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# Philippines allocates P350 M in budget for ASF vaccine procurementÂ

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Philippines Department of Agriculture (DA) has allocated P350 million for the procurement of vaccines to combat African Swine Fever (ASF), a persistent endemic virus that has severely undermined hog production and food security since 2019.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr. said the disbursement of the funds is contingent upon the approval and registration of the vaccines by the Food and Drug Administration, an agency under the Department of Health.

The vaccines, including those from Vietnam, will soon undergo controlled rollout that will be administered by the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI).

Following a directive issued by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. in April, the DA, Department of Health, Food and Drugs Administration, and BAI have signed in early June an agreement to streamline the application process for manufacturers, importers, and suppliers of ASF vaccines. The streamlined process is expected to expedite the approval and subsequent rollout of vaccines critical to combating the ASF outbreak.

Despite concerted efforts, the swine industry continues to face challenges in recovering from ASF, which first emerged in 2019. While ASF does not pose a threat to human health, its impact on hogs is devastating, with a single infection capable of wiping out an entire drove. Recent data indicate a decline in the hog population from 12.7 million in 2018 to 9.9 million as of September 2023.

As of July 26, 2024, BAIâ??s ASF monitoring efforts have identified active cases in 45 municipalities across 18 provinces nationwide, highlighting the ongoing challenge.

BAI is currently finalizing guidelines in collaboration with agricultural and veterinary stakeholders for the controlled use of ASF vaccines. Public consultations will follow to ensure the guidelines are comprehensive and effectively implemented.