

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

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 3238



Introduced by

HON. YEDDA MARIE K. ROMUALDEZ
and
HON. JUDE A. ACIDRE

AN ACT
RATIONALIZING AGRICULTURE EDUCATION IN THE PHILIPPINES BY
ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL SYSTEM OF AGRICULTURE EDUCATION
INSTITUTIONS, PROVIDING FOR MECHANISMS OF IMPLEMENTATION
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is primarily an agricultural country, with 47 per cent of its land area being an agricultural land. According to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), more than half of the population of the Philippines live in rural areas, and 36 per cent of them are poor, dependent on agriculture as their primary and often only source of income.

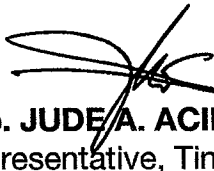
Pursuant thereto and in line with the constitutional mandate of the State to establish, maintain and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society, the proposed legislative measure seeks to establish a National Agriculture Education System (NAES) in order for agricultural education to achieve a unified, coordinated, and improved system of implementation of academic program thrusts geared towards achieving agriculture and rural development of the community and the

country. This will improve the productivity, income, and livelihood of the Filipino people, especially those living in the rural areas.

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



Rep. YEDDA MARIE K. ROMUALDEZ
Representative, Tingog Sinirangan



Rep. JUDE A. ACIDRE
Representative, Tingog Sinirangan

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

Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “*Agriculture Education Act of 2022.*”

Section 2. *Declaration of Policy.* –

- (a) The State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens, regardless of sex and creed, to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all;
- (b) The State shall establish, maintain, and support a complete and integrated system of agriculture education relevant to the needs of the economy, community, and society;
- (c) The State shall provide non-formal education and training to farmers, farm workers, and out-of-school youths in the rural areas; and

- (d) Agriculture education shall be coordinated with the agricultural policies of the State and shall be oriented particularly towards improvement of the productivity and income of small farmers and increased self-sufficiency of rural communities.

Section 3. *Scope.* – This Act shall apply to and govern both formal and non-formal continuing agriculture education programs being offered in all public and private educational institutions in the country.

Section 4. *Definition of Terms.* – The following terms shall mean as defined herein:

- (a) *Agriculture* - means cultivation of the soil, planting of crops, growing of fruit trees, management of forests, raising or catching of livestock or both, poultry, or fish; including the harvesting and post-harvest handling of such products and other activities and practices performed by a farmer/fisherman/forester in conjunction with such operations done by persons whether natural or juridical.
- (b) *Agriculture and Environment Education* - pertains to organized and institutionalized instructions relating to professional, technical, and vocational skills development, research for technology development, and extension of technologies in the various fields/disciplines in agriculture and allied sciences such as crop science, animal science, agricultural engineering, fisheries, forestry, and veterinary medicine. Environmental concerns are integrated in each discipline.

Section 5. *Purpose.* – Qualified existing public and private institutes, colleges, and universities shall be developed into a network of an integrated system of Agriculture Education to respond effectively to agriculture and rural development needs of the country.

Section 6. *The National Agriculture Education System (NAES).* – The network of qualified public and private educational institutions shall be

formed and established into a National Agriculture Education System (NAES), for agriculture education to have a unified, coordinated, and improved system of implementation of academic program thrusts geared towards achieving agriculture and rural development of the community and country. However, in case there is no institution offering agriculture education in the service area which corresponds to the provision of Section 7 of this Act, the same shall be created or established according to the implementing rules and regulations of this Act.

Section 7. *Components of the System.* – From among the qualified agriculture education institutions, regardless of the institution's system of governance as authorized by law, the network shall be composed of five (5) subsystems, namely: agriculture, agricultural engineering, fisheries, forestry, and veterinary medicine. However, administrative organization and structures of the designated institutions shall be governed by their respective charters unless otherwise provided in this Act.

- (a) The Agriculture Education Subsystem shall be composed of one (1) designated National College of Agriculture, one (1) designated Regional College of Agriculture in each region, and at least one (1) designated/converted/created Technical Institute of Agriculture per province.
- (b) The Agricultural Engineering Education Subsystem shall be composed of one (1) designated National College of Agricultural Engineering and a designated Regional College of Agricultural Engineering per region to be located within the network of the agriculture education subsystem.
- (c) The Fisheries Education Subsystem shall be composed of one (1) designated Regional College of Fisheries to be located strategically in three (3) selected regions and a designated/converted/created Regional Institute of Fisheries Technology per region.
- (d) The Forestry Education Subsystem shall be composed of one (1) designated National College of Forestry and designated Regional

College of Forestry per region to be located within the agriculture education subsystem, if possible.

- (e) The Veterinary Education Subsystem shall be composed of one (1) designated National College of Veterinary Medicine and four (4) designated regional College of Veterinary Medicine to be located strategically in four (4) selected regions within the agriculture education system.

Section 8. *The National Colleges (NCs) shall:*

- (a) Concentrate on the post-graduate programs and curricular models in the tertiary level;
- (b) Be responsible for the conduct of basic and applied research and other scientific innovations;
- (c) Assist the Regional Colleges (RCs) and institutes in their development efforts towards excellence, effectiveness, and relevance, in instruction, research, and extension or technology transfer;
- (d) Link up with national and international agencies to keep abreast of the local needs and scientific advances; and
- (e) Share its expertise and facilities with the Government and private sector as far as policy recommendations, program planning and evaluation, and staff training are concerned.

Section 9. *The Regional Colleges (RCs) shall:*

- (a) Concentrate on Bachelor of Science degrees with reasonable involvement in the postgraduate and model technology courses;
- (b) Focus on adaptive research needed in the region with reasonable involvement in basic and applied research and verification projects;
- (c) Assist technical institutes in strengthening their institutional capabilities towards relevance, effectiveness, and excellence in instruction, action research, and technology transfer; and

- (d) Link up with and assist government regional offices in planning and evaluating their programs and in training their staff for agriculture activities.

Section 10. *The Regional Institute of Fisheries Technology shall:*

- (a) Concentrate on the Diploma in Fisheries Technology designed for the training of fisheries technicians on technical skills required of the fisheries industry;
- (b) Conduct verification tests of new techniques developed by research institutions and transfer positive results to field technicians, fishermen, and fish farmers;
- (c) Assist the Fisherman's Training Center of BFAR in planning, implementing, and evaluating their programs and training; and
- (d) Assist high schools with fishery practical arts subjects for the development of their instructional materials.

Section 11. *The Provincial Technical Institutes (PTTs) shall:*

- (a) Concentrate their curricular programs on technical and technology courses designed for farming and extension work with reasonable involvement in selected degree and non-degree post-secondary advanced technology related courses in agriculture;
- (b) Conduct pilot/action research and verification trials to demonstrate advances in agricultural technology and transfer the same to technicians and farmers through field days, short courses, and training programs;
- (c) Serve as a learning and technology resource for development agencies in the province in planning and evaluating programs in training technicians, small farmers, agricultural producers and entrepreneurs; and
- (d) Extend improved appropriate agricultural technologies to secondary and vocational high schools.

Section 12. *Other Roles and Functions of the Institutions.* – In addition to their regular roles and functions, all the member institutions mentioned above shall also serve as the agricultural training centers in their respective areas and offer continuing and adult education course for related line agency staff/farmers/fisherfolk and community leaders to hasten technology transfer, improve attitudes towards farming, and inculcate the importance of agriculture in nation building in support to the Magna Carta for Small Farmers. It shall also be the function of the institutions to provide assistance to students in conducting their income-generating projects as well as placement of their graduates.

Section 13. *Agricultural Education Development Council (AEDC).* - The existing Technical Panel for Agricultural Education (TPAE) is hereby transformed into the Agricultural Education Development Council (AEDC) as the governing advisory policy body which is autonomous and attached to the Department of Education (DepEd) with the following composition and functions:

(a) Composition. - The AEDC shall be composed of the following members to be appointed by the Secretary of Education, Culture and Sports as its Ex-Officio Chairman:

- 1) One (1) outstanding scientist, educationist or practitioner from each of the fields of Crop Science, Animal Science, Agricultural Engineering, Fisheries, Forestry, Veterinary Medicine, Agriculture Teacher Education who shall be nominated by heads of faculties, scientific, or professional groups for a term of three (3) years, and from among themselves a Vice-Chairman shall be chosen;
- 2) One (1) representative each from the Department of Agriculture, Department of Environmental and Natural Resources, Department of Agrarian Reform, Department of Science and Technology, Department of Budget and Management and the National Economic and Development Authority;

- 3) One (1) representative from the Bureau of Higher Education, Department of Education, Culture and Sports;
- 4) One (1) representative from the Professional Regulation Commission;
- 5) One (1) representative from the Federation or Association of Colleges of Associations; Agriculture in the Philippines; and
- 6) One (1) representative from the Fund for Assistance to Private Education.

(b) Functions.

- 1) To study and review the overall philosophy and goals of agriculture and environment education in relation to the regional, national, and international developments in agriculture and industry and formulate alternative directions and plans;
- 2) To assess and identify the agriculture and environmental education, training, and employment needs of the country in consultation with NEDA and other concerned agencies;
- 3) To undertake policy, educational, and evaluation research and recommend measures to improve agriculture and environmental education;
- 4) To formulate and recommend guidelines and minimum educational standards with respect to curricula, faculty, equipment and facilities, library resources, student services, quality of output and other related criteria which shall be applicable to all NAES member-institutions;
- 5) To develop and implement coordinative and collaborative mechanism of monitoring and evaluation of activities of NAES;
- 6) To establish and operate a Management Information System (MIS) for the NAES;
- 7) To provide technical assistance to educational institutions in the planning, development, and implementation of agriculture

- and environmental education programs in cooperation with appropriate agencies;
- 8) To receive or recommend grants or both for the funding of educational research and development following the existing accounting and auditing manual for research operations;
 - 9) To appoint AEDC staff and employees upon the recommendation and endorsement of the Executive Director;
 - 10) To formulate implementing rules and regulations of this Act and recommend the same to the Secretary of Education within six (6) months after the effectivity of this Act; and
 - 11) To perform such other functions as may be deemed necessary.

Section 14. *Secretariat.* – The AEDC shall be assisted by technical and administrative staff with appointment on permanent status to be headed by an Executive Director. The Secretariat's office shall be at the University where the National College of Agriculture is located. The services of a pool of experts/consultants/resource persons on full-time or part-time status shall be provided on special detail or secondment subject to the guidelines approved by AEDC.

Section 15. *Budgetary Scheme shall be as follows:*

- (a) The current appropriations or budgets of the public educational institutions in the NAES designated as the national colleges and regional colleges shall continue and shall be modified or adjusted in succeeding years to meet the standards of the rationalized programs of the institutions as approved by the Department of Budget and Management and shall be included in the Annual General Appropriations Act.
- (b) The PTIs/RIFTs in the NAES which are designated or newly created under this Act shall likewise be provided budgetary support based on their programs and new staffing pattern as approved by the

Department of Budget and Management and shall be included in the Annual General Appropriations Act. Additional institutions that may be established in the province shall solely be supported by provincial government funds.

- (c) This Act shall hereby allocate a lump sum of Ten Million Pesos (Php10,000,000.00) per annum for the next ten (10) years and shall be included in the General Appropriations Act starting the calendar year following the effectivity of this Act. This fund shall be called as the Agriculture Education Program Development Fund to support the development, improvement, and implementation of priority agriculture education and farmers' entrepreneurial training programs of NAES member institutions: *Provided*, that such fund shall be invested in government bonds and securities and managed by AEDC using only the interest earnings of the said fund.
- (d) The operations of the AEDC shall be funded initially from the DepEd budget allocation for the Technical Panel for Agricultural Education (TPAE). Upon the effectivity of this Act, TPAE shall be replaced by the AEDC and all equipment, qualified personnel, and projects of the TPAE shall be transferred to AEDC. Subsequently, the initial amount of at least Five Million Pesos (Php5,000,000.00) shall be allocated for the AEDC in the General Appropriations Act.

Section 16. *Fiduciary, Endowment and Revolving Funds.* - The Fiduciary and Revolving Funds centralized under P.D. 711 are hereby authorized and reallocated to the institutions in NAES to encourage them to demonstrate technologies that they develop in their laboratories, experimental farms and income-generating projects, furthermore endowment funds shall be authorized to be accumulated in the institutions, out of any funds generated from unallocated savings, earnings or from any other external sources to be used as incentives for professorial chairs, teachers/employees incentives award systems, faculty fellowship programs and the like. Such funds shall be disbursed

in accordance with law and guidelines set by AEDEC and the
Commission on Audit.

Approved,