

Philippines DA, DTI, NIA ink MOU on rice supply chain

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Philippines Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and National Irrigation Administration (NIA) have signed a memorandum of understanding that aiming to ensure an efficient rice supply chain and create an alternative market for the grain which will benefit both farmers and consumers.

The MOU seeks to promote the Integrated Rice Supply Chain Development Program, a project that will foster an efficient supply chain; develop a business-to-business online market platform; create alternative market access for buyers and sellers; enhance farmers' income; promote proper rice branding and classification; and make rice affordable to consumers.

"This MOU establishes a formwork for collaboration in the development and implementation of a project that holds the promise of transforming our rice supply chain," said Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. in a message read by Chief-of-Staff Atty. Alvin Balagbag.

With the cooperation in production, classification, marketing and distribution of domestic rice, he said the country could elevate the status of its agricultural products on a global stage. "Our aim is to enhance the income of our hard working rice farmers through more efficient market and supply chain arrangements. We envision a future where our rice is not only of high quality, but is also recognized and appreciated in the market" Sec. Tiu Laurel said.

Agriculture contributed 9% to gross domestic product last year. The sector, however, employed around 25 percent of the 49.7 million Filipinos in the labor force as of November 2023.