



Farmers question EOs' effectiveness in boosting incomes, food security

FARMER organizations raised questions about two executive orders (EO) signed by President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr., which are touted to raise increase rural incomes and boost food security.

EO No. 100 will set a yet-to-be-determined regional floor price for palay (unmilled rice) while EO No. 101 directs all government agencies, state universities, and local governments to purchase food directly from accredited farm and fisherfolk cooperatives.

The Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) criticized EO No. 101 for focusing too much on procurement, saying via Viber that "procurement does not guarantee food sufficiency or fair pricing for staple crops."

"Farmers do not just need a buyer for their produce. They need the means to produce in the first place — control over the land, capital, equipment, insurance, protection. This order fails to provide those," KMP Chairman Danilo Ramos said in the statement.

The KMP recommended that the government shift its focus on strengthening farmer cooperatives, make it the government's mission to achieve food self-sufficiency, and offer interest-free

credit, production subsidies, and debt condonation.

Federation of Free Farmer Chairman Leonardo Montemayor said via Messenger that the impact of EO No. 100 will only show up starting next year.

"Most crops have already been harvested meaning the effects will only be felt starting February 2026."

He said that the floor price mandate is misleading as it only applies to national agencies and local government units only, whose buying power is not enough to persuade traders to raise palay prices.

Mr. Montemayor added that most LGUs do not have the funds to buy directly from farmers, rendering the EO useless if the National Food Authority (NFA) remains the main buyer and sets its own price.

AMIHAN Secretary General Cathy Estavillo said via Viber that EO No. 100 fails to address problems caused by the Rice Tariffication Law, which she said allowed traders to import an excessive amount of grain.

Ms. Estavillo said the Rice Tariffication Act must be repealed if farmgate prices are to rise. — **Andre Christopher H. Alampay**

Animal health, dairy singled out as areas of collaboration with EU-ASEAN biz council

THE European Union-ASEAN Business Council (EU-ABC) and the Department of Agriculture (DA) said they have identified animal health, dairy development, agricultural mechanization, organic and regenerative agriculture, and climate-resilient farming practices as possible areas of collaboration.

In a statement issued by the DA, following a meeting with

the council last week, EU-ABC Executive Director Chris Humphrey also highlighted his organization's ongoing engagement in ASEAN through the Health Summit in Kuala Lumpur and the annual Sustainability Summit hosted by its Philippine Chapter.

He reaffirmed the Council's commitment to forging partnerships with rural communities, promoting inclusive and sustain-

able agriculture, and supporting the conclusion of the EU-Philippines Free Trade Agreement.

Undersecretary Roger V. Navarro was quoted as saying: "This cooperation between the Philippines and EU-ASEAN Business Council will continue to enhance productivity, competitiveness, and food security not just in the Philippines but across the Southeast Asian region."

Mr. Navarro also noted the EU-ABC's active participation in the 47th ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry Meeting and its interest in supporting ASEAN's 2026 Priority Economic Deliverable on the Implementation Plan for Regenerative and Resilient Agriculture.

The Philippines is set to assume the ASEAN Chairmanship in 2026.

Tetra Pak calls for upgrades to PHL waste management infra

THE GOVERNMENT needs to improve the country's waste management infrastructure to help companies execute their sustainability initiatives, food packaging solutions company Tetra Pak said.

"The government plays a key role in creating an environment where circularity can thrive," the company told *BusinessWorld* in an e-mail.

"An important area is infrastructure — from improving collection and segregation facilities to supporting transport networks that make recycling more efficient, especially in areas outside major cities — followed by enforcement of such processes to ensure the outcome is maximized," it added.

Compared to its regional counterparts, the Philippines is still developing the systems that support large-scale recycling.

"Unlike some neighboring countries where infrastructure is



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more centralized, the Philippines' archipelagic setup means we need stronger local partnerships to connect collection points, recyclers, and communities," Tetra Pak said.

"That's why collaboration is at the heart of how we operate here — it's the only way to build reach across islands and regions," it added.

In its sustainability report for 2024, Tetra Pak said there has been a 25% reduction of

greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions across its value chain since 2019.

Within its operations, the company achieved a 54% reduction in GHG emissions since 2019, while it is targeting net-zero GHG emissions by 2030.

Meanwhile, the company said that the government could also help companies in their sustainability initiatives through data and coordination.

"Consistent waste-management data across local government units allows us to see where cartons are being recovered and where we need to build new capacity," it said.

"We're ready to share our learnings with local governments that want to integrate carton recycling into their solid-waste programs," it added.

According to Tetra Pak, the direction for packaging materials today is to increase renewable content while lowering the carbon footprint.

"Consumers are hyperaware enough to take action and lead in finding improvements and solutions based on a study commissioned by Tetra Pak in 2023," it said.

"With this strong pull, food & beverage companies as well as packaging companies will need to secure the sustainable architecture of their product offerings," it added. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

SM City La Union boosts climate resilience with rainwater catchment system

San Fernando, La Union, Philippines — With climate change driving heavier rains and more frequent floods, proactive flood prevention has become a key part of building resilient communities.

SM City La Union, now the 30th mall of SM Prime Holdings, Inc. (SM Prime) that features a rainwater catchment facility, expands its network of climate-resilient infrastructure nationwide. For SM Supermalls, catchment facilities are designed to collect and store large volumes of stormwater, preventing runoff that could otherwise overwhelm drainage networks.

During heavy rainfall, the catchment temporarily holds stormwater, allowing gradual discharge through proper channels. Collectively, SM City La Union's underground rainwater catchment system can provide a total capacity of 760 cubic meters.

Each drop contributes to a safer, more sustainable future for all. Mapping every opportunity to achieve Water for Tomorrow, treating and reusing water as a supplemental water source also significantly decreases freshwater consumption. In 2024, SM Prime achieved a 26.23% increase in recycled water volume, rising from 4.42 million cubic meters in 2023 to 5.59 million cubic meters.

Social resilience is equally important as the physical infrastructure. SM Cares raises awareness on water conservation and adopting sustainable practices in daily life, helping to empower community action.

"Our rainwater catchment systems go beyond flood control — they help create safer spaces for our communities. We hope to show how climate-smart infrastructure and innovation can protect lives, livelihoods, and progress," said SM Supermalls President Steven Tan.



The newly opened SM City La Union becomes the 30th SM mall to install a rainwater catchment system, supporting thousands of residents in flood-prone areas and demonstrating how business innovation protects communities.



A design for tomorrow. SM Supermalls focuses on sustainable water use by managing available resources to meet the needs of future generations.