

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 4811



Introduced by: Hon. Angelina "Helen" D.L. Tan, M.D.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The coconut industry is a major agriculture industry in the country. Coconut is among the Philippine's top export produce and one of the most important crops in the country. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the country is the second largest coconut producer in the world, accounting for 26.6% of global production.

One of the recent products that can be manufactured from the coconut tree is "coco sugar". Coconut sugar is a by-product of coconut sap or tuba and is obtained by boiling freshly harvested sap until it evaporates and thickens. It is then allowed to cool to become granular.

Chemical analysis shows that coco sugar contains higher amounts of nutrients compared to brown and refined cane sugar. Coco sugar has higher levels of nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, chlorine, magnesium, sulfur, and micronutrients.

Health experts indicate that coco sugar can help in the proper management and control of diabetes mellitus because it helps in lowering the total cholesterol level. Coconut sugar is good for people with diabetes since it has a low glycemic index (GI)- coco sugar only has a GI of 35 compared to cane sugar's GI of 50.

This bill seeks to further boost the coconut industry in the country by providing the mechanisms to fund the research and development of coco sugar to ensure this product's conformity with internationally accepted standards for food and safety. It is hoped that this measure will help improve the lives of Filipino families who are directly and indirectly dependent on the coconut industry.

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


ANGELINA "HELEN" D.L. TAN, M.D.
4th District, Quezon

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AN ACT
PROVIDING THE ENABLING MECHANISMS FOR RESEARCH AND
DEVELOPMENT OF COCONUT SUGAR IN THE COUNTRY AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the "Coconut Sugar Research and Development Act".

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote domestic materials and locally produced goods, and to adopt measures to make such locally produced goods competitive in both the local and international market.

Towards this end, the State shall provide the enabling mechanisms to promote the production of coconut sugar in order to help and boost the coconut industry in the country.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* - For purposes of this Act, the terms "coconut sugar" and "coco sugar" shall refer to the product derived from coconut sap and obtained by boiling the same until it evaporates, thickens, and thereafter solidifies turning into honey syrup or granular sugar.

SEC. 4. *Promoting Research and Development (R&D) on Coconut Sugar.* - The Department of Science and Technology (DOST), in coordination with the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA), Department of Agriculture (DA), and the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI), shall conduct an extensive research and development (R&D) study on the health benefits and nutritional value of coconut sugar in order to develop the same and ensure its compliance with internationally accepted standards on food and safety.

The DOST shall facilitate and support interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and international research activities to advance knowledge on and understanding of the health and nutritional benefits of using coconut sugar, and to disseminate this information to stakeholders involved in the production and promotion of coconut sugar.

The DOST, in coordination with the PCA, DA, and the FNRI, shall conduct a year-round information, education and communication campaign to inform and educate the general public on the various health benefits of utilizing coco sugar. It shall also publish the latest research findings, studies and materials on the nutritional value of coco sugar;

SEC. 5. *Coconut Sugar Credit Facility and Loan Package.* - The Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) is hereby mandated to formulate a Coconut Sugar Credit Facility and Loan Package Window, which shall extend low interest loans to small and medium enterprises seeking to venture into the business of promoting the consumption and utilization of coconut sugar.

Within six (6) months from the date of effectivity of this Act, the LBP is mandated to formulate the necessary guidelines, procedures, and requirements for the various stakeholders to avail of the Coconut Sugar Credit Facility and Loan Package, as provided under this Section.

SEC. 6. *Annual Appropriation.* - The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) shall include in its annual programming and annual appropriation the amount necessary to fully implement the objectives of this Act.

SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).* - Within six (6) months from the date of effectivity of this Act, the DOST, in coordination with the PCA, DA, and the FNRI shall promulgate such implementing rules and regulations necessary to implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 8. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof not consistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision or part of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions of this Act not otherwise affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall *take effect* fifteen (15) days from the date of its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,