

Philippines creates farm cooperatives development services to boost food security, farmers incomes

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Philippines Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr. has announced the creation of the Agricultural Cooperative Enterprise Development Services, a new initiative that should enhance the capabilities of agricultural groups across the country as well as to strengthen food security and improve farm productivity through a comprehensive support system.

Under Memorandum Circular 22, the newly established ACED Services will operate within both the central and regional field offices of the Department of Agriculture. These services will be overseen by the Office of the Undersecretary for Operations, now led by Undersecretary Roger Navarro. The strategic focus on agricultural cooperatives reflects the broader goal of transforming the agricultural landscape in the Philippines. As ACED Services begin their work, they are poised to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of agriculture, driving growth, and ensuring the well-being of the agricultural community across the nation.

Secretary Tiu Laurel emphasized that the ACED Services are central to the government's strategy to empower farmers and fisherfolk.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has highlighted the crucial role that transforming and consolidating farmers' cooperatives and associations plays in improving the livelihoods of our agricultural community. These efforts are key to advancing agricultural development and ensuring food security," he said.

The ACED Services will be instrumental helping formulate policies and plans that support agricultural cooperatives. They will also coordinate efforts and oversee the implementation of projects designed to address developmental gaps and adjust strategies as needed.

ACED Services will also help provide comprehensive training programs for cooperatives and associations, including collaborations with other government agencies, private institutions, and civil society organizations. This training will focus on enhancing skills and knowledge crucial for cooperative success.

The new offices will also spearhead the digital transformation of agricultural cooperatives, promoting the use of data analytics, online marketplaces, and climate adaptation tools. This initiative is aimed at boosting productivity, sustainability, and resilience within the sector.

Secretary Tiu Laurel said that the ACED Services are designed to streamline efforts and maximize the effectiveness of resources allocated for cooperative support. The services will implement feedback mechanisms to continually improve and adjust strategies based on stakeholder input, he added.

“The establishment of ACED Services underscores our commitment to enhancing the livelihoods of farmers and fishermen. By fostering increased income, adopting modern farming technologies, and enhancing food security and agricultural exports, we are taking significant steps toward a more productive and sustainable agricultural sector,” added the DA chief.