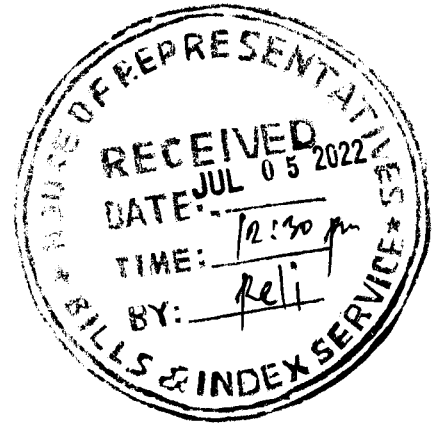


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 1216

Introduced by REP. FAUSTINO 'INNO' A. DY V

EXPLANATORY NOTE

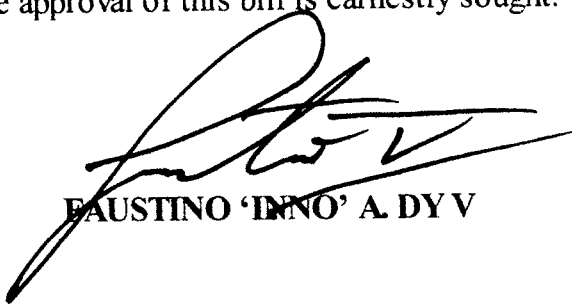
Corn is the second major crop product in the Philippines. It is considered as a basic commodity and a staple food for most Filipinos. In fact, it is promoted as a healthy alternative and a nutritious substitute for rice. Corn contributes to the livelihood of plenty as about 600,000 farm households depend on the same as their primary source of income. Additionally, corn is also a leading source of feeds for the Philippine poultry and livestock industry. In 2021, the country's corn production hit record levels at 8.83 MMT.¹

Notwithstanding the apparent importance of corn to the Philippines, a specialized corn research institute dedicated to researching and developing corn farming has yet to be established. Consistent with Article XIII, Section 5 of the Constitution where it is expressed that the State shall provide support to agriculture through appropriate technology and research, this bill seeks to finally establish the long absent Philippine Corn Research Institute. This institution aims to modernize the corn industry, thereby improving the quality of corn products as well as the livelihood and capacities of Philippine corn farmers.

Bills creating the Philippine Corn Research Institute have been filed in previous Congresses. It is hoped that the 19th Congress will be able to finally pass this measure into law for the benefit of the local corn industry.

¹ <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1166542>

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



FAUSTINO 'INNO' A. DY V

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HOUSE BILL NO. 1216

Introduced by REP. FAUSTINO 'INNO' A. DY V

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE CORN RESEARCH INSTITUTE 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 '*Philippine Corn Research Institute Act of 2022.*'

SEC. 2. *Philippine Corn Research Institute.* The Philippine Corn Research Institute, hereinafter referred to as *PhilCorn*, is hereby established as a body corporate attached to the Department of Agriculture (DA) to modernize the corn industry and consequently improve the livelihood and household income of resource-poor corn farmers in the rain-fed, upland, and dry-land farming communities and to empower farmers with the tools of science and technologies so that they can cope up with problems of low yields, droughts, floods, land degradation, global warming, and other risks arising from environmental and climate changes.

SEC. 3. *Objectives.* The objectives and goals of this Act are as follows:

- a) To develop and implement a strong, dynamic, and innovative farmer-centered and need-based national corn research and development, technology sharing, training, and extension programs;
- b) To strengthen the national capacity for corn research and extension, modernize production and utilization as well as industrial processing of

corn and corn-based crops, diversify harvests through sequential crops to sustain soil health and fertility and thus enhance long-term higher productivity and household income;

- c) To work closely with regulatory agencies such as the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI); the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Standards (BAFS); and private stakeholders and Non-Government Organization (NGOs) in the collection, conservation, and utilization of endemic or traditional corn varieties as well as in the experimentation, planting, and monitoring of corn hybrid and genetically engineered varieties;
- d) To improve the livelihood and economic conditions of small-scale and resource-poor farmers who are growing corn after rice as well as in upland and dry-land farming ecosystems;
- e) To develop and implement sustainable and environment-friendly corn and corn-based farming systems in the vulnerable and marginal areas like sloping terrains and evaluate those areas where crops other than corn may be more appropriate to grow;
- f) To gather and provide reliable, up-to-date data to guide policy makers with regard to corn improvement and development, import and export volumes, and develop strong linkages among stakeholders in promoting the national corn industry;
- g) To expand employment opportunities through corn and corn-based farming systems in the rural areas, and ultimately promote the general welfare of the people through higher efficiency and profitability in production, industrial products development, processing, and marketing;
- h) To initiate and undertake such other related programs in consultation and partnership with the DA-Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAR), the DA regional research centers (DA-RIARCs), the DOST-Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic Resources and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCAARRD), State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), and the private sector.

SEC. 4. *Principal and Regional Offices.* The *PhilCorn* shall have its principal office at the Isabela State University or at any other suitable site as the Board of Trustees may decide. It may also establish other offices, branches, satellite offices, or subsidiaries in any geographically suitable region in the Philippines that are major

producers of corn, as may be necessary for the accomplishment of its purposes and objectives.

SEC. 5. Duties and Functions. The *PhilCorn* shall exercise the following duties and functions:

- a) Unify, plan, fund, conduct, monitor, and evaluate corn research, development, and technology promotion in different scientific and technological fields and programs, including but not limited to the following thrusts: (1) germplasm collection, conservation, breeding, and biotechnology; (2) natural resources management, watershed conservation, drought adaptation and mitigation; (3) corn engineering, farm mechanization, and post-harvest management; (4) pest surveillance, early warning system, integrated pest management, and biological control methods; (5) socio-economics, impact assessment, and policy advocacy; (6) technology packaging and demonstration, promotion and deployment, training and communication; (7) processing and industrial-chemical products development; and (8) corn-based farming systems, farm management improvement, and experiment station development.
- b) Unify, lead, fund, and coordinate a national network of corn and corn-based farming systems research and extension agencies, centers, and stations located in the different agro-ecological regions of the country where corn is a major crop;
- c) Develop technologies suitable for the rain-fed, upland, and dry-land agro-ecosystems that will maximize the productivity and quality of locally grown corn and corn-based crops while also reducing production costs and ensuring long-term and sustainable corn and corn-based production systems through genetic improvement and environmental resources and conservation measures;
- d) Enhance income of corn farmers by developing suitable corn-based crops and livestock farming systems as well as crop rotations where applicable; value-adding corn technologies including on-farm verification, processing, packaging, marketing, and promotion of economically viable technologies as well as entrepreneurial skills, giving emphasis on those aspects necessary for group endeavors of small-scale farmers, cooperatives, and seed growers;
- e) Develop databases needed in the identification and preparation of necessary policy recommendations towards efficient, highly productive and

competitive corn industry and corn-based farming systems through appropriate socio-economic measures and public-private sector mobilization and participation;

- f) Organize and develop strong training and communication programs for corn and corn-based farming systems scientists, research managers, and extension specialists to enable them undertake effective and timely technology promotion of packaged technologies among clusters of farmers and corporate growers by utilizing modern extension systems such as information, education, and communication technology and participatory social mobilization procedures; and
- g) Publish and disseminate research and extension findings and recommendations through scientific journals, books, technical and extension bulletins, videos, and other print and communication channels.

SEC. 6. Corporate Powers. The *PhilCorn* shall exercise the following corporate powers:

- a) To adopt and use a corporate seal;
- b) To sue and be sued in its corporate name;
- c) To have perpetual existence unless a law provides otherwise;
- d) To adopt its by-laws and promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary or proper to implement this Act, and to amend or repeal the same from time to time;
- e) To enter into, make and execute contracts and agreements of any kind or nature;
- f) To borrow funds and obtain loans from all sources, whether local or foreign and whether government or private, to help finance its research programs and its capital and operating expenditures, or support to farmer entrepreneurial activities;
- g) To invest in, purchase or otherwise acquire, own, lease, mortgage, pledge, sell, assign, convey, exchange, encumber, borrow, or otherwise deal in real and/or personal properties of whatever kind and nature, or any interest therein, including shares of stock, bonds, notes, securities, and other evidences of indebtedness of natural or juridical persons, whether domestic

or foreign and whether government or private, as may be useful, necessary or proper to serve the objectives of this Act;

- h) To receive and acquire from any person, government and private entities, whether foreign or domestic, or from any corporation, partnership, association or other entity such characters, licenses, franchises, rights, privileges, concessions, assistance, grants, donations, loans, and contributions consisting of such properties, real or personal, including funds and valuable effects, as may be useful, necessary or proper to finance PhilCorn's research, capital and operating expenditures or otherwise carry out its purposes and objectives, and to administer the same in accordance with the terms and agreement consistent with its purposes and objectives; and
- i) To acquire from the government, whether national or local or from any person, corporation, partnership, association or other entity, such characters, franchises, rights, privileges, assistance, financial or otherwise and concessions as may be conducive to and necessary or proper for the attainment of the purposes and objectives of the *PhilCorn*.

SEC. 7. Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees, hereinafter referred to as the Board, shall exercise all the corporate functions and powers of the PhilCorn and shall control all its businesses, activities, and properties, composed of the following:

- a) The Board shall be composed of the Secretary of Agriculture or his designate as *ex-officio* Chairperson and fourteen (14) members from the following agencies and sectors:
 - 1. Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) who will act as Co-Chairperson;
 - 2. Director of the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) who will act as Vice-Chairperson;
 - 3. Undersecretary for Operations of the Department of Agriculture (DA);
 - 4. Undersecretary of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM);
 - 5. Undersecretary of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR);

6. Director of the Agriculture Division of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA);
7. Director of the DA-Philippine Council for Agriculture and Fisheries (DA-PCAF);
8. Director-General of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA);
9. Three (3) University Presidents from the State Universities and Colleges representing major corn producing and corn-based agriculture regions, one each from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao;
10. Four (4) private sector representatives, one each from:
 - a. corn farmers;
 - b. farmers' organizations, associations or federations;
 - c. private companies engaged in corn research and seed production; and
 - d. livestock/poultry industry
11. Two (2) distinguished scientists from the public and private sectors.

The credentials of private sector representatives shall be evaluated and scrutinized by competent members of the Board.

- b) The term of office of the members of the Board who are heads or officials from their respective agencies or institutions shall be co-terminus with their respective appointments; *Provided*, however, That the term of office of the Regional Executive Director who represents the DA-RFOs where corn is a major crop and the four (4) private sector representatives shall be for five years without prejudice to a reappointment for another five years based on merits and excellent performance in the Board. The *PhilCorn* Executive Director shall serve as Secretary of the Board. All government officials in the Board shall serve as *ex-officio* members and shall not receive any salary or compensation.
- c) The Chairperson, Co-Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and members of the Board shall receive *per diem*, as the Board may determine, for each Board meeting actually attended; *Provided*, however, That such members shall also be entitled to reimbursable transportation and representation allowances in going to and coming from board meetings and in transacting official business for the Institute.

- d) The Board shall meet regularly at least once (1) every quarter or as often as the exigencies of the service demands. The presence of the Chairperson, Co-Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson and at least seven (7) members of the Board shall constitute a quorum and the majority vote of the members present, there being a quorum, shall be necessary for the adoption of any resolution, rule, regulation, decision or any other act of the Board.

SEC. 8. Powers and Functions of the Board. The *PhilCorn* Board shall exercise the following powers and functions:

- a) To adopt by-laws and promulgate policies, rules and regulations, and procedures for the efficient and effective operation of the Institute;
- b) To define and guide the formulation of the vision, mission, strategy, and research-extension priorities, general plans and programs, policies, procedures, and guidelines for the proper operation and management of the *PhilCorn* in accordance with its purposes and objectives;
- c) To approve the *PhilCorn's* organizational structure and staffing pattern, operation and capital expenditures, and financial budget prepared in accordance with its corporate plans;
- d) To approve the plantilla and salary ranges, benefits, privileges, bonuses, scholarship and manpower development, housing facilities and support to staff, and other terms and conditions of service, including promotion systems similar to those in the State Universities and Colleges and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) as well as life and medical insurances and retirement schemes or benefits for all officers and employees of the *PhilCorn*, upon recommendation of the Executive Director;
- e) To appoint, promote, transfer, suspend, remove or otherwise discipline any subordinate officer or employee of the Institute, upon recommendation of the Executive Director;
- f) To seek financial support from foreign donors such as Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), US Agency for International Development (USAID) and similar institutions for the establishment and improvement of *PhilCorn* infrastructures, laboratory facilities, field experiment station development, and training/scholarship of qualified personnel.

- g) To create such committee or committees and appoint the members thereof, as may be necessary and proper for the management of the *PhilCorn* or for the attainment of its purposes and objectives; and
- h) To exercise such other powers and functions and perform such other acts as may be necessary or proper for the attainment of the purposes and objectives of the *PhilCorn*, or as may be delegated by the Secretary of Agriculture or any competent authority through the Board of Trustees.

SEC. 9. *Executive Director and Other Officers.* The *PhilCorn* shall be headed by an Executive Director who shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines, upon recommendation of The Board, based on the findings and recommendations of a *Search Committee* duly organized and commissioned by the Board for such purpose.

- a) The Executive Director shall serve for a term of five (5) years, subject to a one term extension of five (5) years for very meritorious performance, or a maximum total of ten (10) years without further extension for any reason whatsoever; *Provided*, however, That there shall be a reserved plantilla position of the same salary rate for the outgoing Executive Director, if he is previously a holder of a plantilla position at *PhilCorn* and shall not yet be of retirement age at the end of his term as Executive Director; *Provided*, further, That the Board of Trustees, through a *Search Committee* duly organized at least four (4) months earlier, shall have chosen a new Executive Director who shall immediately assume office during a turn-over ceremony on the expiration date of the term of office of the outgoing Executive Director; *Provided*, finally, that no *Officer-in-Charge* shall be designated as head of the Institute.
- b) The Executive Director shall be assisted by two Deputy Executive Directors, Division Heads, and Branch Station Directors or Managers as the Board may determine, to carry out the purposes and objectives of the *PhilCorn*.

SEC. 10. *Powers, Functions, and Duties of the Executive Director.* The Executive Director shall be directly responsible to the Board and shall have the following powers, functions, and duties:

- a) To exercise dynamic leadership, create a vision, map out the mission, provide strategic direction, and undertake systematic supervision over the planning and implementation of all research, development, technology sharing programs, training and extension, upgrading of scientists and staff

of the Institute and, in general, administer and direct the management and operation in a transparent and corrupt-free administration of the *PhilCorn*;

- b) To execute all contracts, incur obligations, acquire and dispose of assets, and deliver documents on behalf of the *PhilCorn* within the framework of the authority delegated by the Board;
- c) To implement and enforce policies, decisions, orders, rules, and regulations that are promulgated or adopted by the Board;
- d) To arrange for the conduct of an External Program and Management Review (EPMR) by a Panel of Experts every 5 years or as often as necessary in order to understand the output and impact of *PhilCorn* programs to the farmers and stakeholders of the corn industry and to provide guidance to management in charting the future of the institute; and
- e) To exercise such other powers and functions and performs such other duties as may be authorized, assigned, or delegated by the Board.

SEC. 11. *Technical Advisory Committee.* A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), organized and approved by the Board, shall assist the Executive Director, Division heads, Program Directors, and Branch Station Directors or Managers in pursuing inter-agency activities and participation of the national research, development, and extension network. The TAC shall be composed of not more than nine (9) members, or as the Board may designate, who are heads, representatives, or scientists and experts of agencies, government or private, that are actively involved in any critical aspect of corn research, corn-based farming systems, seed quality certification, training and extension, production and processing, marketing and consumption, policy advocacy, and capacity building. TAC members may be assigned to assist specific programs, divisions, or branch stations as the services may require in achieving the goals and objectives of *PhilCorn*.

SEC. 12. *Services of Government Personnel.* The *PhilCorn* may, for the purpose of its research, development, training, and extension activities, obtain and secure the services of scholars and scientists as well as specialists in research, training, extension, and communication of any unit, experiment station, institute or center of the Department of Agriculture, University of Southern Mindanao, Central Mindanao University, Visayan State University, University of the Philippines Los Banos, Mariano Marcos State University, Isabela State University, Central Luzon State University, and other agencies and universities of the national government and foreign institutions. Those personnel of national and international reputations, from public or private institutions, shall be designated as visiting scientists and research fellows for a term of

one year to five years to assist in conducting major research problems of strategic importance and consequences in pursuing the goals and objectives of the Institute. The selected personnel may be paid such honoraria or incentives acceptable to all concerned and as may be fixed and authorized by the Board.

SEC. 13. *Buildings, Facilities, and Equipment.* The *PhilCorn* is hereby authorized to own, acquire, borrow, lease, plan, and construct or repair buildings, laboratories, experimental farms, and other facilities as may be necessary or proper to attain its purposes and objectives. It may also utilize facilities of any unit of any cooperating State Universities and Colleges, the Department of Agriculture, and of the national government that is engaged, directly or indirectly, in activities that relate to agriculture, farming systems, corn production or products development of the corn industry.

- a) The *PhilCorn* is further authorized to purchase equipment, materials and articles, either locally or abroad, as may be necessary or proper to carry out its powers and functions and attain its purposes and objectives. It shall be exempted from the payment of any and all forms of taxes, duties, fees and charges on any and all such importation of equipment, materials, articles, and services; *Provided*, however, That the same are not available locally on favorable terms.
- b) The *PhilCorn* shall be authorized to expropriate lands for corn and corn-based farming systems research and development purposes provided that just compensation is paid to the owners of the land. If the land belongs to the government or is inalienable, the Institute is granted automatic title to the land.
- c) Likewise, all lands, farms, plantations, whether directly or indirectly owned, used, utilized or administered by the *PhilCorn* and those that it may hereinafter acquire or utilize for research, training, extension and technology demonstration, and seed production purposes shall be exempted from the coverage of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law.

SEC. 14. *Appropriation.* The *Four Hundred Million Pesos (P400M)* initial fund necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be set aside from any available funds of the National Treasury, not otherwise appropriated. Thereafter, such sums necessary for the continued operation of the Philippine Corn Research Institute shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).

All funds, savings, grants, and income of the *PhilCorn* shall constitute a revolving fund, to be managed as a Trust Fund, and shall be considered part of the funds automatically released to the *PhilCorn*.

SEC. 15. *Applicability of Civil Service Laws.* The *PhilCorn* and its officers and employees shall be subject to the Civil Service Law, rules and regulations; *Provided*, however, That all technical personnel shall be selected on the basis of the highest possible standards of merit and fitness for public officials and employees, preferably those with postgraduate degrees, to be determined in accordance with such policies and guidelines as may be approved by the Board.

SEC. 16. *Legal Counsel.* The Government Corporate Counsel shall be the Legal Counsel of the *PhilCorn*; *Provided*, however, That the *PhilCorn* may establish its own legal unit, subject to the supervision and control of the Government Corporate Counsel, to handle the day-to-day legal matters affecting the affairs of the *PhilCorn*.

SEC. 17. *Annual Report.* The Board shall submit to the President of the Philippines through the Secretary of Agriculture an annual report, together with the audit report on the relevant accounts, generally dealing with the activities and operations of the *PhilCorn*.

SEC. 18. *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. 19. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, executive orders, administrative orders, and rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 20. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,