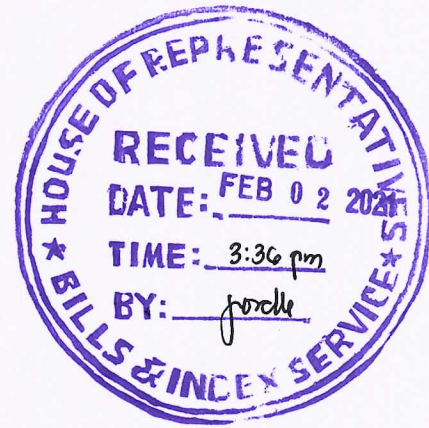


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8610



Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE JOEL MAYO Z. ALMARIO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Philippines is one of the major producers of world-class bananas. In 2018 alone, we produced 9.36 million metric tons of bananas on 447,889 hectares of land, most of which are situated in the Davao Region.

The Philippine Statistics Authority reported that banana exports have grown by 10.71 per cent during the first quarter of 2020 as compared to same period the year before despite the advent of the unprecedented pandemic.

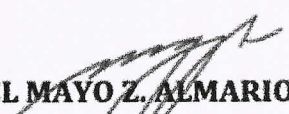
The banana industry, both producers and processors alike, have manifested their resilience which greatly contributed to the steady increase of productivity despite the many challenges they face such as the proliferation of the fusarium wilt fungus or more known as the "Panama Disease" in banana production.

The Pilipino Banana Growers and Exporters Association Incorporated have manifested that at the close of 2020, a contraction of 20-30 per cent from total export volume is expected. Despite this, they still believe that even during the pandemic situation we face, the banana industry is still resilient in providing fresh and quality produce not just to the local economy, but also to the international community.

The need to establish a banana research facility in the Mindanao Region will greatly help in maximizing yield and, at the same time, provide more scientific research to better grow our bananas.

The banana industry, now more than ever, needs the strong support of the State through research and funding with the establishment of the Philippine Banana Research Institute.

Hence, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


JOEL MAYO Z. ALMARIO



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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE BANANA RESEARCH INSTITUTE,
PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFORE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 **SECTION. 1. – Short Title** - This Act shall be known as the “Philippine Banana
2 Research Institute Act of 2021”.

3
4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.**—It is a declared policy of the State to develop self-
5 reliant industries effectively controlled by Filipinos, encourage investments and
6 provide incentives to private enterprise, promote employment and livelihood
7 opportunities for the poor, ensure well-balanced ecology in the use of natural
8 resources for industrial purposes, and prioritize education and training
9 particularly in science and technology for sustainable development.

10
11 In support of these State policies, the establishment of the Philippine Banana
12 Research Institute (hereinafter referred to as the PBRI) aims to comprehensively
13 realize the goals of human empowerment and economic development in the
14 countryside through programs and projects that will increase banana production
15 in the country, and improve quality of life especially in poor rural communities
16 that depend primarily on this industry.

17
18 **SEC. 3. Creation of the Philippine Banana Research Institute.**—There is hereby
19 created the PBRI which shall be under the control and supervision of the
20 Department of Agriculture (DA).

21
22 **SEC. 4. Powers and Functions of the PBRI.**—The PBRI shall have the following
23 powers and functions:
24

- (a) Undertake training and capacity-building programs for banana producers, processors, and cooperatives and provide basic strategic research for developing technologies to increase production and utilization of quality banana produce and raise level of income especially of marginalized stakeholders;
- (b) Enable banana producers, processors, and stakeholders, to have access to quality banana tree seedlings, modern production and processing techniques and other support services from production to marketing of banana produce;
- (c) Aid in the establishment of village-based banana social enterprises to generate livelihood opportunities and improve general well-being of the large percentage of the workforce in agricultural communities;
- (d) Promote cooperative development among stakeholders and provide them access to resources, technological know-how, as well as decision-making processes for the enhancement of their banana social enterprises and the protection of their welfare;
- (e) Initiate research and development projects on banana in order to address technology and policy gaps in promoting a robust banana industry, ensuring standard in production and meeting demands for quality banana produce and products in both domestic and international trade; and
- (f) Enter into memoranda of agreement and receive grants from local and foreign funding agencies through the DA upon the recommendation of the PBRI Advisory Board; or through the respective academic boards of satellite units housed in concerned state universities and colleges upon the recommendation of the PBRI Advisory Board.

SEC. 5. *Executive Director of the PBRI.*—The PBRI shall be headed by an Executive Director who shall be responsible for the planning, implementation and supervision of the programs and activities of the PBRI. He shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines for a term of three (3) years, upon recommendation of the DA. All other officers and employees shall be appointed by the Executive Director of the PBRI, in accordance with the Civil Service Law.

The Executive Director must possess high degree of educational, technical, and managerial competencies in research and development, as well as of integrity and proven probity in public service.

SEC. 6. *Functions and Powers of the PBRI Executive Director.*—The following are the functions and powers of the Executive Director of the PBRI:

- (a) Recommend the creation of divisions and sections including the staffing pattern of the PBRI;
- (b) Recommend to the Agriculture Secretary the appointments of personnel and consultants;
- (c) Oversee the planning, implementation and evaluation of the policies, programs and projects of the PBRI;
- (d) Consolidate and approve the overall budget of the PBRI; and
- (e) Perform such other functions as may be assigned by the PBRI Advisory Board.

SEC. 7. *Appointments of Division Chiefs and Unit Heads of the PBRI.*—Division chiefs, unit heads, coordinators, project leaders and other positions in the PBRI shall be recommended by the Executive Director, and appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture. Appointments to various positions in the PBRI are subject to corresponding qualification standards established by the PBRI, and to rules and regulations set by the Civil Service Commission.

SEC. 8. *Composition of the PBRI Advisory Board.*—There is hereby created an Advisory Board which is mandated to develop policies and programs aimed at improving the state of technologies needed for the Philippine banana industry in order to meet global standards for competitiveness and product quality. The Advisory Board shall be composed of the following:

- (a) Secretary of the DA or his representative, as chairman;
- (b) Undersecretary of the DA, as vice chairman;
- (c) Executive Director of the Bureau of Agricultural Research;
- (d) Executive Director of the Bureau of Plant Industry;
- (e) Executive Director of the PBRI; and
- (f) One (1) representative from the banana producers, and one (1) representative from banana processors, as members, to be appointed by the President of the Philippines, upon recommendation of the DA, for a term of three (3) years.

SEC. 9. *Functions and Powers of the PBRI Advisory Council.*—The Advisory Board shall perform the following functions and powers:

- (a) Formulate policies and initiate programs for the development of the Philippine banana industry;
- (b) Review and recommend the annual budget of the PBRI;
- (c) Evaluate the implementation, efficiency and effectiveness of the programs and projects of the PBRI; and
- (d) Recommend the establishment or abolition of satellite units or branches as may be deemed necessary.

SEC. 10. *Coordination among Stakeholders of the PBRI and Linkages with Other Research Institutions.*—The PBRI shall monitor and evaluate the banana research programs and identify the immediate needs and essential concerns in the banana industry in consonance with the local and national economic development. It shall likewise coordinate with other government agencies in order to formulate strategies that would jump-start the growth of the banana industry.

The PBRI and the local government units where there are suitable areas for the planting of banana trees shall jointly implement projects and programs necessary to achieve the goals of this Act.

SEC. 11. *Allocation of Funds.*—Not more than forty percent (40%) of funds allocated under this Act and in subsequent annual appropriations shall be used for personnel services, and maintenance and operating expenses; thirty-five percent (35%) for research and development as well as training and information; and twenty-five percent (25%) for seedling propagation and dispersal of banana trees.

SEC. 12. *Annual Report.*—The PBRI shall submit an annual report to the Office of the President, the Senate, and the House of Representatives indicating among others, the administration and institutional development of the PBRI and the progress of programs and projects on the banana industry and its stakeholders.

SEC. 13. *Appropriations.*—The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

SEC. 14. *Separability Clause.*—If any part, section or provision of this Act shall be held invalid or unconstitutional, the rest of the provisions shall not be affected thereby.

SEC. 15. *Repealing Clause.*—All laws, executive orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 16. *Effectivity Clause.*—This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from the date of its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved.