

Philippines and Czech Republic collaborate on agricultural trade and technology

03 April 2024 | News

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The Philippines and the Czech Republic have reached mutual understanding on several agricultural issues to improve bilateral trade and widen technology transfers between the two countries, particularly in livestock and dairy production and water management.

Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel, Jr. and other officials of the Department of Agriculture recently met with a delegation from the Czech Republic led by Agriculture Minister Marek Věšerný in Manila, a follow up to their meeting during the visit of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. in the European Union member country.

The Philippines is particularly interested in the Czech Republic's success in the dairy industry and in water and irrigation management, livestock production, and its online platform that offers information and comprehensive solutions concerning agriculture, including technology, machinery, and direct communications with machinery producers.

Sec. Tiu Laurel said the DA hopes to learn from the Czech Republic's experiences in becoming one of the top dairy producing country in Europe and one of the major suppliers of beef, and to purchase bull sperm for artificial insemination to improve the quality of local herd.

The Philippines imports almost all its dairy requirements and sources from overseas parent stocks for cattle and other livestock. Aside from assistance from the Czech Republic in updating local farming technology, the agri chief is also looking to expand the market of Philippine agricultural products within the European Union.

“We have some products ready for export so market access is also very important to us, especially the European Union which is one of the best markets in the world for our products,” said Sec. Tiu Laurel.

Minister VÃ½bornÃ½ took note of the needs of Philippine agriculture and expressed readiness to provide assistance, including trade negotiations.

“We’re definitely ready to offer cooperation. Your aims and ambitions are very similar to what we have in the Czech Republic, where our agricultural sector is also undergoing dynamic changes towards modern technologies, innovations, science and research and the application of their outcomes,” said Minister VÃ½bornÃ½.

The Czech minister has offered training for Filipinos on farming, livestock production and irrigation and water management. Related to this, he said the Czech Republic needs more Filipino workers to further develop the country’s agricultural sector and increase food output.