



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 987

Introduced by Representative Ivan Howard A. Guintu

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Section 5, Article XIII of the 1987 Constitution provides that the State “shall provide support to agricultura through appropriate technology and research, and adequate financial, production, marketing, and other support services.”

Despite the abundance of arable land and marine resources in the country, the contribution of the agricultura sector to the country’s gross domestic product (GDP) has been declining over the past years. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), agricultura, fisheries and forestry (AFF) comprised 8.9% of the total GDP in 2022, comparatively lower to its 9.6% share in 2021.

The decline in the agricultura sector can be attributed to multiple factors, one of which is the outdated agricultural data gathering procedures and methods at the local government unit level. More often than not, agricultura data are outdated and not readily accesible and available to the public. The lack of complete and real0time data on agricultural products avaiable at the local level has led to a mismatch between production and demand, resulting in either: (1) oversupply which leads to wastage of unsold agricultura godos, or (2) undersupply which leads to exorbitant prices of agricultural commodities.

It is already a common scenario in our agricultura sector where the overproduction of certain agricultural produce would force farmers to dump their produce since they would incur more losses of they market and sell their products at an extremenly low Price. In early February 2023, it was reported that more than five hundred kilos of tomatoes were dumped by farmers in the province of Nueva Vizcaya. Provincial authorities cited as one of the reasons for the failure to adress the oversupply was the lack of linkaegs with other provinces on the volumen of their production.

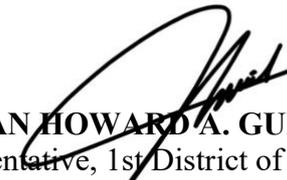
With accesible and readily available real-time data, farmers will have more information at their disposal to aid their decision-making in terms of choosing what to plant and when to plan in order to avoid overproduction of certain crops or vegetables that may ultimately lead to wastage, especially of perishable agricultural goods. Furthermore, a database

containing real-time inventory of all agricultural commodities available in various local communities can make the agricultural market more efficient since traders can easily identify localities where there is an overconcentration of certain agricultural goods and markets them to places that have high demand for such.

Thus, this proposed measure aims to establish the Agricultural Information System (AIS) in all cities and municipalities in the country. The AIS shall contain an up-to-date database of agricultural and fisheries products, crop harvest, volumen, type forecasting as well as demographics of farmers and fisherfolks and shall be integrated and linked to one centralized database under the Department of Agriculture. The measure also aims to set up data tolos including a search engine, a customizable dashboard and a crop calendar, among others, to aid users in the access and interpretation of data available in the AIS.

This proposed measure is the version approved on third Reading in the 19th Congress.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this measure is earnestly sought.


IVAN HOWARD A. GUINTU
Representative, 1st District of Capiz



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AN ACT

ESTABLISHING AN AGRICULTURE INFORMATION SYSTEM IN ALL CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Agriculture Information System Act.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to uplift the socioeconomic conditions of farmers and farming communities nationwide in order to promote their welfare and empower their sector in the overall development and progress of the country. Pursuant to this, an integrated, computerized, web-based agricultural commodity supply inventory and registry system linking farmers and organized communities all over the country needs to be established to provide an easy-to-access local and global real time information for agricultural commodities, with an end view of creating a wider range of market linkages among farmers and agricultural buyers. Furthermore, through a synchronized agriculture information system, the National Government shall have access to real-time agricultural information which can rationalize the objectives and policy directives in the agricultural sector.

SEC. 3. *Objectives.* – This Act aims to attain the following objectives:

- (a) Provide an up-to-date database of agricultural and fisheries products in a locality;
- (b) Foster information sharing between farmers and potential buyers of agricultural and fisheries products;
- (c) Secure a market for agricultural and fisheries products and ensure appropriate return of investment for farmers and fisheries stakeholders;

- (d) Allow local government units to manage a secure and independent platform that creates linkages for farmers and fisheries stakeholders;
- (e) Provide data on specific commodities that are readily available in a particular locality for purposes of production monitoring in order to meet the demands of the market;
- (f) Provide a secure, transparent, and independent modern web application that may be accessed anytime by the public through a multi-platform support or cross-platform support devices which can be linked to existing systems in the Department of Agriculture (DA);
- (g) Streamline training and seminars in the management of the operations;
- (h) Monitor the use of inputs given by producers, buyers, and other segments of the value-chain including information during post-harvest and processing; and
- (i) Ensure that all forms of assistance given to local government units (LGUs), registered cooperatives and other qualified individuals and organizations are monitored.

SEC. 4. *Agriculture Information System.* – All cities and municipalities are hereby mandated to establish an Agriculture Information System (AIS). The AIS shall serve as a dynamic online computer database where information on the demand for specific agricultural and fisheries commodities is gathered and uploaded simultaneously with the production data from farmers in every barangay. The AIS shall merge and synchronize agricultural data from different sources into a cohesive database designed to facilitate linkages from place of origin or the farm to local, and ultimately, global markets. The AIS shall also be integrated with the existing systems of the DA.

The information system shall have the following features and contents:

- (a) Municipal and city-wide identification of individual farmers, fish breeders, and fisherfolk as well as qualified organizations which produce specific farm and fisheries products, regardless of quantity;
- (b) Crop harvest, volume, and type forecasting;
- (c) Inventory of specific classification of crop varieties planted, livestock and type of fish raised in a particular LGU;
- (d) Farmers' and fisherfolk demographics, including age group, gender, ethnic group, income, seminars and trainings attended, and assistance received;
- (e) Selected reports presented in both tabular and graphical form;
- (f) Registry of farmers' contact details and farm location to facilitate market linkages;
- (g) Search engine which allows farmers, fish breeders, and fisherfolk to look for potential and actual buyers and for such buyers to search for farms, farmers, and available agricultural and fisheries products; and
- (h) Customizable dashboard which is accessible only to registered farmers and fisherfolk clients and contains the farmers' and fisherfolk's profile such as the area of the farm or fishpond, crops planted, livestock and type of fish raised.

SEC. 5. *Registration.* – All cities and municipalities shall encourage and facilitate the free registration of all farmers, fisherfolk, as well as buyers transacting within their respective areas in the Information System.

SEC. 6. *Functions and Responsibilities of Cities and Municipalities.* – The LGU shall exercise the following functions and responsibilities:

- (a) The Municipal Agriculture Office, in coordination with the Municipal Agrarian Reform Office, shall gather, encode, and consolidate all pertinent data on the profile and demographics of farmers, fisherfolk as well as buyers;
- (b) Monitor and control farm inputs including machineries and equipment;
- (c) For municipalities and component cities, prepare and submit real time data under (a) and (b) to the provincial agricultural office and to the respective regional offices of the DA;
- (d) For highly urbanized cities, submit real time data to the respective regional offices of the DA;
- (e) Establish farmer and buyer linkages and act as a gatekeeper at the city or municipal level in the nationwide marketing of agricultural products; and
- (f) Serve as the web administrator at the municipal or city level and be responsible for integrating farm and fisheries locations into the geographic integration system map.

SEC. 7. *Functions and Responsibilities of the Province.* – The provincial government shall have the following functions and responsibilities:

- (a) The Provincial Planning and Development Office (PPDO) is the web administrator at the provincial level and is responsible for integrating farm and fisheries data into the geographic integration system maps for agriculture and fisheries;
- (b) The Local Economic and Investment Promotion Office (LEIPO) acts as the lead administrator of the AIS in the provincial level and ensures the balance between supply and demand;
- (c) The Provincial Agricultural Office monitors the submission of reports from municipalities and component cities, and ensures the completeness, accuracy, and validity of data submitted by the Municipal Agricultural Offices and the Municipal Agrarian Reform Offices; and
- (d) Except for highly urbanized cities, prepare and submit such data to the regional office of the DA.

SEC. 8. *Functions and Responsibilities of the Regional Office of the DA.* – The regional office of the DA shall have the following functions and responsibilities:

- (a) Integrate the data provided by the provinces and highly urbanized cities in the existing information systems of the DA such as the National Farmers and Fisheries Information System (NFFIS) which is a web-based data collection system that serves as a platform for updating the Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA);
- (b) Collaborate with the regional offices of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in order to facilitate the availment of the various programs of the DTI as well as strengthen market linkages through such programs;
- (c) Recommend to the central office of the DA appropriate interventions in the form of marketing, importation, and training assistance, as may be needed;
- (d) Validate the data from the LGUs acting as the system administrator at the regional level and provide real-time report to the central office of the DA; and
- (e) Endorse for financial assistance the qualified fifth and sixth class municipalities that can be given assistance in establishing and maintaining their respective AIS.

SEC. 9. *Functions and Responsibilities of the Central Office of the DA.* – The central office of the DA shall have the following functions and responsibilities:

- (a) Allocate funding for the integration of the AIS with existing information systems;
- (b) Coordinate with the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) to upgrade, expand, and integrate its information systems;
- (c) Ensure that the implementation, appropriate verification processes and information safeguards are in place pursuant to existing laws and regulations, in coordination with the DICT, Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), National Privacy Commission (NPC), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST);
- (d) Approve the prioritized interventions by the regional offices and allocate corresponding funding;
- (e) Collaborate with other agencies for the creation of market linkages in the domestic and international markets; and
- (f) Provide safety nets in the import and export of agricultural products in order to support farmers.

SEC. 10. *Duties of the Secretary.* – The Secretary of the DA shall monitor and ensure the compliance of all cities and municipalities as provided for under this Act and shall, as soon as practicable, establish a centralized AIS that shall integrate and link all existing agriculture information systems in the country.

SEC. 11. *Reports.* – The Secretary of the DA shall prepare and submit to the President and both Houses of Congress an annual report on the implementation of the program which shall contain information on accomplishments achieved and recommendations for improvements thereof.

SEC. 12. *Appropriations.* – The Secretary of Agriculture shall include in the Department’s programs the establishment of the integrated and centralized AIS, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act. The LGUs shall provide the necessary funds for the establishment of an AIS in their respective annual budgets.

SEC. 13. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days after the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall promulgate rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 14. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected by such declaration shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 15. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 16. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,

