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MANILA BULLETIN:

DA chief: PCIC can motivate new generation of farmers

BY GABRIELL CHRISTEL GALANG

May 18, 2024 12:30 PM

Following the challenges faced by the rice industry in the past few months, the Department of Agriculture (DA) believes that the Philippine Crop Insurance Corp. (PCIC) would motivate more Filipinos to seek a career in agriculture.

President Ferdinand Marcos recently signed an executive order (EO 60) that allows the PCIC to return to the DA's management to enhance agricultural insurance protection for small farmers, fisherfolk, and other farm stakeholders.

The PCIC was originally made as a government-owned or controlled corporation (GOCC) in 1995 under the DA to insure farmers against losses from natural disasters, plant diseases, and pests.

However, this corporation was moved to the Department of Finance (DOF) by former President Rodrigo Duterte to rationalize and monitor the insurers' operations and coordination of policies and programs.

Because of the newly signed EO 60, the seats of the finance chief and the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) within the PCIC board have been removed, while the PCIC president and Land Bank of the Philippines will remain.

"One board seat each is reserved for the Executive Director of the Agricultural Credit Policy Council of the DA and the representative of the private insurance industry, who will still be nominated by the DOF secretary," the DA said.

Additionally, three board seats are reserved for the representatives of the subsistence farmers' sector.

Meanwhile, one of the recent programs that have been sought after to help farmers produce more yield is the contract farming agreement.

This program was initiated by the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) to utilize rice varieties in increasing production, which in turn, can be sold at P29 per kilo in Kadiwa stores.

The current price for well-milled rice ranges from P48 to P55 per kilo, while the regular milled rice is at around P46 to P53.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/5/18/da-chief-pcic-can-motivate-new-generation-of-farmers>

Marcos transfers PH Crop Insurance Corp to DA

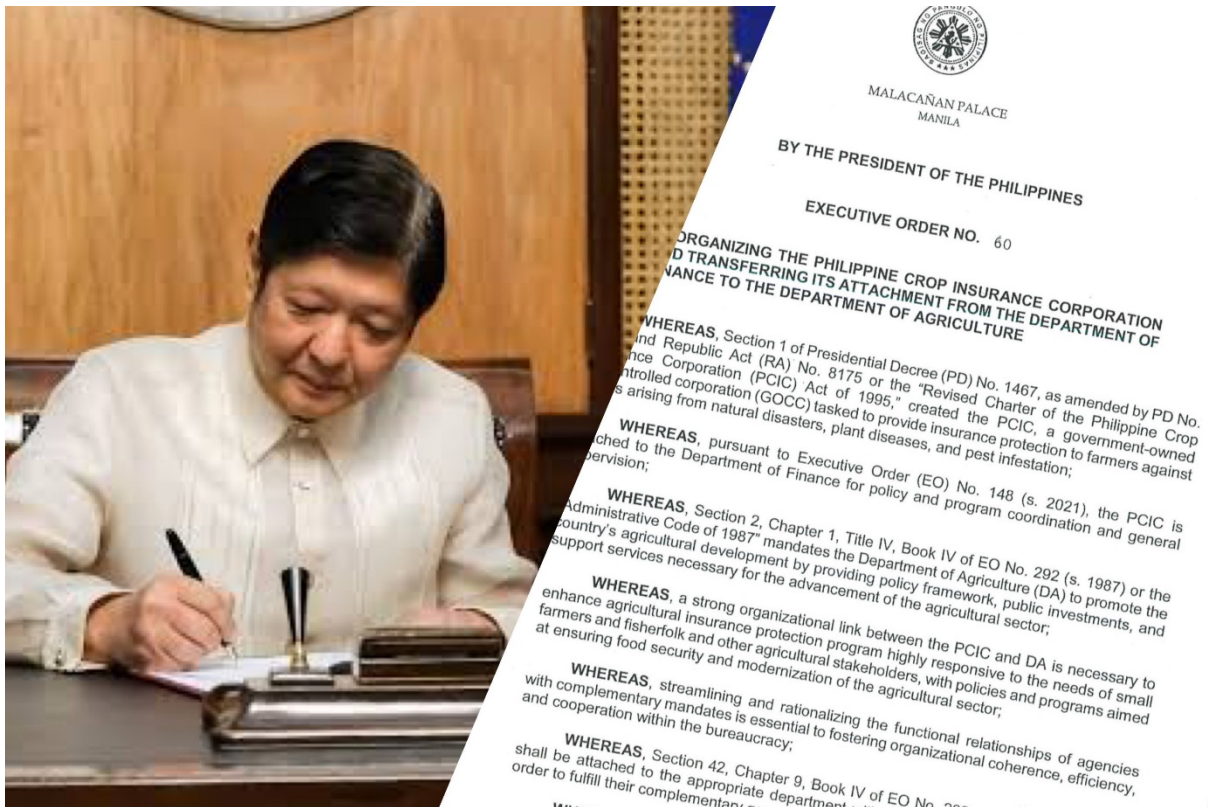
BY ARGYLL CYRUS GEDUCOS

May 18, 2024 09:33 AM

AT A GLANCE

- In his EO, Marcos said a strong organizational link between the PCIC and DA is necessary to enhance an agricultural insurance protection program highly responsive to the needs of small farmers, fisherfolk, and other agricultural stakeholders.

President Marcos has issued an executive order (EO) transferring the Philippine Crop Insurance Corp. (PCIC) from the Department of Finance (DOF) to the Department of Agriculture (DA) to make it more responsive to the needs of small farmers, fisherfolk, and other agricultural stakeholders.



The EO, released on Saturday, May 18, was signed by Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin on May 13.

In his EO, Marcos said a strong organizational link between the PCIC and DA is necessary to enhance an agricultural insurance protection program highly responsive to the needs of small farmers, fisherfolk, and other agricultural stakeholders, with policies and programs aimed at ensuring food security and modernization of the agricultural sector.

The document furthered that streamlining and rationalizing the functional relationships of agencies with complementary mandates are essential to fostering organizational coherence, efficiency, and cooperation within the bureaucracy.

Under the reorganization, the PCIC Board shall now comprise the following:

- Land Bank of the Philippines president
- PCIC president
- Agricultural Credit Policy Council executive director
- A representative from the private insurance industry appointed by the President upon nomination by the Secretary of Finance.
- Three representatives from the subsistence farmers' sector, preferably representing agrarian reform beneficiaries, cooperatives, or associations from Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao appointed by the President upon their nomination by different farmer organizations and/or cooperatives

The appointment or designation of the chairperson, vice-chairperson, and other officers of the board of directors shall be in accordance with the GOCC Governance Act of 2011.

Republic Act (RA) No. 8175, or the Revised Charter of the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC) Act of 1995, created the PCIC, a government-owned or -controlled corporation (GOCC) tasked to provide insurance protection to farmers against losses arising from natural disasters, plant diseases, and pest infestation.

The Administrative Code of 1987 mandates the DA to promote the country's agricultural development by providing policy framework, public investments, and support services necessary for the advancement of the agricultural sector.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/5/18/marcos-transfers-ph-crop-insurance-corp-to-da>

MANILA BULLETIN:

DTI eyes Qatar investments for cooling systems, dairy factory

BY KHRISCIELLE YALAO

May 17, 2024 04:35 PM

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) is exploring investment opportunities with two Qatari firms to boost dairy production and cooling system manufacturing in the Philippines. DTI Secretary Alfredo Pascual met with officials from Qatar district cooling system (DCS) provider Qatar Cool and food brand Baladna to discuss potential partnerships during the Qatar Economic Forum (QEF) on May 16.

Pascual met with Qatar Cool Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Yasser Al Jaidah and Commercial and Finance Director Mohannad Khader to follow up on possibly establishing DCS in the country, and partnering with major district-wide or township developers locally.

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Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Secretary Fred Pascual and Qatar Cool (QC) Chief Executive Officer Yasser Al Jaidah.

“The DTI, together with relevant stakeholders, is committed to supporting Qatar Cool’s exploration of the Philippine market. The Department of Energy (DOE) will further assess QC’s business model for potential Board of Investment (BOI) endorsement,” Pascual said in a statement on May 17.

According to DTI, Qatar Cool had already visited the Philippines to scout for locations in March this year, and have conducted meetings with stakeholders.

The Philippine party recommended townships or dense communities outside of the National Capital Region (NCR), particularly sites that house offices or workspaces for the information technology and business process management (IT-BPM) sector, that could benefit from the DCS.

With Qatar Cool's cost- and energy-efficient solutions, the agency also encouraged the firm to contribute to developing the cooling systems in the country's current priority infrastructure projects, namely the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) and New Manila International Airport (NMIA).

“The DTI looks forward to further discussions with Qatar Cool and facilitating their successful investment journey in the Philippines, which can contribute significantly to the country's energy efficiency goals,” Pascual added.



Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Secretary Fred Pascual and Baladna Board Member Aidan Tynan.

Meanwhile, Pascual and Baladna Board Member Aidan Tynan discussed the potential establishment of a dairy facility in the Philippines, given the local demand for dairy products with almost P3 billion imports recorded.

The Trade Secretary also noted the Philippines' support and compliance to Philippine National Standards (PNS) on labeling fresh milk, UHT milk, and imported frozen milk concentrate.

The National Dairy Authority (NDA) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will also continue to discuss and review the PNS, said the DTI.

“The Philippine government stands ready to support Baladna to realize its planned investments in the country. Through a whole of government approach, the DTI and the Board of Investments are ready to facilitate business-to-business meetings and introductions to potential joint venture partners for Baladna. Additionally, the Department of Agriculture (DA) is actively identifying suitable locations for the proposed dairy facilities,” Pascual said.

The agency will also help the DA make policies to create a “level playing field” for all milk and dairy producers in the country, he added.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/5/17/dti-eyes-qatar-investments-for-cooling-systems-dairy-factory>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Performance of Philippines' rice sector rose by 7% due to RTL—DA

BY JEL SANTOS

May 17, 2024 04:00 PM



The performance of the Philippines' rice sector has gone up by seven percent since the Rice Tariffication Law (RTL) was enacted, the Department of Agriculture (DA) said on Friday, May 17.

“Nagpapasalamat kami dito sa RTL, lalo na dito sa RCEF dahil malaki ang naitulong nito – tumaas almost by seven percent iyong ating naging performance ng rice sector simula noong maipasa ang RTL at napakaganda nito para sa ating overall rice productivity (We are grateful for the RTL, especially the RCEF because it has been a great help – our rice sector's performance has increased by almost seven percent since the RTL was passed, and this is very beneficial for our overall rice productivity),” Assistant Secretary Arnel de Mesa, the spokesperson of the DA, said.

He cited the agency's data from 2019 to 2023 wherein rice production in the 57 RCEF provinces increased by approximately seven percent.

The RCEF, according to the agency, is a key component of the RTL which is currently under review for potential amendments.

De Mesa noted that the DA is pushing to increase the RCEF fund to P15 billion.

“Dito sa gagawin na extension at amendment ng RTL, iminumungkahi na gawing at least P15 billion na iyong RCEF at iyong excess collection naman ay gagamitin para rin sa irrigation, para sa Rice Farmers Financial Assistance – ito iyong limang-libong piso, Niña, na pinamamahagi rin sa mga magsasaka na hindi tataas sa dalawang ektarya iyong kanilang sinasaka (In the proposed extension and amendment of the RTL, it is suggested to increase the RCEF to at least 15 billion pesos. The excess collection will also be used for irrigation and for the Rice Farmers Financial Assistance – this is the five thousand pesos, Niña, that is distributed to farmers cultivating no more than two hectares,” the spokesperson stated.

Recently, the DA called legislators to extend the RCEF until 2030 as the RCEF or Rice Fund would expire next year.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. characterized the RCEF as a dynamic economic strategy that has allowed the government to leverage significant tariff from imported rice to enhance farmers’ productivity and incomes.

“[The Rice Fund] has provided a substantial revenue stream for the government to finance essential development projects aimed at improving the competitiveness of the rice sector in the Philippines,” he stated.

Over a million Filipino rice farmers have benefited from the Rice Fund since its implementation in 2019, Laurel noted.

Rice Fund allocates P10 billion annually for the distribution of farm machinery and seeds, among other resources.

Also, the agency proposed changes to the RTL that would allow the National Food Authority (NFA) temporary powers to intervene in the rice market as needed to correct significant price disparities and perform price stabilization functions in times of food security emergencies and periods of sudden price hikes and sustained high prices of rice, creation of an office that would coordinate various rice programs of the government, and strengthening regulatory functions specifically targeting anti-competitive practices such as rice hoarding and price manipulation to protect consumers and ensure market fairness.

To recall, the Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) has earlier warned lawmakers that the proposal to subsidize the sale of NFA’s rice to the public is detrimental to the country’s rice farmers.

It noted that the proposed scheme could be costly and difficult to manage.

Per the studies conducted by the FFF, the NFA rice subsidy of P10 per kilo will require P31 billion a year to service the 4.4 million poor households covered by the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps).

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/5/17/performance-of-philippines-rice-sector-rose-by-7-due-to-rtl-da>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Cebu province set to be placed under state of calamity due to high heat index

BY CALVIN CORDOVA

May 18, 2024 03:56 PM

CEBU CITY – The province of Cebu will be placed under a state of calamity due to the devastation caused by the extremely high heat index.

Gov. Gwen Garcia on Friday, May 17, announced that she will issue an executive order for the formal declaration of the state of calamity.



GARCIA (FB)

“This will be further supported by a board resolution that will be passed when the Provincial Board meets this Monday (May 20),” Garcia said in a press conference.

While the province will be placed under a state of calamity, the provincial government will not be giving dole outs. Instead, the province will look for ways to give the Cebuanos opportunities to survive the drought.

“We will further discuss this to address this matter,” said Garcia.

According to Provincial Agriculturist Roldan Saragena, the agricultural damage in the province caused by the El Niño phenomenon has already reached P176.8 million.

Saragena said that as of May 16, 12,312 farmers and fishermen in the province have been affected by the drought.

Partial report coming from 32 local agriculturist's offices showed that the drought has already affected 3,179.32 hectares of land.

Garcia said affected farmers will receive assistance from the Philippine Crop Insurance Corp. (PCIC).

She said the province is also looking for ways to address water shortage.

The governor said that there is a “shortfall” of 60,000 cubic meters in Metro Cebu after the Mananga and Lusaran Rivers which are the source of water by Metro Cebu Water District have dried up. To help address the water shortage, the province has issued special permits to six contractors to desilt the Mananga River.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/5/18/cebu-province-set-to-be-placed-under-state-of-calamity-due-to-high-heat-index>

MANILA BULLETIN:

Prices of rice, other food items drop in early May

BY XANDER DAVE CEBALLOS

May 17, 2024 02:29 PM

Most prices of basic commodities experienced a decline during the first days of May, based on data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

A kilogram of well milled rice would cost a consumer P56.52 during the period, which was lower than the P56.98 and P57.04 recorded for the commodity previously.

For a medium-sized chicken egg, its price also dropped to P8.51 per piece from the P8.58 in the second phase of April and P8.68 in the first phase.

Likewise, the price of galunggong also had a decline which stood at P195.41 per kilogram, lower than P197.29 and P204.49 in April.

Further, a kilogram of mango cost only P145.08 during the first week of May from P151.48 and P157.63 last month.

Meanwhile, two commodities experienced price increases such as baguio beans which rose to P124.13 and hawaiian ginger at P146.53 per kilogram from P108.26 and P136.87, respectively.

The country's inflation rate went up to 3.8 percent in April from 3.7 percent in March 2024 as prompted by increase in food prices.

Food inflation rose to 6.3 percent from the previous month's 5.7 percent, which was attributed to vegetables (up by 4.3 percent), fish (0.4 percent), and ready-made products (4.8 percent).

Rice, on the other hand, recorded a lower inflation rate of 23.9 percent in April, down from 24.4 percent in March, yet it remains the primary driver of inflation, accounting for 2.1 percentage points.

Even with higher prices, the agriculture sector still posted a 0.4 percent growth despite the impacts of El Niño mainly driven by higher poultry and egg production.

National Economic and Development Authority Secretary Arsenio M. Balisacan said that it will continue to implement a whole-of-government approach to ease the impact of El Niño while preparing for La Niña.

"We are collaborating with distribution utilities to manage the increasing electricity demand and working with private water concessionaires to address leaks and wastage, ensuring water security," Balisacan said.

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/5/17/psa-prices-of-rice-other-food-items-drop-in-early-may>

MANILA BULLETIN:

May is the month of festivals and National Heritage Month

BY DR. FLORANGEL ROSARIO BRAID

May 18, 2024 00:13 AM

PAGBABAGO



The month of May is National Heritage Month, established through Presidential Proclamation 439 in 2023 for the purpose of “creating among the people a consciousness, respect, and love for the legacies of the nation’s cultural history.” The purpose is not merely to make people aware of museums and centers of art and culture, but also to acknowledge the value and contribution of various ethnic cultures and indigenous peoples.

During this month we are encouraged to visit places like the baroque churches in the country, the town of Vigan, Banaue Rice Terraces, the Tubbataha Reefs, Fort Santiago, and the Wildlife Sanctuary in Davao Oriental, among others. But more than that, we are encouraged to learn about our shared identity by passing on stories of our ancestors to our children, participation in historical enactments, as well as learning traditional dances and handicrafts.

May is also a time of festivals when most provinces celebrate events such as Flores de Mayo and Santacruzán, a religious festival in honor of the Blessed Virgin. There is the annual Pahiyas, a colorful display of “kiping” or colorful and decorative rice wafers, as well as fruits, vegetables and various agricultural products in the towns of Lucban and Sariaya, Quezon; the Pista y Dayat, a thanksgiving festival for the bounty of the sea in Lingayen and Dagupan, Pangasinan; the Magayon festival, a month-long celebration of the beauty and culture of Albay province. There is the Pulilan Carabao festival in Angono, Rizal; the Obando Fertility Rites in Bulacan; and the annual Antipolo pilgrimage.

While fisherfolk in several regions of our country gather to celebrate the gift of the ocean, their counterparts in the West Philippine Sea (WPS) continue to suffer from harassment by Chinese vessels.

To help address the plight of fisherfolk in the WPS, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) had launched a project that seeks to improve livelihood opportunities for fisherfolk in the area. Under the 370-kilometer economic zone, the WPS will have fuel subsidies, new fishing tools and post-harvest equipment and other livelihood programs. Pagasa fishermen received P5 million worth of livelihood assistance – from fishing related tools and equipment including a 30-foot fiberglass boats, blast freezers, and fishing paraphernalia. The UP Marine Institute estimated the value of fisheries resources in the WPS at “billions of pesos.” The WPS is expected to improve the country’s fish supply since 373,733 fisherfolk depend on the West Philippine Sea. (Florangel.braid@gmail.com)

<https://mb.com.ph/2024/5/18/may-is-the-month-of-festivals-and-national-heritage-month>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

Philippines gets P575 million to address climate change

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

May 18, 2024 | 12:00am



A boy and a carabao roam in their dried-up farm in Rosario, Batangas on April 9, 2024.

Russell Palma / The Philippine STAR

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines has secured a financial boost of P575 million (\$10 million) to ramp up its programs aimed at addressing the worsening impacts of climate change.

In a statement, the Department of Finance said the Philippines is set to benefit from the new program grant of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) worth P575 million.

This came after the GCF recently concluded a four-day mission in the country to improve access to climate finance and catalyze sustainable development initiatives that would mitigate impacts of climate change.

The GCF is an international fund under the global climate treaty, the Paris Agreement of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It was

created to support low-emission development and climate resilience projects in developing countries such as the Philippines.

The GCF's latest grant to the Philippines will accelerate the implementation of climate-resilient projects in the sectors of agriculture, energy, biodiversity conservation, environment, transportation and waste, among others.

The People's Survival Fund, which champions adaptation, risk financing and loss and damage implementation at the local level, is being considered to harness the potential of the grant.

Finance Secretary Ralph Recto said projects to be developed with the GCF would not only impact local communities but will also help build a more secure and sustainable future.

The Philippines currently receives funding from GCF for two single-country and six multiple-country projects and five readiness grants valued at \$139.9 million.

Meanwhile, four priority project proposals worth \$188 million are in the pipeline for GCF funding that will leverage at least \$119 million worth of co-financing from the government and other partners.

The GCF mission also focused on private sector involvement in financing climate solutions, as well as employing innovative approaches and technologies in driving sustainable development.

<https://www.philstar.com/business/2024/05/18/2355895/philippines-gets-p575-million-address-climate-change>

THE PHILIPPINE STAR:

State of calamity set in Cebu due to heat

The Philippine Star

May 18, 2024 | 12:00am



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

STAR / Walter Bollozos

MANILA, Philippines — Cebu Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia is placing the province under a state of calamity because of the intense heat and the lingering impact of the El Niño phenomenon.

Garcia is set to issue an executive order for the declaration, which will be followed by a resolution set to be passed by the provincial board next week.

“This prompts us to think about ways and means of addressing this huge challenge, not necessarily giving ayuda. But we will be helping farmers help themselves. That is the culture that we wish to nurture in the entire province, not the culture of mendicancy. You only get lazy people from that,” Garcia said.

The farmers and fisherfolk in Cebu province who are affected by the drought are insured through the Philippine Crop Insurance Corp., according to Garcia.

The Provincial Agriculturist's Office of Cebu has reported that P176.8 million worth of crops and aquafarms have been damaged so far in the province due to El Niño.

The damage assessment reported by PAO is the partial consolidated report from the 32 local government units in the province as of May 16.

Partial data also showed that 12,312 fishermen and farmers have been affected.

Aside from the damage to agriculture, the provincial government is also addressing the water crisis being experienced in the province, especially in Metro Cebu.

<https://www.philstar.com/nation/2024/05/18/2355969/state-calamity-set-cebu-due-heat>

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER:

How to reach the full potential of the Rice Tariffication Law

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

[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#) / 02:10 AM May 18, 2024

The Rice Tariffication Law (RTL) is in the news lately as it is being trumpeted as a partial solution to the rice crisis. While amendments are being introduced, effective implementation of the current law is also needed.

This was what the AgriFisheries Alliance (AFA) said in a position paper and during a testimony at a May 14 Senate hearing on the matter. AFA is composed of three coalitions: Alyansa Agrikultura (AA), representing farmers and fisherfolk; Philippine Chamber of Agriculture and Food, Inc. (PCAFI) representing agribusiness; and Coalition for Agriculture Modernization in the Philippines (Camp) representing science and academe.

Here are AFA's three priority recommendations, plus valuable insights from Senators Cynthia Villar and Imee Marcos.

Implementation

The first is for an effective implementation of the law. Improvements were seen since the law's problematic start in 2019.

The Senate was correct in legislating a 35-percent tariff to replace the damaging quantitative import restriction. However, the 35-percent level required by the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreement should have been supplemented by the executive branch with a WTO-sanctioned safeguard measure of an effective additional tariff.

The Senate was not able to give the executive branch the guidance needed so that the RTL would not seriously hurt farmers.

Misleading news then followed from several sources: Rice retail prices were reported to have decreased by 14 percent from 1988, thanks to the RTL.

But 1988 was an abnormal year because imports were very much delayed because of government inaction. Compared to 2017, retail prices decreased by only 2 percent. What was also not often stated was that rice farmer incomes fell by a disastrous 25 percent. Again, this is because the Senate was not able to guide the executive branch on the matter.

The Senate must now use its oversight function to ensure that the executive branch takes action consistent with the objectives of the RTL. During the hearing, Villar showed how her oversight guidance helped make the RTL more effective in the area of mechanization.

Half of the P10 billion allocated for mechanization had two major implementation problems. Aside from extremely slow disbursement, farmers were receiving equipment not appropriate for their needs. In addition, they were not trained to operate the equipment, which was eventually left idle.

Tapping the oversight function, Villar influenced both the speed and quality of the disbursement while also ensuring proper equipment training. This oversight function must also be used for other RTL components.

Amendments

The second recommendation is related to the oft-quoted phrase: “Do not throw the baby out with the bath water.” In abolishing (correctly) the harmful rice import quantitative restriction, certain important regulatory functions necessary for producer and consumer welfare were also cut. These must immediately be restored.

Examples are the government’s ability to quickly import rice during crisis situations (only as a last resort), easy access to information such as importer details, rice shipments and storage areas, and inherent responsibilities such as visiting warehouses to prevent hoarding.

While both Villar and Marcos agree to restore some of these functions, they are not for giving them back to the National Food Authority because of its deplorable track record. Options they mentioned were to give these to the Agriculture Secretary, an interagency task force, or even a new commission. They have a very valid point.

The third recommendation is for other RTL components to be improved. For example, the P1-billion allocation to government banks for credit can be redirected because these banks are already awash in funds.

They hesitate to lend because of the risks in agriculture. One possibility is to transform the credit component into a credit guarantee that will minimize agriculture risk.

If guided by the Senate, this could even become a model to follow for our now suboptimal agriculture credit guarantee schemes.

To fulfill the full potential of RTL, the amendments as well as the Senate oversight function on implementation are needed. Given our critical rice situation, it is hoped that action on these points will be immediately implemented.

<https://business.inquirer.net/459331/how-to-reach-the-full-potential-of-the-rice-tariffication-law>

REMATE:

Presyo ng ilang bilihin bahagyang bumaba ngayong Mayo

May 17, 2024 18:24



MANILA, Philippines- Karamihan sa presyo ng mga pangunahing bilihin ay bumaba sa mga unang araw ng buwan ng Mayo, base sa datos mula sa Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

Nagkakahalaga ang kilo ng well-milled rice ng P56.52 sa nasabing period, mas mababa kumpara sa P56.98 at P57.04 na presyo nitong unang naitala.

Para sa medium-sized na itlog, bumaba rin ang presyo nito sa P8.51 kada piraso mula P8.58 sa ikalawang bahagi ng Abril at P8.68 sa unang bahagi.

Gayundin, mas mura nang mabibili ang galunggong sa P195.41 kada kilo, kumpara sa P197.29 at P204.49 na presyo nito noong Abril.

Gayundin, nagkakahalaga na lamang ang kilo ng mangga ng P145.08 sa unang linggo ng Mayo mula P151.48 at P157.63 noong nakaraang buwan.

Samantala, umakyat ang presyo ng dalawang bilihin– ang baguio beans na P124.13 na at hawaiian ginger na P146.53 kada kilo mula P108.26 at P136.87.

Bumilis ang inflation rate ng bansa sa 3.8 porsyento noong Abril mula 3.7 porsyento noong Mayo 2024. RNT/SA

<https://remate.ph/presyo-ng-ilang-bilihin-bahagyang-bumaba-ngayong-mayo/>

REMATE:

State crop insurer ibinalik sa DA

May 17, 2024 17:43



MANILA, Philippines- Opisyal nang ibinalik ni Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos Jr. ang Philippine Crop Insurance Corp. (PCIC) sa Department of Agriculture (DA).

Sa katunayan, nagpalabas ang Pangulo ng isang Executive Order (EO) para rito.

Matatandaang September 2021 nang ilipat ni dating Pangulong Rodrigo Roa Duterte ang PCIC sa ilalim ng pangangasiwa ng Department of Finance (DOF) upang epektibong magampanan nito ang mandato na magbigay ng insurance protection sa mga magsasaka.

Makaraan ang tatlong taon, nilagdaan ni Pangulong Marcos ang Executive Order No. 60 na nag-aatas na ibalik ang state crop insurer sa 'original parent agency' nito.

“The PCIC is hereby attached to the DA for policy and program coordination,” ang sinabi ni Pangulong Marcos sa EO No. 60.

Sa kabilang dako, nilikha ang PCIC noong 1995 bilang government-owned or -controlled corporation (GOCC) na may tungkuling magbigay ng insurance protection sa mga magsasaka laban sa mga pagkalugi dahil sa “natural disasters, plant diseases at pest infestation.”

Ang GOCC ay orihinal na naka-attach sa DA.

Sa pagbabalik ng PCIC sa ilalim ng DA, binigyang diin ng Chief Executive ang pangangailangan para sa “strong organizational link between the PCIC and DA...to enhance agricultural insurance protection programs highly responsive to the needs of small farmers and fisherfolk and other agricultural stakeholders, with policies and programs aimed at ensuring food security and modernization of agriculture.”

Sa kabila ng pagbabalik ng PCIC sa Agriculture Department, naniniwala naman ang Pangulo na hindi na kailangan para sa Agriculture chief na maging isa sa nakaupo sa pitong pwesto sa state crop insurer’s board.

Inalis din ni Pangulong Marcos ang pwesto ng Finance chief at Government Service Insurance System sa PCIC board.

Samantala, ang PCIC at Land Bank of the Philippines ay mananatili sa crop insurer’s board.

“One board seat each is reserved for the Executive Director of the Agricultural Credit Policy Council of the DA and the representative of the private insurance industry—who will still be nominated by the Finance secretary,” ayon sa ulat.

“Moreover, three board seats, instead of just one, were assigned to representatives of the farmers sector,” dagdag pa rito.

Nakasaad sa EO No. 60 na ang appointment o designation ng PCIC board chairman ay kailangan na sumunod sa mga alituntunin sa ilalim ng GOCC Governance Act of 2011.

“We are pleased that the PCIC is back under the wings of the DA. This gives us the scope to assure farmers, livestock and poultry raisers, aquaculturists, and others in production-side so we could shield them from losses that may be caused by disasters, pests and diseases,” ayon kay Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr.

Winika naman ni Tiu Laurel na “the safety net provided by PCIC would hopefully encourage more Filipinos to engage in agriculture and create a new generation of farmers.” **Kris Jose**

<https://remate.ph/state-crop-insurer-ibinalik-sa-da/>

REMATE:

PH gov't nakahanap ng solusyon sa mataas na presyo ng bigas – PBBM

May 17, 2024 16:28



MANILA, Philippines- Naniniwala si Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos Jr., na nakahanap na ang gobyerno ng “best solution” para mapababa ang presyo ng bigas sa merkado sa gitna ng planong sertipikahang ‘urgent’ ang panukalang amyendahan ang Rice Tariffication Law (RTL).

Sa isang ambush interview sa Cagayan de Oro City, sinabi ni Pangulong Marcos na nakaisip ang Congress bicameral committee ng mga hakbang para tugunan ang presyo ng bigas.

“I don’t want to preempt the bicameral committee, but I think we have found the solution already,” ayon sa Pangulo.

“The mechanism will be different from that which is proposed but, in the end, and net effect pareho pa rin, makakapag-import ang national government,” dagdag na wika ng Chief Executive .

Tinuran ng Pangulo na kapwa nakahanap ng solusyon ang dalawang Kapulungan ng Kongreso para payagan ang pamahalaan na mag-angkat ng bigas na sa huli ay makababawas sa presyo ng bigas.

“Pagka mataas ang presyo ng bigas, magbibitaw tayo ng bigas, magbebenta tayo ng mababa para sumunod ang merkado,” ayon sa Pangulo.

Iyon mga lamang, hindi naman matukoy pa sa ngayon ng Pangulo kung anong ahensya ang pahihintulutan na mag-angkat ng bigas at bahala na aniya rito ang bicameral committee.

“Syempre, nakikipag-ugnayan tayo and I think we may have found the solution and nakikita natin that we will be immediately able to bring down the price of rice,” ayon kay Pangulong Marcos.

Sa kabila ng development, sinabi pa rin ni Pangulong Marcos na sesertipikahan pa rin niya bilang ‘urgent’ ang panukalang pag-amyenda sa RTL.

“Mase-certify talaga ‘yan,” pahayag ng Pangulo.

Nauna rito, sinabi ni Pangulong Marcos na ang pag-amyenda sa National Food Authority (NFA) charter at RTL ay makapagbibigay ng kakayahan sa pamahalaan na magkaroon ng boses sa oras na ang retail prices ng bigas ay tumaas.

“Mako-control natin, meron tayong influence doon sa presyuhan sa pagbili ng palay at sa pagbenta ng bigas. So that’s what we are going to do,” giit ni Marcos.

“I think it justifies the urgent certification,” dagdag na pahayag nito.

Ayon sa Pangulo, ang presyo ng bigas ay tumataas dahil walang kontrol ang gobyerno rito.

Nilagdaan ni dating Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte noong 2019, binawi ng RTL ang quantitative restrictions sa bigas at ipinakilala ang taripa para protektahan ang local rice producers.

Itinatag nito ang Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF), na nakapagpadagdag sa rice productivity at sumuporta sa mga magsasaka.

Binigyan nito ng mandato ang NFA na pangasiwaan ang buffer stock na ang pinanggalingan lamang ay ang lokal na magsasaka.

Gayunman, inisip naman ng mga kritiko na nabigo ang RTL na bawasan ang halaga ng presyo ng bigas at tumaas naman ang bilang ng murang imported na bigas sa merkado. **Kris Jose**

<https://remate.ph/ph-govt-nakahanap-ng-solusyon-sa-mataas-na-presyo-ng-bigas-pbbm/>

ABANTE:

PH Crop Insurance Corporation ibinalik sa superbisyon ng DA

- Abante News
- May 17, 2024



Ipinag-utos ni Pangulong Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. na ibalik sa superbisyon ng Department of Agriculture (DA) ang Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC) matapos na hawakan ito ng Department of Finance (DOF) sa loob ng tatlong taon.

Nakasaad ito sa Executive Order No. 60 na pirmado ng Pangulo noong Lunes, Mayo 13, 2024.

Nakasaad sa EO na kailangang paigtingin ang ugnayan ng PCIC at DA upang palakasin ang agricultural insurance protection programs para sa pangangailangan ng mga maliliit na magsasaka, mangingisda, at iba pang

agricultural stakeholders at masiguro ang seguridad sa pagkain at modernisasyon ng agrikultura.

Itinatag ang PCIC noong 1995 bilang government-owned-and controlled corporation sa ilalim ng DA. Subalit noong Setyembre 2021, inilipat ito ni dating Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte sa DOF batay sa rekomendasyon ng Governance Commission for GOCCs upang mamonitor sa pangkalahatan ang operasyon ng PCIC gayundin ang mga polisiya nito at program coordination.
(Aileen Taliping)

<https://www.abante.com.ph/2024/05/17/ph-crop-insurance-corporation-ibinalik-sa-superbisyon-ng-da/>

MANILA STANDARD

DA Cordillera conserves corn varieties for future generations

By Manila Standard Business

April 18, 2024, 7:45 pm

The Department of Agriculture- Regional Field Office Cordillera (DA-RFO CAR) said it is actively safeguarding the region's rich agricultural heritage by conserving indigenous and traditional corn varieties.

Under the Corn Germplasm Utilization through Advanced Research Development (CGUARD) Project, they collected 746 traditional corn samples from 57 barangays across six municipalities in Benguet and Mountain Province between 2023 and 2024.

Collected samples are undergoing cleaning and preparation for long-term storage at the Plant Genetic Resources Center (PGRC) at the Baguio Animal Breeding and Research Center (BABRC) in Dontogan, Baguio City.

Established through a partnership between DA-RFO CAR and the DA-Bureau of Agricultural Research, PGRC serves as a vital repository not only for corn but also for heirloom rice and other traditional crops crucial to the region's agricultural history.

The partnership aims to document, regenerate, and conserve traditional corn varieties for future generations.

Prior to collecting the corn samples, the DA-RFO CAR, with the facilitation of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), obtained Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) from the involved communities. Othel V. Campos

This ensured respectful collaboration with indigenous communities as partners in safeguarding their agricultural heritage.

The CGUARD Project meticulously documents and analyzes the morphological characteristics of traditional corn varieties.

About 56 seed samples from Kabayan, Benguet are undergoing detailed characterization at the BABRC. The data will be invaluable for future research and

development efforts aimed at creating improved corn varieties while preserving the unique traits of these traditional crops.

<https://manilastandard.net/agriculture/314437266/da-cordillera-conserves-corn-varieties-for-future-generations.html>

Agri trade deficit narrows in Q1

By Janine Alexis Miguel

May 18, 2024

TRADE in agricultural goods posted a deficit of \$2.62 billion in the first three months of the year as gains in exports failed to offset a decrease in imports, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported.

On Friday, the PSA said the \$2.62-billion deficit represented a 6.5-percent drop from the \$3.01 billion posted in the same period last year.

The country's agricultural trade increased by 2.6 percent to \$6.07 billion in the first three months of the year compared to the same period last year.

It was a turnaround from the 0.8-percent annual decrease in the previous quarter and the 8.4-percent decline a year earlier.

Agricultural exports rose to \$1.72 billion, a 10.7-percent increase from \$1.56 billion a year earlier. The exports accounted for 28.4 percent of the country's total trade during the period.

Imports of farm goods, meanwhile, dropped by 0.3 percent to \$4.34 billion from \$4.36 billion last year.

Edible fruits, and nuts and peels of citrus fruit melons accounted for the largest share of agriculture exports during the first three months of the year at \$517.96 billion, up by 10.3 percent from the previous year's \$439.97 million.

Animal or vegetable fats and oils, and their cleavage products; prepared edible fats; and animal or vegetable waxes increased by

21.79 percent to \$423.30 million from the year-earlier \$347.54 million.

Preparations of vegetables, fruit, nuts or other parts of plants were valued at \$183.59 million, 0.85 percent lower from the \$185.18 million recorded a year earlier.

Rounding up the country's top five agricultural exports for the first quarter were preparations of meat, fish and crustaceans, mollusks and other aquatic invertebrates at \$139.07 million and shipments of tobacco and manufactured tobacco substitutes at \$120.52 million.

The top 10 commodity groups in terms of export value contributed \$1.66 billion or 96.5 percent of the country's agricultural export revenues for the quarter.

As for agricultural imports, cereals accounted for the biggest share of the country's total trade at 27.0 percent or \$1.17 billion, an increase of 27.8 percent from \$916.9 million a year earlier.

Residues and waste from food industries and prepared animal fodder followed at \$595.84 million; miscellaneous edible preparations at \$448.44 million; meat and edible meat offal at \$367.96 million; and animal or vegetable fats and oils, and its cleavage products, and prepared edible fats, animal or vegetable waxes at \$272.48 million.

Among Association of Southeast Asian Nations member countries, Malaysia remained the top buyer of the Philippines' agricultural exports at \$75.72 million.

The Netherlands, meanwhile, was the top destination for Philippine agricultural commodities valued at \$317.32 million among the European Union member countries.

Michael Ricafort, chief economist at Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., attributed the increase in the agricultural exports to better weather conditions during the latter part of 2023.

"This also reduced the need for agricultural imports with marginal decline year on year," he said.

However, he added that the risk of the El Niño and La Niña would remain up to the second quarter of 2024, which could reduce domestic agricultural production.

"This could also lead to some pick up in rice imports and also in other agricultural products," he said, adding that government policies and other nonmonetary measures will help augment local supplies.

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2024/05/18/business/top-business/agri-trade-deficit-narrows-in-q1/1947235>

P16.3 billion kailangan ng NFA pambili ng palay sa 2025

By [Doris Franche-Borja](#)

May 18, 2024 - 12:00am



Ayon kay NFA Acting Administrator Larry Lacson, ang nasabing pondo ay upang makamit ang dami ng target volume para sa national buffer stock at sa dagdag na budget para sa pag-upgrade ng storage capacity nito.

STAR/ File

MANILA, Philippines — Umaabot sa P16.3 bilyon ang hinihirit na pondo ng National Food Authority (NFA) para sa pagbili ng palay sa 2025.

Ayon kay NFA Acting Administrator Larry Lacson, ang nasabing pondo ay upang makamit ang dami ng target volume para sa national buffer stock at sa dagdag na budget para sa pag-upgrade ng storage capacity nito.

Aniya, bukod sa pagpopondo sa pagbili ng palay mula sa mga lokal na magsasaka, kinakailangan nang bumuo ng karagdagang mga pasilidad sa pag-iimbak at pagsasaayos ng drying facilities upang mapabuti ang buffer stocking.

Sa kasalukuyan, ang NFA ay may kapasidad lamang na magtuyo ng 31,000 metrikong tonelada pero bumibili ng humigit-kumulang na 495,000 metrikong tonelada ng palay.

Sa panukalang budget ng Department of Agriculture para sa 2025, P24.85 bilyon ang inilaan para sa NFA na mas mataas ng 77 percent sa P14.03 bilyon ngayong taon.

Sa pondo para sa taong ito, P9 bilyon ang inilaan para sa pagbili ng palay ng NFA, na may assumed procurement price na P23 kada kilo.

Samantala, pinag-uusapan pa rin sa Kongreso kung ibabalik ang kapangyarihan ng NFA na mag-angat ng bigas o magpatatag ng presyo sa merkado.

May ilang senador kasi na nagmungkahi na ibigay na lang sa DA ang kapangyarihang ito.

<https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/bansa/2024/05/18/2355936/p163-billion-kailangan-ng-nfa-pambili-ng-palay-sa-2025/amp/>

Gobyerno nakahanap na ng solusyon para mapababa presyo ng bigas – Pangulong Marcos

By [Gemma Garcia](#)

May 18, 2024 - 12:00am

MANILA, Philippines — Nakahanap na ng mabisang solusyon ang pamahalaan para maibaba ang presyo ng bigas sa merkado.

Sa ambush interview sa Cagayan de Oro City, sinabi ni Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos Jr. na may usapan ang Senado at Kamara tungkol sa pag-aangkat ng bigas ng national government.

“I don’t want to preempt the bicameral committee, but I think we have found the solution already,” sinabi pa ni Marcos.

Ayon sa Presidente, ayaw niya pangunahan ang bicameral committee subalit binanggit nito ang tungkol sa pagbebenta ng murang bigas ng gobyerno para sumunod ang merkado.

“Pagka mataas ang presyo ng bigas, magbibitaw tayo ng bigas, magbebenta tayo ng mababa para sumunod ang merkado,” sinabi pa ng presidente.

Sabi ni PBBM, hindi pa niya alam kung anong ahensya ang mauuna subalit dedesisyunan niya kung ano ang pinakamainam gawin para mapababa ang presyo ng bigas sa lalong madaling panahon.

Bukod dito, desidido rin ang Pangulo na sertipikahan bilang urgent ang pag-ayenda sa Rice Tariffication Law.

<https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/bansa/2024/05/18/2355933/gobyerno-nakahanap-na-ng-solusyon-para-mapababa-presyo-ng-bigas-pangulong-marcos/amp>

EDITORIAL - NFA, huwag bigyan ng power sa rice import

(Pilipino Star Ngayon)

May 18, 2024 - 12:00am



May dungis na ang National Food Authority (NFA) at hindi na dapat pagkatiwalaan ng Department of Agriculture (DA). Ang isyu ay lumutang makaraang mapabalita na mag-iimport ng bigas ang bansa at ang NFA ang pagkakalooban ng kapangyarihan ukol dito. Umalma kaagad ang mga senador at sinabing tutol sila sa balak ng pagbibigay ng kapangyarihan sa NFA sa pag-import ng bigas. Ang pagtutol ay ginawa nang magkaroon ng pagdinig sa Senado noong Huwebes.

Sinabi naman ni Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu-Laurel Jr., na hindi nila gustong ibalik ang kapangyarihan ng NFA sa pagbili at pagbenta ng bigas. Wala raw intensiyon na ibalik ang full-power ng NFA sa pagbili at pagbenta ng bigas kundi gagamitin lamang ang ahensiya sa pagpapababa ng presyo ng bigas. Hindi raw bibigyan ng authority ang kahit sinuman sa NFA, sabi pa ni Tiu-Laurel.

Nararapat lamang na huwag nang bigyan ng kapangyarihan ang NFA at baka maulit na naman ang nangyaring korupsiyon noong Marso nang mabulgar ang pagbebenta

mismo ng NFA ng 75,000 sako ng bigas sa piling millers at traders sa halagang P25 bawat kilo na hindi dumaan sa public bidding. Sobrang nalugi ang gobyerno sa nangyari. Naganap iyon habang ang mamamayan ay naghahanap ng murang bigas.

Agad ipinag-utos ng Office of the Ombudsman ang pagsuspende sa 141 NFA officials at employees sa loob ng 90-araw na walang suweldo. Noong nakaraang linggo, pinabalik na ng Ombudsman ang 23 kawani ng NFA na unang sinuspende. Pinababalik din ang kanilang suweldo. Hindi naman nalaman ang kaso ng mga matataas na opisyal ng NFA na sangkot sa korapsiyon.

Hindi rin naman nabatid kung nagsagawa ng top to bottom na paglilinis sa NFA si Secretary Tiu-Laurel. Maaaring matagal nang ginagawa ang pagbebenta ng rice buffer stock sa murang halaga at ngayon na lamang nabuking.

Isang malaking pagkakamali ng DA kung ibalik ang power sa NFA para mamahala sa pag-import ng bigas. Lalong maghihirap ang bansa kapag hinayaang magkaroon ng kapangyarihan ang NFA sa importasyon ng bigas.

Nakalulungkot naman na wala nang ginagawa ang pamahalaan kundi ang umangkat nang umangkat ng bigas. Nangunguna ang Pilipinas sa mga bansang umaangkat ng bigas sa mundo. Hindi ba kinikilabutan ang DA sa ganitong balita. Naturingang agricultural na bansa ang Pilipinas pero numero uno sa pag-angkat ng bigas.

Wala bang ginagawang hakbang para maparami ang ani at hindi na umasa sa bigas ng Vietnam, Thailand at India. Hindi ba nangangarap ang DA na ang ihahain na kanin sa hapag ay inani sa sariling lupa?

<https://www.philstar.com/pilipino-star-ngayon/opinyon/2024/05/18/2356023/editorial-nfa-huwag-bigyan-ng-power-sa-rice-import/amp/>