



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10719



Introduced by **MAGSASAKA Party-List Representative**
ARGEL JOSEPH T. CABATBAT

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Central Luzon has been known as the largest rice-producing region in the Philippines since the 1920s. Almost a century later, from 2017 to 2019, Central Luzon contributed an average of 19.23 percent to the country's total rice output, followed by the 13.5 percent average of Cagayan Valley and the 11.4 percent average of Western Visayas. In the latest figures of the Philippine Statistics Office (PSA), Central Luzon remains as the country's leading palay (unmilled rice) producer after registering 699,044 metric tons of palay in the first quarter of 2021. This covers 15.1 percent of the country's total production, while the other 15 regions' notable contributions range from 0.5 to 14.3 percent.

Among the provinces of Central Luzon, Nueva Ecija is recognized as the "Rice Granary of the Philippines" based on its average rice production volume and rice area of 207,401.16 hectares. The title was earned in the late 1800s after having an annual production volume of 700,000 to 1,500,000 cavans between 1870 and 1887. In the third quarter of 2021, PSA has documented Nueva Ecija as, still, the top palay producer in the region after registering a production volume of 177,217 metric tons of palay, which constitutes 44.2 percent of the region's total production. The share percentage was followed by 17.8 percent of Pampanga and 16.5 percent of Tarlac, which are both one of the top rice producers in the region.

Out of the 32 municipalities of Nueva Ecija, Guimba is recognized as its top rice producer due to its consistent contribution to the province's total rice production. With

a land area of 24,529 hectares, the Municipal Agriculture Office (MAO) of Guimba has estimated its rice farm area at more or less 15,514 hectares, as of 2021.

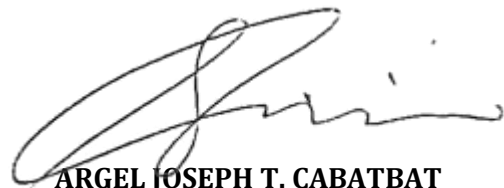
The Municipality of Guimba consists of 64 barangays that are located in relatively flat areas with mild slopes. Such terrain specifications were observed by its early Ilocano settlers in 1865 after clearing thick forests and discovering that the area was very suitable for planting rice. Since then, the main productive agricultural crop in Guimba became rice, which sparked the town's emergence as Nueva Ecija's top rice producer in the early 20th century.

Based on the latest data of PSA's Philippine Standard Geographic Code (PSGC) in 2020, 59 out of its 64 barangays are considered as rural farming areas that produce rice as the main crop, which is 92 percent of the whole municipality.

According to the latest record of the MAO of Guimba in 2021, the average yield of the said municipality is at 15 metric tons per hectare in every cropping season in the last five years. The total average yield is broken down to 8.5 metric tons per hectare during the dry season and 6.5 metric tons per hectare during the wet season. The most recent record of Guimba's highest yield was in 2016 when the municipality registered 16.63 metric tons of rice per hectare, which boosted Nueva Ecija's average contribution to rice production in the country even further.

Hailed as among the top rice producers in the world, the country boasts of vast potential for expansion in its output. Through recognition of Guimba, Nueva Ecija as the official rice capital of the Philippines, due to its decades-long record as the country's top rice-producing municipality, adequate fund infusion and program-centered initiatives will boost its growth. Likewise, the title will help promote local ecotourism as it establishes Guimba's unique identity. In turn, an improved local economy based on the rice industry can be expected to benefit the people and surrounding communities.

With a record of 10.2 percent share of agriculture, forestry, and fishing (AFF) to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2020, this promotion in the local rice industry can potentially boost the sector's contribution to GDP even further, stimulate economic progress, and improve the lives of our local rice farmers. And ultimately achieve a rice self-sufficient Philippines while scaling up its global competitiveness and capacity.



ARGEL JOSEPH T. CABATBAT
Representative, Magsasaka Partylist



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10719

Introduced by **MAGSASAKA Party-List Representative**
ARGEL JOSEPH T. CABATBAT

**AN ACT DECLARING GUIMBA, NUEVA ECIJA AS THE RICE CAPITAL OF THE
PHILIPPINES**

Section 1. *Declaration of Policy.* - Section 1, Article XII of the 1987 Constitution provides that the State shall promote industrialization and full employment based on sound agricultural development and agrarian reform, through industries that make full and efficient use of human and natural resources, which are competitive in both domestic and foreign markets.

Therefore, the State shall recognize the country's rice producers as one of the most important drivers of agricultural development that can contribute to food security, livelihood, and economic progress.

Section 2. *Rice Capital of the Philippines.* - In recognition of its reputation as the top producer of rice and its contribution to the country's food supply, the Municipality of Guimba is hereby declared as the rice capital of the Philippines.

Section 3. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, rule, or regulation inconsistent or contrary to the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 4. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,