

Philippines to strategizes farm production by modernizing agriculture, food production

05 January 2024 | News

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Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. has announced that Philippines Department of Agriculture is set to unveil next week its strategy to modernize agriculture and boost the farm sector's production capacity and contribution to the domestic economy, especially in improving the lives of farmers and fisherfolk as well as creating more jobs.

Laurel rallied the DA employees to focus on the challenge of producing more food for Filipinos even as the country faces a prolonged dry spell in the first part of the year.

Tiu Laurel enjoined DA employees to stay focused on the goal of modernizing the country's agriculture sector to achieve food security and lessen agricultural imports in 2024. Tiu Laurel has visited various DA offices around the country and has inaugurated new irrigation and other facilities, and consulted local officials, farmers, fisherfolk and other agriculture stakeholders to determine a better course of action and gather support to achieve President Ferdinand Marcos's vision of a modern farm sector and better lives for farmers and fishermen.

Tiu Laurel also spoke of the need for more timely farm and market statistics, adaption of new technologies, and farm mechanization. He visions that by producing more locally, the Philippines could dramatically narrow a yawning agricultural trade deficit that in 2022 total \$11.8 billion, around P660 billion, or four times the budget of the DA in 2024. Money paid for by

consumers for imported agricultural commodities could go instead to the pockets of farmers and fisherfolk, and fuel investment in the agriculture sector that employs four in every 10 Filipinos