

Philippines Japan collaborates for market driven vegetable sector

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The Philippines Department of Agriculture (DA) and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) signed the Minutes of the Meeting to Amend the Records of Discussion for the technical cooperation project of DA and JICA on Market Driven Enhancement of the Vegetable Value Chain in the Philippines (MVC2).

Domingo F. Panganiban, Senior Undersecretary (DA) and Sakamoto Takema, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Chief Representative were present.

The project, which commenced in early 2022, aims to strengthen vegetable value chain models in selected municipalities of Benguet and Quezon provinces, as well as in Metro Manila.

The signed minutes of the meeting contained modifications, including an updated project framework based on the detailed planning survey conducted last August to September, as well as pilot projects for implementation.

According to Panganiban, the MVC2 project will develop inclusive business models that will contribute to increasing the income of vegetable farmers in the country.

Aligned with the directives of Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. President, the project will focus on rebuilding value chains in order to achieve food security and sufficiency.

“With the increasing food prices and inefficiencies in the food supply chain due to the high cost of logistics and food distribution, we need to find ways by which we can lower the production costs, deliver goods to the markets, and make it more affordable to the consuming public,” Panganiban said.

For his part, Sakamoto explained that the long withstanding cooperation for agriculture between the Philippines and JICA has focused on the production side of the value chain, which includes the establishment of agricultural infrastructures and irrigation systems.

He added that as JICA recognises the importance of addressing the development needs in other aspects of the food value chain.

“This technical cooperation is a testament to this move, as JICA considers that this market-oriented approach is also essential to address the issues related to income generation, job creation and disparity mitigation among others,” he said.