

German pork import ban lifted after ASF regionalization deal

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said it lifted its temporary ban on imports of swine products from Germany following a bilateral agreement recognizing regionalization measures for African Swine Fever (ASF).

In Department Circular No. 18, the DA said it now recognizes Germany's regionalization approach for ASF, allowing the resumption of imports of pork and related by-products from designated disease-free zones.

The Philippines imposed a ban in 2020 to prevent the entry of ASF through imports of

live pigs and pork products from Germany, one of Europe's largest hog producers.

According to the circular, the DA's Bureau of Animal Industry found that Germany maintains "sufficient veterinary oversight" and has implemented control and mitigation measures that reduce the risk of ASF transmission from identified regions.

The DA said the decision was based on compliance with Administrative Circular No. 12, Series of 2025, which sets guidelines for bilateral recognition of regionalization for ASF among accredited exporting countries.

Under ASF regionalization rules, live swine must come from ASF-free zones, show no clinical signs of infection, and avoid restricted areas during transport.

Pork products must also originate from ASF-free regions, be transported in sealed vehicles directly to approved slaughterhouses, and pass both ante- and post-mortem inspections.

Exporting countries' veterinary authorities must also provide detailed reports on ASF surveillance, control measures, and boundaries of ASF-free regions. — **Vonn Andrei E. Villamiel**

Soybean meal imports expected to rise due to higher demand for feed

PHILIPPINE soybean meal imports will likely increase by 0.2% to 3.26 million metric tons (MMT) in marketing year 2026-2027, driven by higher feed demand from the poultry, aquaculture, and pet food industries, according to the US Department of Agriculture (USDA).

In a report, the USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) in Manila said soybean meal (SBM) imports are forecast to increase slightly from 3.25 MMT in the previous marketing year, due to high feed demand from key livestock and aquaculture segments.

Despite an ongoing African Swine Fever (ASF) outbreak affecting the hog industry, overall SBM consumption is projected to expand as poultry and aquaculture production offset weaker swine industry demand.

"Ongoing ASF cases continue to limit hog feed demand relative to pre-ASF years, but feed use for poultry and aquaculture maintains overall SBM consumption growth in marketing year 2026/27," according to the report.

FAS Manila projects SBM feed use to rise by 0.9% to 3.28 MMT in marketing year 2026-2027, reflecting higher demand for both commercial and self-mixed feed.

It said higher output in poultry and aquaculture also drives SBM demand, as feed in these sectors typically have the highest soybean mixes.

Meanwhile, FAS Manila said soybean imports are forecast to grow 2.4% to 128,000 metric tons, driven by rising demand for soybean-based food and beverage products such as soy drinks, soy sauce, and tofu.

"Demand for soy drinks and soy sauce continues to expand year on year. In the Philippines, soybeans are processed into a range of food products... including soymilk, soy sauce, soy oil, tofu, bean curd, and fermented soybean products," it said.

FAS Manila said total sales volume of soy-based products rose by an average of 0.3% per year between 2023 and 2025, and is expected to further increase by an average of 2% between 2025 and 2026. — **Vonn Andrei E. Villamiel**

900 more distribution sites planned for P20 rice program

THE Department of Agriculture (DA) said it will expand the government's P20-per-kilo subsidized rice program by opening about 900 additional selling sites, following a funding and supply agreement between state-owned Food Terminal, Inc. (FTI) and the National Food Authority (NFA).

In a statement on Sunday, the DA said the new outlets will be established in priority and high-need areas, including Capiz, Bukidnon, Cebu, Cotabato, and Catanduanes.

According to the DA, the FTI-NFA agreement also covers procurement of around 1.8 million 50-kilogram sacks of well-milled rice, supported by a P3-billion allocation under the government's P10-billion "Rice for All" program.

The DA said part of the funding will also be used to expand palay



PHILIPPINE STAR/RYAN BALDEMAR

(unmilled rice) procurement to support farmers.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. said the expansion is intended to improve

access to affordable rice as transport costs continue to affect retail prices.

"We have sufficient food supply, but elevated fuel and logistics

costs are pushing market prices to levels that further pressure the budgets of many Filipinos," he said.

As of the first quarter of 2026, the program had 932 outlets, including KADIWA stores, NFA warehouses, local government units, National Government agencies, and FTI-accredited sellers, the DA said.

It added that the program had served 6.45 million beneficiaries as of April 7. Eligible beneficiaries include senior citizens, 4Ps households, solo parents, persons with disabilities, and selected farmers and fisherfolk.

The DA said the program's expansion also includes longer operating hours to improve beneficiaries' access to subsidized rice. — **Vonn Andrei E. Villamiel**

Colombia banana exports expected to fall 5% in 2026 after heavy rains

BOGOTA — Colombia's banana exports are expected to fall 5% in 2026 after heavy rains flooded plantations in the northwestern Uraba region, an industry official said, following a record 2025 performance.

The sector exported a record 133 million 20-kilogram

boxes last year, driven by favorable weather and higher productivity, making Colombia the world's fourth-largest exporter.

Flooding hit 1,200 hectares of banana plantations in the Uraba region during the first two months of 2026, reducing ex-

pected output, Emerson Aguirre, president of the banana growers association said.

Colombia has 52,943 hectares planted with bananas across the country.

2025 export value jumped 27.6% to \$1.31 billion as volume rose 22% and productivity

climbed 21.6% through improved fertilization.

The European Union was the top market (65.8%), followed by the US (17.3%) and the UK (13.6%).

Bananas are Colombia's third-largest agricultural export, supporting over 200,000 direct and indirect jobs. — **Reuters**

Finance dep't sees IT-BPM, semiconductor, renewable industries driving job creation

THE Department of Finance (DoF) said it is counting on the business process outsourcing (BPO), semiconductor, and renewable energy industries to deliver job creation.

"Creating jobs (is behind) everything we do, from the reforms we have created to attract investment, both foreign and domestic," Finance Secretary Frederick D. Go said in a statement on Sunday.

"It has one singular purpose, which is to provide jobs for millions of Filipinos," he added.

He expects the country's next wave of employment to be driven by these industries as they climb the value chain.

"The BPO industry is evolving into higher-value services such as artificial intelligence, data analytics, and information technology-enabled services — opening more opportunities," the DoF said.

Meanwhile, Mr. Go said that the continued expansion of the semiconductor and electronics manufacturing sector due to investments from global firms such as Samsung creates more jobs in advanced manufacturing.

He added that the Philippines' vulnerability to climate-related disasters is attracting increasing investment in wind, solar, and geo-

thermal projects which are also becoming a major source of employment.

"Our weakness is our strength. We get hit by a lot of typhoons, so we need to harness wind power. We get a lot of sun, we need to harness solar power. And third, we're also a volcanic country, we need to find ways to keep harnessing the geothermal energy," he said.

At the Intergovernmental Group of Twenty-Four (G-24) Ministers' and Governors' Meeting on April 14, Mr. Go called for stronger international support to help protect jobs during war and climate-related crises.

In particular, he cited the need for scaled-up and more flexible financing, which includes budget support and emergency funding tools that will help countries absorb external shocks.

He also called for deeper mobilization of private capital, sustained support for jobs and human capital, and stronger and faster support for disaster and climate resilience.

"Sustaining progress requires collective resolve. We call on countries and development partners to deepen collaboration in responding to both current and emerging crises," he said.

"We therefore urge renewed multilateralism and deeper international cooperation to strengthen and stabilize the global financial

architecture — so that economic transformation is achieved and progress remains inclusive and sustainable," he added.

On Friday, the heads of Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) said that they are ready to deploy timely and effective support to help countries amid higher energy costs, supply chain disruptions, and tighter financial conditions.

Mr. Go during a constituency meeting with the World Bank sought faster approval of crisis-related assistance to enable the government to respond more quickly to disaster or economic shocks.

"The Philippines further requested continued scaling up of financial support from the Bank, along with more affordable lending terms," the DoF said.

"This would help ensure that critical investments, specifically those that create jobs and support vulnerable and upper middle-income communities, can continue despite global challenges," it added.

The Philippines also called for expanded access to blended financing, which is seen to help fund urgent needs, strengthen institutions, and support long-term development. — **Justine Irish D. Tabile**

El Niño, rising input costs to dampen corn output

CORN PRODUCTION is expected to decline in the coming months as a looming El Niño and rising input costs weigh on farmers' planting intentions, an industry official said.

Romualdo J. Elvira, Jr., president of the Philippine Maize Federation, Inc. (PhilMaize), said the developing El Niño could already be affecting the next corn planting season.

"The volume of harvest will definitely be affected, especially for the coming May-June planting," he told *BusinessWorld* via Viber.

The government weather service has said that a moderate to strong El Niño may emerge by the fourth quarter and persist into early 2027.

The Philippines experiences below-normal rainfall during El Niño episodes, affecting agricultural production, particularly for water-intensive crops such as corn.

Mr. Elvira said rising input and fuel costs due to the war in the Middle East are also expected to weigh heavily on corn yields.

"Urea has increased in price from P1,500 a bag last year to P2,450 last month, and may rise further to P3,500 next month," he said. "Fuel cost could affect our mechanized operations — land preparation, hauling, logistics, irrigation, and later on harvesting and drying."

With elevated input and fuel costs, Mr. Elvira said corn farm-

ers may be forced to cut back on fertilizer application and equipment use, which is expected to reduce productivity.

To help cushion the impact on corn and the industries that depend on it, such as animal feed and livestock raising, PhilMaize urged government intervention through procurement support.

"We further demand that the National Food Authority immediately allocate funds to procure at least 200,000 metric tons of corn at P25 per kilogram (dry)," the group said in a policy statement.

PhilMaize also opposed a proposal to remove tariffs on corn, instead calling for adjustments of the minimum access volume (MAV) for the commodity.

The MAV scheme allows limited imports of agricultural commodities at favorable tariff rates, while volumes beyond the quota are subject to higher duties. Corn imports within the MAV are currently charged a 5% tariff, while out-of-quota shipments carry a 15% rate.

PhilMaize proposed raising the MAV for corn to 500,000 metric tons from 216,000 metric tons, saying this would help stabilize supply and prices without undermining domestic producers.

"This adjustment will temper price declines, stabilize the market, and ensure a fairer playing field for both producers and consumers," it said. — **Vonn Andrei E. Villamiel**

Career Opportunity in **LOTTE ECOWALL PHILIPPINES INC.**

GENERAL MANAGER

Job Description
 • Supervise organizational management, including staffing and performance evaluation
 • Coordinate with clients, partners, and headquarters for project execution
 • Monitor financial performance, including budgeting and profit & loss management

Qualification
 • Applicants who are High School graduate or at the college level are eligible, qualified, and encouraged to apply but College Graduate/Bachelor Degree is a plus
 • Strong leadership qualities and excellent communication skills
 • Good knowledge of different business functions

Applications may be sent to:
 Leida Balli
 lotteecowallph@lotteecowall.ph

Company/ Employer	Name of foreign national intending to apply for the position
LOTTE ECOWALL PHILIPPINES INC. Unit 2503 Orient Square F, Ortigas Jr. Avenue Road, Ortigas Center, San Antonio, Pasig City Technology Services	SUNG SOON KIM Unit 57A, TPR, The Proscenium Residences, Poblacion, Makati City Korean national Three (3) Years

LOTTE ECOWALL PHILIPPINES INC. hereby declares that the above-named foreign national is able, willing and qualified to perform the services and job description for this position. The company has the intention to employ the said foreign national and apply for an **Alien Employment Permit with the Department of Labor and Employment- National Capital Region located at 967 Maligaya Street, Malate Manila.**

Career Opportunity in **CHEIL INTEGRATED MARKETING PHILIPPINES, INC.**

RETAIL ACCOUNT MANAGER

JOB DESCRIPTIONS:
 1. Manages day-to-day client relationships, meets with clients when needed, shadowing Account Managers.
 2. Provides timely and consistent communication to clients and account team on the status of projects.
 3. Assists in various data research and analysis for establishing alternatives of brand identity in trade-level.
 4. Helps in managing the Client's budgets and work within target.

QUALIFICATIONS (Education, Experience, Professional License, Skills, Certification, Specialized Training):
 1. A College graduate/ bachelor's degree in any field.
 2. At least one (1) year experience as the retail account manager.
 3. Strong communication and negotiation skills.
 4. Excellent organizational and time-management skills, with the ability to handle multiple accounts simultaneously.

Applications may be sent to:
 JOSYANNE COLLADO
 ju.collado@samsung.com

Company/ Employer	Name of foreign national intending to apply for the position
CHEIL INTEGRATED MARKETING PHILIPPINES INC. 10TH Floor Science Hub Tower 4 McKinley Hill Cyber Park, Pinagsama, City of Taguig Business and management consultancy activities	JUYEON HAN 8B Alpha Street, Barangay Concepcion Dos, Marikina City Korean national Three (3) Years

CHEIL INTEGRATED MARKETING PHILIPPINES INC. hereby declares that the above-named foreign national is able, willing and qualified to perform the services and job description for this position. The company has the intention to employ the said foreign national and apply for an **Alien Employment Permit with the Department of Labor and Employment- National Capital Region located at 967 Maligaya Street, Malate Manila.**

Career Opportunity in **EASY BIO PHILIPPINES, INC.**

DIRECTOR FOR FEEDS SALES

Job Description
 • Direct and manage the overall operations of the Company in Feeds business units.
 • Increase the market share of Ifeeds in the Philippine market.

Qualifications
 • College Graduate/ Bachelor of Science in Agriculture, Business Administration or any related field.
 • Has a strong leadership and management skills.
 • Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

Applications may be sent to:
JESSICA JOY B. TOLENTINO
 recruitment@easybiophis.com

COMPANY / EMPLOYER	NAME OF FOREIGN NATIONAL INTENDING TO APPLY FOR THE POSITION
EASY BIO PHILIPPINES, INC. Unit 2202 B, C & D East Tower Tekitte Towers, Exchange Road, Ortigas Center, San Antonio, Pasig City Manufacturing of Agricultural Products, Retail and Wholesale Distributor and Importer	KIM, TAKYONG Unit 36D North Tower, One Shangri-la Place Condo., Internal Road corner St. Francis Street, Barangay Wack-Wack Greenhills East, Mandaluyong City Korean national Three (3) Years

EASY BIO PHILIPPINES, INC. hereby declares that the above-named foreign national is able, willing and qualified to perform the service and job description for this position. The company has the intention to employ the said foreign national and apply for an **Alien Employment Permit with the Department of Labor and Employment- National Capital Region located at 967 Maligaya Street, Malate Manila.**

Career Opportunity in **AGS Health Philippines, Inc.**

Manager (1 Vacancy)

Job Description
 • Responsible for overseeing all administrative activities, supervision of facilities, vendor management and support other functions such as compliance, HR, technology, finance, in accordance with the policies and procedures prescribed by Company's parent entity in India and be actively involved in MIS reporting, budget tracking, procurement and other critical, company confidential matters and support on audits including ISO 27001, PCI DSS standards etc.

Qualifications
 • Bachelor Degree or MBA, deep knowledge and expertise in Microsoft excel, powerpoint, working knowledge on international information security standards, quality standards, negotiation skills etc.

Applications may be sent to:
 Sammy Jason Salinas - Manager - Human Resources
 sammyjason.salinas@agshealth.com

COMPANY / EMPLOYER	NAME OF FOREIGN NATIONAL INTENDING TO APPLY FOR THE POSITION
Company Name: AGS Health Philippines, Inc. Address: 21st Floor, Units A, B, C and D, Cyber Sigma Lawton Avenue, Fort Bonifacio, Fourth District, Taguig City, NCR, 1635 Nature of business: BPO	Name: Rejula Bakkiam Devadoss Address: Taguig City Nationality: Indian Intended period of employment: 3 years

AGS Health Philippines Inc. hereby declares that the above-named foreign national is able, willing, and qualified to perform the services and job description for this position. The company has the intention to employ the said foreign national and apply for an **Alien Employment Permit with the Department of Labor and Employment - National Capital Region located at 967 Maligaya Street, Malate, Manila.**