



Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Elliptical Road, Diliman
1100 Quezon City

April 8, 2020

MEMORANDUM

TO : ALL DA CENTRAL OFFICE OFFICIALS AND HEADS OF OFFICES (DIVISIONS, SERVICES, PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS), REGIONAL FIELD OFFICES, BUREAUS AND ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATIONS

FROM : THE SECRETARY

SUBJECT : AGRICULTURE AND FISHERY SECTOR AS FRONTLINERS IN ENSURING FOOD SECURITY OF THE COUNTRY

COVID-19 is now a major threat to our national food security. When food security is threatened, it becomes a national security issue. When movement of food supplies is restricted, it leads to artificial food shortage. Artificial food shortage is turning to be an alarming national food crisis if not mitigated early.

Our fight against COVID-19 is now equally a fight for food security and our country's survival!

The Department of Agriculture (DA), under the steadfast leadership and guidance of President Rodrigo Duterte, has been relentless in the pursuit to ensure food security and food availability in the country in these challenging times.

As food security frontliners, we play a crucial role in addressing the key needs of our 105 million Filipino people and in alleviating the plight of our hardworking farmers and fishers.

We want to ensure that food is available, affordable, and sufficient on the table of every Filipino household under the situation we are in.

We have actively recommended a host of measures to the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) which were subsequently adopted by the body, including the following:

1. The boosting of domestic agricultural production and food processing. All agriculture and fishery stakeholders must be considered frontliners and their movements remain unhampered.

A food-secure Philippines
with prosperous farmers and fisherfolk



2. Expansion of support for improved agricultural production and productivity with the approval of the Php8.5 Billion funding for the Rice Resiliency Project, and reiteration of the need to fund the Ahon Lahat, Pagkaing Sapat (ALPAS) Kontra sa COVID-19 or the Plant, Plant, Plant, Program.
3. Implementation of the Expanded SURE-Aid and Recovery project, a loan assistance (a) to small farmers and fishers amounting to P25,000 at zero interest and payable in 10 years; and (b) to eligible SMEs (single proprietorship, partnership, corporation or cooperative/association) with the amount of up to P10 million at zero interest, payable up to five (5) years.
4. Affirmation of the national policy of unhampered movement of agriculture and food products including cargoes and workers from permitted establishments and their supply chain.
5. Importation of 300,000 metric tons of rice by the Philippine International Trading Corporation to ensure a 30-day buffer stock of the National Food Authority.

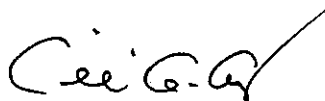
I call upon each and every one of you, our food security frontliners, to continue assuming a bigger and more meaningful role in this race against time for the survival of our sector and our people.

Together, we must remain vigilant and always be ready to serve our nation amid this COVID-19 pandemic situation.

With your continued and selfless efforts, we shall collectively rise above this situation.

Together, we can beat COVID-19; together we heal as one.

Mabuhay tayong lahat!



WILLIAM D. DAR, Ph.D.

Secretary

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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