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Philippines spearheads Agri and Horticulture development initiatives

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During the Pagsibol: Philippine Horticulture and Urban Agriculture Summit 2024, on held May 3, Secretary Tiu Laurel expressed the Department of Agricultureâ??s (DAâ??s) commitment to spearheading initiatives for the development of the Philippine agriculture in line with President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.â??s agenda for modernization and mechanization for food sufficiency.

Secretary Tiu Laurel said horticulture offers a pathway to diversity with its focus on cultivation of high-value crops and ornamentals and since the countryâ??s agricultural landscape is currently limited, DA is striving to help meet the evolving demands of domestic and international markets.Â

The agri chief also recognized urban agriculture as a modern adaptation of traditional practices by bringing agriculture to city centers and communities.

â??We recognize the significant role of horticulture and urban agriculture, and what it does, and its role in our nationâ??s food security, economic growth, and sustainability. It presents a unique opportunity to reimagine the role of urban spaces in our agricultural system and harness the capacity of idle lands into centers of food and land production,â? he added.Â

Co-organized by the DA-Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI), DA-High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP), DA-National Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Program (NUPAP), and the DA-Agricultural Training Institute (ATI), the event will highlight the status, challenges, potentials, and innovations of horticulture and urban agriculture in the country.

According to DA-BPI, NUPAP, and HVCDP Director Gerald Glenn Panganiban, the increasing interest in urban agriculture not only promotes self-sufficiency but also enhances community resilience and quality of urban life. He reiterated that the Philippines has emerged as a significant player in the global horticulture market, with exports of fruits, flowers, and ornamental plants reaching substantial annual values.Â

â??The dynamic nature of horticulture and urban agriculture offers exciting prospects for innovation and entrepreneurship, from technology adaptation to farm-to-market initiatives. Our farmers and entrepreneurs can capitalize on the use of technology and creativity to drive positive change in the agriculture sector, both domestically and on the global stage,â? Director Panganiban said.