

Fisheries output seen rising in Q3 as El Niño boosts plankton growth

By Sheldeen Joy Talavera

FISHERIES production could continue to improve in the third quarter, with the weather favoring the growth of plankton that fish depend on for food, a former fisheries official said.

"That is the trend that I am seeing with El Niño, (assuming no other) extreme weather disturbance," according to Asis G. Perez, former director of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and co-convenor of advocacy group Tugon Kabuhayan.

Mr. Perez said fish eat more in warm weather, allowing them to grow bigger. Warm weather also encourages plankton growth, on which the fish feed.

"Since primary production happens with sunlight, the production of the food for fish will be higher this time as El Niño is entering," he told BusinessWorld by phone.

The government weather service, known as PAGASA (Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration), has forecast the possibility of an El Niño episode beginning in June, running until the first quarter of 2024.

Fisheries production in the first quarter rose 2% to 991.14 thousand metric tons, led by the marine municipal fisheries and aquaculture subsectors.

From the three months to June, Mr. Perez said fishermen reported a good harvest as favorable weather allowed them to fish, while supply-chain disruptions are clearing up for processed animal protein (PAP), a material used in fish feed.

The Philippine Statistics Authority is set to release agricultural output data for the second quarter on Aug. 9.

During the third quarter of 2022, Mr. Perez said fisheries production, particularly aquaculture, declined due to the lower supply of PAP, which was caught up in the import bans on pork products imposed due to African Swine Fever.

"Now, we're hoping that with the better climate and at least with less rain and moderate sunlight, assuming no weather disturbances, then maybe fisheries performance will improve," he said.

Mr. Perez noted that increased volume of production does not translate to higher incomes, considering the market's demand and supply situation.

"Kapag sobrang madami naman, 'yong farmer naapektuhan kasi good production does not necessarily mean more income... kapag nagkasabay-sabay ang harvest medyo ang presyo apektado (If the harvest is too bountiful, the farmer could be affected. Good production does not necessarily mean more income. If all the good harvests come in at once, the price could be affected)," he said.

According to the Department of Agriculture's price monitors, as of June 30 the retail price of bangus or milkfish in Metro Manila was between P145 and P240 as of June 30.

Tilapia fetched between P105 and P160 while galunggong or local round scad sold for between P180 and P200.

Mr. Perez also noted that pork imports have affected demand for fish and other commodities.



COTABATO PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURIST

Cotabato farmers trained in organic fertilizer preparation

FARMERS in Cotabato province received training in the preparation of alternative fertilizers from the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPAG) at the Municipal Nursery of Midsayap.

Seventy organic farmers from Midsayap learned to make fertilizer using fermented fruit juice, fermented plant juice, fish amino acids, and calcium phosphate made from jackfruit, bananas, fish, eggshells, muscovado, vinegar, carbonized rice hulls, and liquid smoke' as well as organic composting.

The program is a farm-income improvement initiative of Governor Emmylou J. Taliño-Mendoza.

The OPAG lead official for organics, Dina A. Lumogdang, said the methods used will save farmers money and keep their farms chemical-free.

Meanwhile, the Department of Agriculture (DA) Region 12 and the provincial government of Cotabato also discussed the distribution of rice fertilizer support.

"Sa ngayon ay pinaghahandaan nang probinsya ang isasagawang pamamahagi kung saan magkakaroon ng ikalawang pagpupulong kasama ang mga representante ng iba't-ibang munisipyo upang maibahagi ang nasabing fertilizers sa mga karapat dapat na mga benepisyaryo (The province is preparing for the distribution, for which we will convene a second meeting with representatives from each municipality, in order to distribute fertilizer to eligible beneficiaries)," the governor said.

In 2022, the DA ranked Cotabato province no. 1 in Region 12, no. 3 in Mindanao and no. 10 in the country in rice production, with output of 510,973 metric tons. — Maya M. Padillo

Well-milled rice prices up in six regional centers

SIX regional trading centers reported higher average retail prices of well-milled rice at mid-June, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

In a report, the PSA said prices rose on June 15-17, which it refers to as the second phase of June, compared with the prices from June 1-5, or the first phase.

Higher prices were recorded in Cabanatuan City where they increased by P1.50 to P40.50 per kilogram. Prices rose by P0.50 in both Legazpi City and Digos City to P45.75 and P46.50, respectively.

Retail prices also increased in Kidapawan City by P0.42 to P43.50, in Pagadian City by P0.25 to P43.25, and in the National Capital Region (NCR) by P0.11 to P43.25.

Well-milled rice prices fell P0.17 to P40.33 in Tuguegarao City. In Iloilo City they fell P1.61 to P50.89.

The PSA estimated the average retail price of red onion increased in six regional trading centers during the period.

Red onion prices rose by P25 to P207.50 per kilo in Tacloban City, by P22 to P228 in Iloilo City, and by P15 to P265 in Pagadian City. Increases were also monitored in Batangas City where prices rose by P10 to P145, in Baguio City by P10 to P211.50, and in the NCR by P0.13 to P170.17.

Retail prices declined in Calapan City by P15 to P215, in Tuguegarao City by P2.50 to P162.50, and in Cagayan de Oro City by P0.27 to P224.73.

The average retail price of dressed chicken declined in five trading centers during the second phase of June.

Prices fell in Cabanatuan City by P10 to P162.50, in Digos City by P9 to P188.00, and in Pagadian City by P5 to P197.50.

Chicken prices also dropped in the NCR by P2.59 to P180.64, and in Kidapawan City by P2 to P219.50.

Meanwhile, the average retail price of dressed chicken in Iloilo City rose by P5 to P175. — Sheldeen Joy Talavera

Pursuant to the Department of Transportation approval of LRT-1 fare adjustment dated June 14, 2023, the following revised fare matrix is for implementation in LRT-1 effective AUGUST 2, 2023.

LRT1 STORED VALUE Fare Matrix table with columns for destinations and fare amounts for various stations like Baclaran, EDSA, Libertad, etc.

LRT1 SINGLE JOURNEY Fare Matrix table with columns for destinations and fare amounts for various stations like Baclaran, EDSA, Libertad, etc.

Official document from the Department of Transportation, Republic of the Philippines, dated June 23, 2023, regarding fare adjustments for LRT-1.

SUFFICIENCY OF PETITION section containing numbered points 2.5 through 2.10, detailing the basis for fare adjustments and the authority to file petitions.

Section 2.20 through 2.27, including a comparison table of fare rates for LRT-1 versus other road transportation modes.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY section, dated March 22, 2023, detailing the RRU's recommendation on fare adjustments.

COORDINATION WITH COMMISSION ON AUDIT (COA) AND LAND TRANSPORTATION FRANCHISING REGULATORY BOARD (LTFRB) section, containing points 2.11 through 2.14.

Section 3.0 Recommendation, containing points 3.1 through 3.3.2, and a signature block for Jaime J. Bautista.