier for violation of the contract" and "imposition of liquidated damages," COA stressed.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/4/27/coa-questions-catanduanes-over-p41-2-m-undelivered-abaca-suckers>

THE PHILIPPIN STAR:

P15.5 billion calamity fund ready for El Niño

[Louise Maureen Simeon](#) - The Philippine Star

April 27, 2024 | 9:30am



Locals walk over the dry part of Intang Lake in Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija on April 22, 2024.

STAR / Walter Bollozos

MANILA, Philippines — Government agencies can still tap over P15 billion in disaster funds to mitigate the impacts of El Niño, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) said yesterday.

As of April 24, the DBM said the national disaster risk reduction management fund, more commonly known as the calamity fund, stood at P15.507 billion.

Since the start of the year, some P4.99 billion has already been released from the total P20.5 billion allocation under the 2024 national budget.

“We are prepared to support all operations that seek to cushion the negative impacts of the dry spell affecting various provinces in the country,” Budget Secretary Amenah Pangandaman said.

Calamity funds are being used for aid, relief and rehabilitation services to various areas, as well as for the repair and reconstruction works in connection with the occurrence of natural or human-induced calamities.

Currently, over 100 cities and towns have been placed under a state of calamity due to El Niño.

Some 2.1 million individuals have also been affected by the weather phenomenon.

A state of calamity declaration allows local governments to use the available calamity funds to mitigate the impact of the dry spell.

According to the DBM, the available calamity fund balance comes from the 2024 budget and the remaining continuing appropriations from last year.

It is also inclusive of P1 billion allocated for the parametric insurance coverage of government facilities against natural calamities.

Further, select agencies may also tap their built-in quick response fund (QRF).

These include first response agencies such as the Departments of Agriculture, Education, Health, Interior and Local Government, Public Works and Highways, Social Welfare and Development and Transportation.

Under the law, once the QRF of any agency reaches 50 percent or lower, it can request replenishment from the DBM.

Apart from the calamity fund, the government also allocated P4.5 billion for the crop insurance program of the Philippine Crop Insurance Corp.

The funding will finance crop insurance premiums of around 2.3 million subsistence farmers and fisherfolk nationwide.

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/04/27/2350819/p155-billion-calamity-fund-ready-el-nio>

Fish catch down since Balikatan – group

[Bella Cariaso](#) - The Philippine Star

April 27, 2024 | 10:00am



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 — Fish catch around Panatag (Scarborough) Shoal has decreased since the start of the Balikatan exercises, which may have prompted the Chinese to send more vessels to the area and continue harassing Filipino fishermen, a local fishers' group said yesterday.

“The bullying of the Chinese coast guard continues and their number increased right after the Balikatan,” New Masinloc Fishermen’s Association president Leonardo Cuaresma said in a radio interview.

The 39th Balikatan joint military exercises kicked off on April 22, and will last until May 8. Beijing has denounced the military drills, which include a joint sail by the naval forces of the Philippines, the US and France on the fringes of the West Philippine Sea.

“Before the tension, we have a good fish catch but when the Balikatan started, our fish catch decreased amid the presence of many Chinese vessels,” Cuaresma said.

He said fish catch in the past few days only totaled some 1.5 tons compared to some four tons last month.

“Based on my information, more than 30 Chinese militia, six Chinese Coast Guard and four Chinese Navy are still in the area,” Cuaresma said.

He confirmed that it was the CCG which removed the payao installed in the area by local fisherfolk and commercial fishing vessels.

“They (Chinese) were behind the removal of the payao in the West Philippine Sea,” he said.

He noted that fishers in his group spend at least P200,000 for fuel during a usual fishing activity in the West Philippine Sea.

“The fishermen spend at least five days but there are times that they only earn at least P3,000, but they have no choice as they cannot go to municipal waters as it is too crowded,” he said.

The bigger presence of the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) in the area, he said, has also encouraged Filipino fishermen to continue doing their trade in the Panatag Shoal area, which is off the coast of Zambales.

“Before, only two boats sail in the area but because of what the Coast Guard and BFAR were doing, our fisherfolk were persuaded to join the big fishing vessels in their operation,” Cuaresma said.

But he revealed his group, which has 40 members, has yet to receive assistance from BFAR under its Livelihood Activities to Enhance Fisheries Yields and Economic Gains from the West Philippine Sea.

“No assistance reached us. The last assistance we received was when Sen. Risa Hontiveros visited us last December,” he noted.

Monitoring Balikatan

While it is not clear if the Chinese have also expanded their presence in other fishing areas following the start of the Balikatan, Beijing’s ministry of national defense said it is closely monitoring the activities of the naval forces involved in the annual drill.

“The Chinese military is closely following relevant moves, and will resolutely respond with effective measures,” Senior Colonel Wu Qian, spokesman for China’s MND, said.

“We will never allow anyone to sow chaos (in) the South China Sea,” he said in a statement shared by the Chinese embassy in Manila.

Wu said the defense ministry opposes “external interference, muscle flexing, provocations and harassment in the South China Sea, and oppose piecing together exclusive circles or bloc confrontation.”

“It requires great wisdom to resolve the South China Sea issue. Drawing forces outside the region or countries not directly concerned into the issue will only further complicate the situation and make it harder to solve,” he stressed.

Wu said China always advocates a common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security arrangement and remains a firm believer in the primacy of dialogue and consultation in settling difference.

China’s MND has also expressed concern over the US deployment of medium-range ballistic missiles in the Asia-Pacific, a development that “severely threatens the security of regional countries and undermines regional peace and stability.”

In a post on X by China’s Global Times, Wu was also quoted as telling the Philippines, Japan and the US of their “disregard of facts” by questioning Beijing’s South China Sea claims.

“The US-Japan-Philippines joint statement that expressed ‘serious concerns’ regarding the Ren’ ai Jiao situation, and called China’s activities in the South China Sea and East China Sea ‘dangerous and aggressive’ disregards facts and confuses right and wrong,” the post said. Ren’ ai Jiao is Beijing’s name for Ayungin Shoal, where the BRP Sierra Madre is positioned as Philippine military outpost. —
Michael Punongbayan, Ghio Ong

<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/04/27/2350797/fish-catch-down-balikatan-group>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

A ‘shadow’ government in the DA

By: [Ernesto M. Ordoñez](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 02:10 AM April 27, 2024

To transform the agriculture sector, it is necessary to also transform the structures supporting it.

Thankfully, changes are now ongoing under the current leadership. We discuss here one such structure: the public-private Philippine Council for Agriculture and Fisheries (PCAF).

According to Executive Order No. 116-1987, the PCAF “acts as an advisory body to the [Department of Agriculture, or DA] to ensure the success of its programs and activity.” It is composed of 16 regional agriculture and fisheries councils (RAFCs) and 11 sectoral committees (SCs). The SCs address key subjects such as crops (e.g., rice), policies (e.g., international trade), and programs (e.g., mechanization).

The past

Under the previous administration, some private sector members made recommendations different from the existing policies and positions of the DA. But instead of strengthening the PCAF, these only made the latter weak and damaged.

For example, the PCAF operating budget was cut in half. The international trade committee was abolished. Private sector monitoring of the DA budget was terminated.

Also, the election of committee heads by members was conditioned on the requirement that a list of three nominees would have to be given to the agriculture secretary before a chair was chosen.

There was one instance when a committee nominated only one person in four separate meetings but in the end the person was relegated to a temporary position only because three candidates’ names were not submitted.

These issues are now being addressed. Take, for example, the private sector monitoring of the DA budget, which was announced only last Jan. 5 by newly installed Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, Jr. This will help ensure that one-third of the DA budget is not lost to corruption and waste.

Shadow government

In parliaments abroad, there is a “shadow government” made up of the opposition party that keeps watch over the government’s key ministers. In one such parliament, the “shadow” for each minister was an individual from the private sector. His or her primary function was to ensure monitoring and make recommendations.

This same idea was used in suggesting a structural change for the SCs, specifically in four areas: their new role definition, roadmap implementation, budget formulation, and budget use.

Regarding their role, the SC heads should not just generally follow the PCAF Secretariat initiatives and focus on quarterly committee meetings.

Instead, they should engage their government counterparts at least once a month to monitor progress and take appropriate action. As active partners of the DA, they should partly be responsible for the successes and failures of their respective organization sectors.

On roadmap implementation, they should help establish public-private implementation teams. They will cochair these teams so that the roadmaps are actively used and not just lying idle on the shelf. They should meet quarterly, focusing on implementing short-term plans and plucking low-lying fruits.

Roadmap

For budget use, they should monitor how the budget is being implemented in their respective sectors. They should require submission of the respective sector budgets to the private sector-led RAFCs for monitoring to prevent questionable expenses that we have seen in the last three years. They should also have to insist on penalties against erring officials.

For budget formulation, they should identify the priority needs of their respective sectors. They must actively recommend budget provisions to address those needs. They should ensure that the budget responds to the unique needs of their respective sectors (this has recently started).

The PCAF is full of very competent and committed people. But the agency's structure should be addressed to maximize their potential.

As we try to transform agriculture, we must also transform its structures. We should support the current DA leadership in accelerating its pace before other powerful forces can derail it.

<https://business.inquirer.net/456438/a-shadow-government-in-the-da>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

BAI TEAM NOW IN DAUIS

Calamity state up in Bohol town as ASF cases spike

By: [Leo Udtohan](#) - Correspondent / [@leoudtohanINQ](#)

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 05:04 AM April 27, 2024



COP CHECK Policemen are stationed at a checkpoint in Tagbilaran City, the provincial capital of Bohol, on Friday as part of measures to stop the spread of the African swine fever in Dauis town on Panglao Island where the hog disease was detected. —LEO UDTOHAN

TAGBILARAN CITY — The municipal council of Dauis in Bohol declared the town under a state of calamity this week due to the growing cases of hog deaths caused by the African swine fever (ASF).

“There is a need for vigilant control measures to avoid transmission of diseases to other hogs in nearby municipalities,” read part of the resolution of the Municipal

Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council that the council endorsed on Tuesday.

With the declaration, the local government can already tap its quick response fund to address the needs of affected residents and the procurement of supplies for disease containment and eradication.

Since April 17, at least 59 hogs in Barangays Mayacabac, Biking and Mariveles in Daus have died, all with symptoms associated with ASF.

Last week, Gov. Aris Aumentado ordered a temporary ban on the entry of live pigs, cooked and raw pork, and pork products and byproducts from Panglao Island to mainland Bohol to protect the P6-billion hog industry.

The ban will last for a month, from April 18 until May 18, the fiesta season of the province.

At least 48,000 Boholanos are into backyard hog raising, government records showed.

“I ask the public to not panic because the provincial government is serious in its action to address the matter,” Aumentado said.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) has sent a team to Bohol to focus on cases of ASF on Panglao Island, a prime tourist destination composed of the municipalities of Daus and Panglao.

Dr. Constante Palabrica, officer in charge of the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI), said the team was sent to the villages of Mayacabac, Biking and Mariveles in Daus to monitor and analyze the situation.

He said the members of the team were well-trained and equipped with instruments that would help in the intensified monitoring, surveillance, investigation, and “test and destroy” operations in the area.

Palabrica said they would gather more blood samples from pigs for testing and send it to local laboratories in Tagbilaran City and in Metro Manila for confirmation.

The DA, he said, is ready for whatever situation connected with the possible spread of the ASF in the province.

Assistance

The Bohol provincial government will provide financial assistance to hog raisers affected by the death of pigs in Dauis town.

According to an advisory from the province, hog raisers will receive P5,000 for every adult pig and P1,000 per piglet in the three villages in Dauis that were affected by ASF.

These hogs will be immediately buried to stop the spread of the disease.

The families of affected hog raisers will also receive a financial assistance of P10,000 from the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office.

Palabrica said mainland Bohol was in a “light green” zone, which means ASF was not detected and considered a moderate risk.

Dauis has been identified as a “red” or “infected” zone after swine specimen samples from its three barangays tested positive for ASF.

Authorities continued to implement border checkpoints to prevent the entry of hogs and pork products from Panglao Island into mainland Bohol.

The World Organization for Animal Health described ASF as “a highly contagious viral disease of domestic and wild pigs” with no available vaccine, causing a 100-percent mortality rate.

While it rarely infects humans, meat from infected pigs should not be consumed.

“For food safety, we have to bury the infected pigs rather than letting people eat the infected meat,” Palabrica said.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1934112/calamity-state-up-in-bohol-town-as-asf-cases-spike>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

South Cotabato under state of calamity due to drought

By: [Bong S. Sarmiento](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Inquirer Mindanao](#) / 09:43 PM April 26, 2024

KORONADAL CITY – South Cotabato was placed under a state of calamity on Friday due to the effects of the [prolonged dry spell](#) which resulted in agricultural losses worth over P200 million.

South Cotabato is the fourth province in Mindanao to have declared a state of calamity due to the El Niño weather phenomenon after Sultan Kudarat, Basilan, and Maguindanao del Sur.

Provincial Board Member Junette Hurtado, who presided over the special session of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan, said the attending provincial legislative members unanimously approved the measure declaring the entire province under a state of calamity.

The Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office (PDRRMO) proposed a budget of at least P25 million to help those affected by the drought across the province, including farmers.

Rolly Doane Aquino, PDRRMO officer-in-charge, said that at least five of the 11 localities in the province have been hit hard by El Niño.

The worst-hit areas, so far, are the farming towns of Banga, Norala, Surallah, Tantangan and T'boli, he said.

South Cotabato is also composed of the towns of Tampakan, Tupi, Polomolok, Sto. Nino, and Lake Sebu, and Koronadal City, the provincial capital and seat of government of Region 12.

So far, the municipal governments that declared a state of calamity are Banga, Surallah and T'boli.

“Even if the other local governments in the province have not declared a state of calamity, they can utilize their quick response funds to address the impact of El Niño in their localities because the provincial government has already placed the entire province under a calamity state,” Aquino said during the special session.

Aquino said preliminary data they gathered indicate the El Niño caused damage to crops, livestock and infrastructure, in all worth P201.9 million.

At least 2,767 farmers in the province have been affected by the drought, data from the Office of Provincial Agriculturist said.

In T’boli town, Vice Mayor Ronie dela Peña said the estimated damage caused by the drought to agriculture reached P62.3 million as of April 17.

In Surallah, Mayor Pedro Matinong said El Niño destroyed crops and inland fisheries worth P71.8 million.

In their town, 1,178 farmers with 999 hectares of land were affected by the dry spell, Matinong said.

Last Wednesday, the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council convened and agreed to recommend to the Sangguniang Panlalawigan the calamity declaration due to the long dry spell which caused water shortages and crop failures in parts of the province.

In Basilan, local authorities have estimated agricultural losses at P315 million, with crops wilting due to extreme heat and lack of rain.

In Maguindanao del Sur, local disaster officials accounted for some P346 million in crop losses, affecting 5,601 farmers.

Throughout Mindanao, at least 20 towns have been placed under a state of calamity.

The highly urbanized city of Zamboanga was the earliest locality to have declared a state of calamity because of the long dry spell which affected the supply of potable water. (*With reports from Ryan D. Rosauero*)

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1934092/south-cotabato-under-state-of-calamity-due-to-drought>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Drought damage P4.3B; UN airs call to aid PH

By: [Jordeene B. Lagare](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:30 AM April 27, 2024



CALAMITY Local technicians in South Cotabato assess crops wilted by the intense heat. The province was placed under a state of calamity on Friday. —PROVINCIAL DISASTER RISK REDUCTION MANAGEMENT OFFICE-SOUTH COTABATO PHOTO

The monthslong drought caused by extreme heat and lack of rain has bludgeoned the country's crop and livestock production, with damage rising to P4.3 billion this week, according to the Department of Agriculture (DA).

In a bulletin posted on Friday, the DA said agricultural losses recorded on April 23 were higher than the P3.94 billion reported a week earlier.

Rice was the crop most affected by the dry spell, accounting for 61.71 percent of the total damage, or 113,446 metric tons worth P2.71 billion from 50,511 hectares.

High-value crops comprised 19.8 percent, or P869.34 million, of overall agriculture losses, while corn constituted 17.53 percent, or P769.68 million. Other crops, livestock and poultry accounted for the remaining 1 percent, or P42.1 million.

The regions affected by the El Niño-induced drought are Cordillera, Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon), Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan), Bicol, Western Visayas, Zamboanga Peninsula, Davao and Soccsksargen (South Cotabato, Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani and General Santos).

A state of calamity due to the prolonged drought has been declared by local officials in 103 cities and municipalities and six provinces as of April 26.

The department has extended about P2.16 billion worth of assistance to affected farmers and fishers, including P1.1 billion in financial aid to rice farmers and P8 million in rice machinery and equipment.

The DA is also providing fertilizers, planting materials, irrigation pumps and engines, and various farm inputs through its regional offices.

Disaster-prone

Meanwhile, the United Nations called on the international community to increase its support for the country as it deals with what it described as a “serious drought” caused by one of the strongest El Niño episodes in history.

Local UN officials noted that the dry spell had affected more than 1.4 million people in the Philippines where the upcoming harvest was expected to be below average.

The Climate Crisis Coordinator for the El Niño/La Niña Response, UN Assistant Secretary General Reena Ghelani, who ended her weeklong visit to the Philippines on Wednesday, said the country had demonstrated the importance of “acting early before a disaster strikes.” “With more frequent and severe climate shocks, it is crucial we strengthen our support to community resilience,” she said.

According to the United Nations, the Philippines is one of the world’s most disaster-prone countries and is highly vulnerable to climate change. Disasters have already cost \$23 billion in damage to the country since 1990, it said.

UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in the Philippines Gustavo Gonzalez said they were “recalibrating” their technical assistance for the country amid the relentless heat.

On Friday, a special session of the South Cotabato Provincial Board unanimously agreed to place the province under a state of calamity after its agricultural losses had climbed to over P200 million, according to Board Member Junette Hurtado.

South Cotabato is the fourth province in Mindanao to have declared a state of calamity due to the El Niño weather phenomenon. The others are Sultan Kudarat, Basilan and Maguindanao del Sur.

Throughout Mindanao, at least 20 towns have been placed under a state of calamity. Zamboanga City was the first to declare after the long dry spell depleted its potable water supply.

Drought upland

In Luzon, the extreme heat is wilting the rice planted in the famed rice terraces in the Cordillera region as their unique engineering system for conserving rainwater could not cope with the long dry spell, DA officials said on Thursday.

A DA team has been documenting the conditions of farms struck by the drought from forested Itogon town in Benguet to Apayao province, according to Charles Picpican, the DA project evaluation officer.

The weather bureau predicted extreme heat for “mountainous Luzon” at least until June.

Picpican said all mountain farms generally suffered low rainfall, including the vegetable gardens in Benguet province which are carved on the sides of mountains, the stone-walled terraces of Mountain Province and the picturesque rice terraces of Ifugao, which collectively make up one of the country’s World Heritage Sites.

Ifugao has been the hardest drought-hit upland province, accounting for an estimated damage of P232 million out of the total P444 million losses throughout the Cordillera, according to Jennilyn Dawayan, the DA Cordillera director, who cited a DA inventory report in March.

El Niño had disrupted “water availability, and aquifers have not been recharging even in areas like Ifugao,” based on initial observations, she said. Ifugao terrace farmers produce homegrown grains like Tinawon, which are classified as heirloom rice because of their rarity.

Picpican said he was unaware if the region’s drought losses included rice terrace production, which is traditionally grown for household or community consumption.

The Rice Data Analytics Dashboard of the Philippine Rice Research Institute said Ifugao produced 34,202 MT in 2023 but did not say whether they included heirloom grains.

In 2005, terrace farmers grew heirloom rice for export to the United States, selling up to 97 MT of Tinawon and Unoy grown in Kalinga province, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

The Ifugao terraces were designated as a combined World Heritage Site in 1995.

In 2011, it was recognized as a globally important agricultural heritage system by the FAO. —*WITH REPORTS FROM BONG S. SARMIENTO, VINCENT CABREZA AND INQUIRER RESEARCH*

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1934133/drought-damage-p4-3b-un-airs-call-to-aid-ph>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

DA EYEING LEGAL OPTIONS AMID COURT RULING

Stopping GMO crops may cause ‘more harm than good’ – scientists

By: [Jordeene B. Lagare](#), [Kathleen de Villa](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:34 AM April 27, 2024



The International Rice Research Institute (Irri) spent two decades with PhilRice to develop Golden Rice. —Isagani Serrano/IRRI

A recent court decision halting the production of the genetically modified crops Golden Rice and Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) eggplant may impact on the country’s food security and may cause “more harm than good,” according to the Department of Agriculture (DA) and government advisory body of scientists and academicians.

In a statement on Friday, the DA said the government was exploring legal options after the Court of Appeals (CA) on April 17 issued a cease-and-desist order on the commercial propagation of Golden Rice and Bt eggplant, and revoked the biosafety

permits granted to the crops' developers, the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) and the University of the Philippines Los Baños, respectively.

“The government’s legal team, led by the Office of the Solicitor General, is exploring legal remedies in relation to the subject CA order, which could have significant implications for the country’s food security,” it said.

“In this light, the DA will opt for prudence and refrain from commenting further on this issue,” it added.

Golden Rice is the first genetically modified rice variety for improved nutrition developed by PhilRice with the International Rice Research Institute. It contains additional levels of beta-carotene which the body converts into vitamin A.

On the other hand, Bt eggplant contains a natural protein from the soil bacterium *Bacillus thuringiensis* making it resistant to eggplant fruit-and-shoot borer.

Delaying innovations

In a position paper made public on Thursday, the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST), which is under the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), said it was concerned that the court decision may “unnecessarily delay overdue innovations.”

“Consistent with its mandate to help guide Philippine society in understanding scientific and technological controversies, NAST reiterates its support for the use of modern biotechnology in plant breeding,” said the NAST’s agricultural sciences division.

It feared that the CA ruling was tantamount to the “weaponization of the law to favor an extreme ideology about nature—that a pristine environment must be preserved, and modern biological technology is working against this goal.”

“If we did not interfere with nature through modern technology, we would not have attained the quality of life we now enjoy,” it said.

For the NAST, modern interventions on plant breeding resulted in “improved varieties” of crops and other medical technologies, such as vaccines and antibiotics, which provided relief to humans against health, social and environmental harm.

“Bt talong (eggplant) and Golden Rice are just the latest in the parade of modern varieties of crops,” it said.

The NAST’s position paper was signed by the agricultural sciences division chair, Eufemio Rasco Jr., and eight other members. National Scientist Emil Javier, who is a member of the biological sciences division, is also a signatory.

Created in December 1976 through a presidential decree, the NAST is mandated to advise the President on policies affecting the science and technology landscape of the country. It also holds yearly scientific conferences and publishes academic journals and books based on the studies of its own academy members and national scientists.

‘Precautionary principle’

The NAST also opposed the invocation by the CA of the “precautionary principle,” which states that human activities that may pose irreversible environmental damage “that is scientifically plausible but uncertain” should merit actions that could curb any threat.

“The precautionary principle says, ‘look before you leap,’ and puts the burden of proving the absence of harm to developers of technology,” it said. “While ‘looking’ is the job of science, the requirement to prove the absence of harm or absolute freedom from all risks, known and unknown, is beyond the capacity of the scientific method.”

It added: “No technology is risk-free, [and] the most advanced societies are those that are more willing to take risks.”

Still, the NAST maintained that both Golden Rice and Bt eggplant passed the country’s regulatory measures, which it noted was “not perfect,” but was “compliant with international standards,” to ensure the safety for human consumption and the environment of these genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

Promote farmer health

In its ruling, the CA granted the writ of kalikasan and the writ of continuing mandamus, which directed the concerned government agencies to submit their enhanced risk assessments and protocols in monitoring GMOs.

According to the NAST scientists, over 20 years worth of scientific evidence show that Bt eggplant “can substantially improve farmer income by reducing losses due to insect damage ... and promote farmer health by reducing his reliance on harmful chemical pesticides.”

“Both of these are attained without harming the consumer or the environment,” they said.

Golden Rice, meanwhile, can “effectively reduce human suffering due to vitamin A deficiency, without any negative impact on the farmer and the environment,” they noted.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1934144/stopping-gmo-crops-may-cause-more-harm-than-good-scientists>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

Bulacan is 17th province declared free of bird flu

By: [Jordeene B. Lagare](#) - [@inquirerdotnet](#)

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 05:02 AM April 27, 2024

INQUIRER FILES

Bulacan has joined the list of provinces declared free of bird flu as tests conducted on local poultry yielded negative results for avian influenza more than 90 days since the end of cleaning and disinfection operations and surveillance activities, the Department of Agriculture (DA) said.

The DA said Bulacan was the 17th province to have fully recovered from highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). Others are Camarines Sur, Davao del Sur, Rizal, South Cotabato, Ilocos Sur, Batangas, Capiz, Quezon, Aurora, Ilocos Norte, Pangasinan, Cotabato, Isabela, Maguindanao del Sur, Benguet and Sultan Kudarat.

The World Organization for Animal Health's terrestrial animal health code states a previously free country or zone may regain its avian influenza-free status at least 28 days after completing a stamping-out policy and disinfecting the last affected establishment, and that consequent surveillance showed the absence of infection.

The issuance came more than a year after Bulacan recorded 10 confirmed cases of HPAI in different areas.

Avian influenza was detected in the City of Baliwag and the towns of San Rafael, San Ildefonso, San Miguel, Santa Maria and Pulilan between January 2022 and February last year.

It affected ducks, quails, native chickens, chicken layers, broiler breeders and game fowl.

Fighting disease

The local government, in coordination with the DA's regional office in Central Luzon and the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI), conducted disease investigation, immediate depopulation, cleaning and disinfection, movement restrictions and surveillance in the affected premises upon detecting the disease.

Continued disease monitoring and surveillance in the 1-kilometer and 7-km surveillance zones surrounding the affected farms yielded negative test results for influenza type A virus.

Bulacan, even before recording its first bird flu cases, had put in place disease control measures including stamping out, cleaning and disinfection operations, biosecurity and other quarantine activities to avert the risk of further spread from infected premises.

Based on BAI's tally as of April 19, the provinces of Pampanga, Nueva Ecija and Leyte still have cases of bird flu affecting quail, native chicken, duck, game fowl and broiler breeder chicken.

Bulacan has 135 registered poultry facilities as of March this year, according to the DA.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1934108/bulacan-is-17th-province-declared-free-of-bird-flu>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

More than 2,000 Leyte farmers get P10M in FARM cash aid

By: [Luisa Cabato](#) - Reporter / [@luisacabatoINQ](#)

[INQUIRER.net](#) / 04:21 PM April 27, 2024

MANILA, Philippines — A total of 2,044 farmers in San Miguel, Leyte, received cash aid amounting to P10 million from the government’s Farmers’ Assistance for Recovery and Modernization (FARM) Program, House Speaker Martin Romualdez announced in a statement on Saturday.

Each farmer received P5,000 in a ceremony at the San Miguel Municipal Gymnasium on Friday.

Romualdez said the funds were sourced from the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations Program of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

The FARM program was designed to “lower the price of rice” by utilizing and maximizing current government interventions available to farmers.

It also aims to assist the National Food Authority in accomplishing its mandate to increase its buffer stock, which can be used in case of emergency, as the farmer-beneficiaries were encouraged to sell at least 100 kilograms of their rice harvest to the government.

“We established this program so the government can reciprocate your heroism in helping millions of Filipino families put food on the table. For President [Ferdinand] Marcos Jr., it’s very important for each Filipino is important and that includes all of you,” Romualdez said.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1934289/more-than-2000-leyte-farmers-get-p10m-in-farm-cash-aid>

REMATE:

South Cotabato isinailalim sa state of calamity sa El Niño

April 27, 2024 10:36

MANILA, Philippines – Inilagay sa state of calamity ang South Cotabato dahil sa epekto ng El Niño.

Inaprubahan ng Sangguniang Panlalawigan ng South Cotabato ang deklarasyong ito dahil sa matinding tagtuyot na naranasan sa probinsya, partikular na sa mga bayan ng Banga, Norala, Surallah, Tandingan, at Tboli.

Sa preliminary reports mula sa Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office-South Cotabato, nakita na nagdulot na ang El Niño ng P201.9 milyong halaga ng pinsala sa mga pananim, livestock at imprastruktura.

“These towns have been particularly hard-hit, prompting their declaration of a state of calamity,” saad mula sa abiso ng pamahalaang panlalawigan.

Nauna nang idineklara ang state of calamity sa Surallah, South Cotabato dahil pa rin sa El Niño.

Ayon sa Office of the Municipal Agriculturist sa Surallah, halos 1,000 ektarya na ng taniman at palaisdaan ang natutuyo hanggang noong Marso 31.

Umabot naman sa halos P71 milyon ang pinsala sa agrikultura sa panahong iyon.

Sa ilalim ng state of calamity, pinapayagan ang mga lokal na pamahalaan na gamitin ang kani-kanilang **calamity fund allocations**. *RNT/JGC*

<https://remate.ph/south-cotabato-isinailalim-sa-state-of-calamity-sa-el-nino/>

REMATE:

Pilipinas mag-iimport ng 25K MT ng isda – DA

April 27, 2024 12:33



MANILA, Philippines – Upang masiguro ang stable na suplay ng isda bago ang closed fishing season, pumayag ang Department of Agriculture (DA) na mag-angkat ng 25,000 metriko tonelada ng frozen fish para sa mga pamilihan.

Sa ilalim ng Memorandum Order No. 17, inisyu ng DA ang Certificate of Necessity to Import (CNI) ng 25, 000 MT ng frozen small pelagic fish para sa mga pamilihan mula Oktubre 1 hanggang Disyembre 31, 2024.

“Makakatulong ito para mag-stabilize ang presyo kapag panahong closed fishing season dahil alam naman natin na talaga magkakaroon ng gap sa supply gawa ng sarado ang ating mga pangunahing fishing grounds,” pahayag ni DA spokesperson Nazzer Briguera.

Ang bilang ay mas mababa sa 35,000 MT allowable imports noong nakaraang taon.

Sinabi ng DA na ang Maximum Importable Volume (MIV) sa ilalim ng CNI ay ilalaan sa mga registered importer batay sa mga sumusunod:

— For registered importers under the commercial fishing sector, 80% of the MIV shall be allocated based on the fish landings of each of the commercial fishing operators who have valid Commercial Fishing Vessel and Gear License (CFVGL) qualified to participate in the current importation period. For the volume of landings outside PFDA ports, only 20% of said volume shall be credited for the computation of the allocation.

— For the fisheries associations/ cooperatives, the 20% of the MIV shall be based on their performance taking into consideration the percentage arrival of fish imported from the immediately preceding importation period.

“Moreover, the BFAR shall assess the financial capacity of the importer under this category. 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,” dagdag ng kagawaran.

Naglabas din ito ng panuntunan sa alokasyon sa qualified importer.

Sa kabila nito, sinabi ng National Federation of Small Fisherfolk Organization in the Philippines o PAMALAKAYA na ang pag-aangkat ng isda ay walang basehan at maaaring makaapekto ito sa lokal na industriya ng bansa.

“Kung ang dahilan natin, possible na meron tayong shortage supply, gumawa tayo ng programa (kung) paano natin maangkupan yung possible na magkaroon ng kakulangan ng supply sa sarili nating produksyon,” ayon sa chairman ng grupo na si Fernando Hicap. *RNT/JGC*

<https://remate.ph/pilipinas-mag-iimport-ng-25k-mt-ng-isda-da/>

P15-B allocated for El Niño relief

By Niña Myka Pauline Arceo

April 27, 2024

BUDGET authorities are prepared to help address the impact of the El Niño phenomenon, with the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund (NDRRMF) currently holding P15.507 billion.

"We are prepared to support all operations that seek to cushion the negative impacts of the dry spell affecting various provinces in the country," Budget Secretary Amenah Pangandaman said in a statement on Friday.

As of April 24, Pangandaman said the disaster relief fund stands at over P15 billion.

The amount is included in NDRRMF's P20.5-billion budget for 2024.

The remaining balance includes P14.85 billion from the 2024 General Appropriations Act (GAA) and P653.7 million from the 2023 continuing appropriations.

It incorporates the P1 billion for parametric insurance coverage of government facilities against natural disasters.

In addition to the built-in Quick Response Fund (QRF) of P7.925 billion, P1 billion is provided to the Department of Agriculture, P3 billion to the Department of Education, P500 million to the Department of Health, P50 million each to the Bureau of Fire Protection and Philippine National Police, P500 million to the Office of Civil Defense, P1 billion to the Department of Public Works and Highways, P1.75 billion to the Department of Social Welfare and Development, and P75 million to the Philippine Coast Guard.

"Aside from that, several identified agencies may mobilize their QRF allocated in their respective budgets when necessary," Pangandaman said.

She said the NDRRMF will be used for aid, relief and rehabilitation services to communities affected by natural or human-induced disasters in the current year or the past two years, pending approval from the President.

The fund can also supplement the budgets of agencies with QRF provisions when their balances drop to 50 percent, subject to approval from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). In addition to the NDRRMF, budget authorities have allocated P4.5 billion for the Crop Insurance Program of the Philippine Crop Insurance Corp. (PCIC).

This year's P4.5-billion appropriation is expected to cover crop insurance premiums for over 2.292 million farmers.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/04/27/news/national/p15-b-allocated-for-el-nio-relief/1943485>

REMATE:

Bulacan ligtas na sa H5N1 avian flu – DA

April 27, 2024 13:39



MANILA, Philippines – Idineklara na ng Department of Agriculture na malaya sa H5N1 avian influenza ang probinsya ng Bulacan.

Sa pahayag, iginawad na ng DA ang AI-free status “more than 90 days since cleaning and disinfection activities, and the last surveillance which yielded negative results.”

Bago ang deklarasyon, nagpatupad ang DA na mahigpit na hakbang, kabilang ang depopulation, disinfection, at logistics restrictions, sa 135 poultry facilities sa Bulacan.

Inilagay din ang surveillance zones ng isa hanggang pitong kilometro sa paligid ng infected farms.

Batay sa monitoring reports ng Bureau of Animal Industry, naitala ang impeksyon sa mga pato, native chicken, chicken layers, at broiler feeders sa Baliwag City, Pulilan, Santa Maria, San Rafael, San Miguel, at San Ildefonso mula Enero 2022 hanggang Pebrero 2023.

Ang huling H5N1 infection ay iniulat sa game fowl farm sa Santa Maria noong Mayo 2023. *RNT/JGC*

<https://remate.ph/bulacan-ligtas-na-sa-h5n1-avian-flu-da/>

REMATE:

Pork products mula NegOr, pwede na sa Cebu

April 27, 2024 15:10



MANILA, Philippines – Pinayagan nang makapasok sa Cebu ang mga baboy at pork-related products mula Negros Oriental.

Ang ban ay inalis sa pamamagitan ng Executive Order (EO) No. 17 na inisyu ni Cebu Gov. Gwen Garcia nitong Huwebes, Abril 25.

Matatandaan na ipinagbawal noong Mayo 26, 2023 ang pagpasok ng mga baboy at pork-related products mula Negros Oriental sa pagpasok ng Cebu.

Ipinatupad ito dahil sa kumpirmadong kaso ng African Swine Fever (ASF) sa Negros Oriental.

Ani Garcia sa EO No. 17, ang temporary ban ay inalis dahil sa pangangailangan sa mga baboy at pagtaas ng presyo ng lechon sa Cebu.

Nakaapekto na sa mga consumer sa Cebu ang tumataas na presyo ng lechon.

Bagamat inalis na ang ban sa lechon, naglatag naman si Garcia ng requirements sa pagpasok ng live hogs, biik, at iba pang pork-related products sa Cebu.

Isa rito ay ang pagpapakita ng certificate na nagpapakita ng mga baboy sa pagpasok sa Cebu ay ASF-free.

Kailangan din ang shipping permit.

Para sa imported at local frozen pork products, ang meat inspection certificate ay dapat ding ipakita. *RNT/JGC*

<https://remate.ph/pork-products-mula-negor-pwede-na-sa-cebu/>