

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

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 720

Introduced by **HON. AGAPITO H. GUANLAO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill will institutionalize urban agriculture and vertical farming in the highly-urbanized cities nationwide. Urban agriculture is the production, processing and marketing of food in response to the demand of consumers within a town, city, or metropolis, with the application of intensive production methods, such as the using and reusing urban sources and wastes, to yield a diversity of crops and livestock. This bill shall be known as "The Urban Agriculture Act of 2013".

The urban poor are mostly handicapped in terms of education and job opportunities. The Urban Agriculture Act of 2013 will help them gain the benefits from urban agriculture as it will continue to better livelihood by providing non-market access to food.

The world population will double in 50 years. Studies have shown that new land will be needed to grow enough food for everyone. Urban agriculture and farming will not only clean our environment but it will also avoid climate change. This proposed measure seeks to promote the use of urban agriculture and vertical farming in the country's metropolitan areas to address food security concerns and regenerate ecosystem functions. It is now high time to combat the effects of over population and climate change.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


AGAPITO H. GUANLAO

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AN ACT
PROMOTING THE USE OF URBAN FARMING IN THE COUNTRY'S METROPOLITAN
AREAS TO ADDRESS FOOD SECURITY CONCERNS AND REGENERATE ECOSYSTEM
FUNCTIONS APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE.

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 **"Urban Agriculture Act of 2011"**. 2013

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to reaffirm the fundamental right of every person to adequate food and to be free from hunger. The achievement of self-sufficiency in food production is therefore adopted as a primary state policy. Towards this end, key reforms for the development of modern, appropriate, cost-effective and environmentally safe agricultural technologies are hereby encouraged in order to ensure the food security of the country.

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms.– For the purpose of this Act, the term:

"Urban Agriculture" shall refer to the practice of cultivating, processing and distributing of food in, or around a village, town or city. Urban agriculture also involves animal husbandry, aquaculture, agro-forestry and horticulture.

"Vertical Farming" shall refer to the method of farming that is brought to the urban space by employing the concepts of indoor agriculture in skyscrapers and other modern buildings.

SEC. 4. Comprehensive Research on Urban Farming. – For purposes of this Act, the respective Secretaries of the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) are hereby mandated to promote the use of urban agriculture and vertical farming in the country's metropolitan areas as an instrument to address food security concerns and regenerate ecosystem functions of the Philippines.

Idle and/or abandoned government lots and buildings owned by either national and local governments or available land resources in state universities and colleges shall be considered for growing crops, raising livestock and producing food using the said methods.

SEC. 5. Inclusion of Urban Agriculture and Vertical Farming in Agricultural Training.- Urban agriculture and vertical farming are used in agricultural production shall be integrated in the academic curriculum for secondary and tertiary level students of both public and private academic institutions studying courses on Agriculture, Practical Arts, Home Economics and/or other subjects related to agriculture. A course curriculum on gardening/urban gardening shall also be developed and included into the regular curriculum of both elementary and secondary education.

All elementary and secondary schools, – public or private – state colleges and universities shall implement urban gardening/agriculture and include in its regular curriculum its practical or hand-on application.

For universities and colleges, urban gardening or agriculture shall form part of the required period of time spent by students in the National Service Training Program (NSTP) or the Citizens Military Training (CMT). A plan therefore for the utilization or the maximizing space occupied by schools shall be formulated specifically for urban gardening/agriculture. Instructional materials shall also be developed.

The Department of Education (DepEd), in coordination with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the implementation of this Section within six (6) months from the date of effectivity hereof.

SEC. 6. Appropriation. – The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included and incorporated in the annual general appropriations of the Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Department of Education (DepEd) and Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

SEC. 7. Local Government Units Participation – The local government units shall formulate policy on the practice of urban farming, utilizing unused spaces and idle lands. This shall require the enactment of local legislation institutionalizing urban gardening or agriculture in all levels of the LGU. This also shall require local governments to enact measures or ordinances that will include urban gardening/agriculture as regular component in budget appropriations of local government units.

SEC. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations.- Within six (6) months from the date of effectivity of this Act, the DA, the DOST and the DILG shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 9. Seperability Clause.- If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SEC. 10. Repealing Clause.- Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provision of this act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SEC. 11. Effectivity Clause.- This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from the date of its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.