

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3958



Introduced by **Representative Wilbert T. Lee**

AN ACT
PROVIDING POST-HARVEST FACILITIES TO RICE FARMERS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article XIII, Section 5 of the 1987 Constitution provides that “[t]he State shall recognize the right of farmers, farmworkers, and landowners, as well as cooperatives, and other independent farmers’ organizations to participate in the planning, organization, and management of the program, and shall provide support to agriculture through appropriate technology and research, and adequate financial, production, marketing, and other support services.”

The problem on post-harvest loss is an undeniable threat to food security, loss in farmer incomes, and inefficiency in the global food system. It is estimated that a third of food produced worldwide is lost or wasted.¹ The need to institute interventions to increase farm-level productivity has been one of the priorities and thrust of this representation and the sector we humbly represent in Congress. During our consultation among farmers and agricultural workers, one of the solutions we garnered is to close the domestic supply-and-demand gap and increase rice productivity and income of farmers through the government’s assistance of providing them post-harvest facilities.

Republic Act 8435, also known as the Agricultural & Fisheries Modernization Act (AFMA), defines postharvest activities as those involving threshing, drying, milling, grading, storage and handling of produce, and other activities such as stripping, winnowing, chipping and washing. Postharvest facilities for conducting these activities include, but are not limited to, drying and milling facilities, fish ports and landings, ice plants and refrigerated storage facilities, processing plants, warehouses, buying stations, and market infrastructure and transportation.²

A study revealed that agricultural production and postharvest industry is fragmented and small-scale in nature with numerous producers, as well as multiple layers for marketing and distribution between growers and buyers. This results in inefficiencies in the supply chain

¹ Bckele D (2021) *Role of Postharvest Management for Food Security: A Review*. ACST 9: 475. DOI: 10.4172/2329-8863.1000475

² National Agricultural & Fisheries Council. 2004. *Agricultural Fisheries & Modernization Act*. Retrieved last 18 August 2022 from <http://naafc.da.gov.ph/afma/ra8435-1.Php>.

which increases costs, causes losses both in terms of quantity and quality, and leads to higher prices of products. The large losses from farm to plate are attributed to poor handling, distribution, storage, and purchase/consumption behavior involving huge resources that could otherwise be spent on more productive activities go into producing and transporting goods that are wasted.³

With the vision to employ state-of-the-art equipment and well-trained personnel, post-harvest facilities rice especially in regions heavily producing rice should be able to produce properly dried paddy and consequently good-quality milled rice. The presence of these facilities should also provide a safety net for farmers during periods of oversupply, when drying facilities are overutilized and private traders are not willing to accept wet paddy and/or offer very low buying prices.

A Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) study also reveal the importance of Flatbed Dryers and Threshers. Flatbed dryers are said to be crucial and essential, especially during the rainy season. This is mainly due to weather which prevents them from using sun drying. This is particularly so for farmers who are unable to avail of RPCs services due to the smallness in the volume of their harvested paddy. Threshers, on the other hand, are reported to be critical in meeting farmers' urgent need to immediately turn harvest into cash for household and loan repayment needs. The DA provided an additional unit of threshers enabling them to thresh their paddy immediately.

Hence, to further improve lowering post-harvest production losses, this bill proposes the government to construct and provide post-harvest facilities like warehouses, rice mills, and transport facilities, including crucial equipment such as Flatbed Dryers and Threshers. We also include one of the PIDS' recommendation that consultation among beneficiaries and project stakeholders is vital as early as possible for greater understanding, appreciation and consequent "buy in" and even project ownership in the process.

In view of the foregoing, the expeditious consideration and approval of this measure is earnestly sought.



HON. WILBERT T. LEE
Representative
AGRI PARTYLIST

³ Manalili, N., Dorado M., Van OTERIDIJK, R. 2014. *Investing in Appropriate Packaging Technologies in Developing Countries*. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rome, Italy

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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 “Post-Harvest Facilities
2 Support Act of 2022”.

3 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** It is the policy of the State to promote agricultural and
4 rural development. Specifically, the State aims to raise farm productivity and income to a level
5 high enough to allow farmers to afford their material needs and achieve quality of life. It is
6 also the policy of the State to encourage and strengthen non-government organizations, such
7 as farmer organizations, cooperatives, and enterprises.

8 **SEC. 3. *Post-harvest Facilities.*** - The Department of Public Works and Highways
9 (DPWH), in consultation with the Department of Agriculture (DA), the Department of
10 Agrarian Reform (DAR), and farmer cooperatives shall construct warehouses and rice mills in
11 every rice producing municipality and city in the Philippines: Provided, That in the initial phase
12 of the program, every district with at least one rice-producing municipality shall be the
13 beneficiary of at least one warehouse and rice mill.

14 Additionally, the Department of Trade and Industry, in consultation with the DA, the
15 DAR, and farmer cooperatives, shall provide the equipment and machinery required to operate
16 these warehouses and rice mills such as Flatbed Dryers and Threshers, as well as the necessary
17 transport facilities.

18
19 **SEC. 4. *Stakeholder Consultations.*** – The aforementioned implementing agencies of
20 this act shall conduct beneficiaries and project stakeholders consultation from the planning to
21 evaluation stages of the post-harvest facility project. The formation of the local project’s
22 Technical Working Group (TWG) that shall lead the consultation, updating and evaluation of
23 the project is hereby created.

1 **SEC. 5. *Partnership on Facility Enhancement.*** – Local farmer cooperatives and
2 enterprises are highly encourage to contribute additional equipment or other form of assistance
3 that can help further develop and enhance their local post-harvest facilities. Applicable
4 incentives schemes available on these donations shall be applied.
5

6 **SEC. 6. *Appropriation.*** The amount necessary for the effective implementation of this
7 Act shall be charged against the current appropriations for DA. Hereafter, such amount as may
8 be necessary for its continued implementation shall be included in the annual General
9 Appropriations Act: Provided, that funding support for agencies implementing the Program
10 shall be included in the necessary appropriations for this Act.

11 **SEC. 7. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** Within thirty (30) days from the
12 effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Interior and Local
13 Government, in consultation with appropriate government agencies and other stakeholders,
14 shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to implement this Act. The implementing
15 rules and regulations shall include a template to guide the cities and municipalities in the
16 establishment of their own Agri-food Terminals and Trading Centers.

17 **SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.*** If any provision of this Act, or parts thereof, is declared
18 unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other portions.

19 **SEC. 10. *Repealing Clause.*** All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, and
20 implementing rules and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified
21 accordingly.

22 **SEC. 11. *Effectivity.*** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in
23 the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,