

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6300



Introduced by **Representative Wilbert T. Lee**

AN ACT
URGING THE PLANNING, EVALUATION, AND PROMOTION OF BANANA
FOR INTERNATIONAL EXPORT, ESTABLISHING A BANANA RESEARCH
AND EXPORT DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, AND PROVIDING FUNDS
THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is the world's second-largest exporter of bananas.¹ Undeniably, our Banana industry contributes significantly to our national economy. As a byproduct that constitutes its own industry, bananas are an important source of revenue for a big population of Filipino farmers. In addition, it is a delicious and healthy fruit that will provide a number of health benefits.

Over the years, the banana business has faced several challenges, including politics, poor infrastructure, mites, and climate change. The Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program for instance, which led to disagreements over land distribution, had an impact on a banana plantation.²

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 90% of Asian banana exports originated in the Philippines, which ranks as the second leading global banana exporter worldwide. However, this 90% share fell to some 60% in 2021. This is a massive decline in terms of the production of banana plantations due to the aforementioned struggles and challenges.³

¹ Arcalas, J. (13 September 2022) PHL share in Asian banana exports down to 60%. Retrieved last 9 November 2022 from: <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2022/09/13/phl-share-in-asian-banana-exports-down-to-60/>

² Philippine Banana Cooperatives (n.d) accessed from: <https://archive.foodfirst.org/philippine-banana-cooperatives-successes-and-challenges-part-2/#:~:text=The%20farms%20were%20highly%20compacted,pest%20or%20disease%20comes%20through.>
An Overview Of Philippine Bananas accessed from: <https://foodphilippines.com/story/an-overview-of-philippine-bananas/>

<https://psa.gov.ph/fruits-crops-bulletin#:~:text=Banana%20production%20for%20the%20second,the%20same%20period%20of%202021.>

³ Ibid

COVID-19 and the spread of Panama disease were two of the leading factors behind the rapid decline of the Philippines' banana exports. Increasing costs of equipment and worldwide inflation have also caused quite a problem for the production of bananas, while storms and maintenance costs led to the decline in domestic production, significantly affecting small-scale banana farmers.

The farms were highly compacted with poor fertility and extremely susceptible to climate extremes like droughts, storms, and typhoons. Because there is only one variety of bananas being produced for export, these farms are highly vulnerable to pest or disease.

Acknowledging the fact that bananas are the most exported fresh fruit in the world by both volume and economic value and the 4th most important agricultural commodity in developing countries, this measure seeks to revitalize and strengthen the Banana industry and its immense potential to compete in the global market through exports by establishing a Banana Research Export Promotion Council (BREPC) tasked not only to promote and harness the promising benefits of a thriving banana industry, but to pursue research and development of the banana business.

The expeditious consideration and approval of this measure is earnestly sought.



HON. WILBERT T. LEE
Representative
AGRI PARTYLIST

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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 "Banana Research and Export
2 Act of 2022."

3 **Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** It is hereby declared the policy of the State to develop
4 and promote a globally competitive banana industry to increase banana farmers' income,
5 encouraging the production of export-quality fruits, and promoting international trade and
6 industry. Likewise, continuing research and development on this fruit and export product
7 must also be pursued for its sustainability and competitiveness.

8 **Sec. 3. *Establishment of the Banana Research and Export Promotion Council***
9 ***(BREPC).*** A council, composed of the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture (DA) or
10 any undersecretary designated as his or her representative as the Chairperson, the Secretary
11 of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) or his representative, the Secretary of the
12 Department of Foreign Affairs(DFA) or his representative, and one (1) each from the banana
13 growers and commercial processors' sectors to be designated by the Secretary of the DA shall

growers and commercial processors' sectors to be designated by the Secretary of the DA shall be created immediately upon the effectivity of this Act to ensure the government's, support, and assistance to banana exporters.

Sec. 4. Functions of the BREPC. The BREPC, in consultation with the DA, Department of Science and Technology (DOST), state universities and colleges, banana growers' and processors' cooperatives and organizations, local government units, and the private sector, shall formulate a (10) year framework to be validated and updated annually. Such Framework shall serve as a guide to the formulation and implementation of plans, programs and projects for the production, processing and marketing of bananas for export worldwide, as envisioned in this Act. The Framework shall likewise provide for the following:

a. *National Expansion Plans and Programs* - The DA, DOST, state universities and colleges (SUCs) and other stakeholders shall encourage the conduct of research on bananas, particularly the areas of crop improvement (development of new varieties), crop protection, harvesting and postharvest handling, supply chain analysis, marketing and promotion. The model farm shall also be established in key banana growing areas of the country to showcase the latest technologies in banana propagation, production Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) post-harvest handling, and processing, packaging and branding.

b. *Investment Promotion and Facilitation* - The DA and DTI shall establish linkages between stakeholders in the banana industry, Government Financial Institutions (GFIs) and private financial entities. Programs to invite the private sector to banana production and processing shall likewise be developed.

c. *Export Promotion Support* - An integrated export strategy shall be created, to include branding, advertising, market research and analyses, and updated Phyto sanitary guidelines. Foreign trade and export promotion activities such as training, technical assistance, capacity building, information on export opportunities, export planning assistance, and participation in international agriculture food and events shall be facilitated.

d. *Formulation of Trade Policies* - The BREPC shall have a consultative approach at every stage of the trade policy-making process, inviting all banana stakeholders. The DTI shall lead the negotiation of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) to provide a competitive environment for Filipino banana exports overseas.

1 e. *Research and Development* - To undertake strategic research for developing
2 technologies to enhance the productivity and utilization of bananas and sustainable ways to
3 increase the production of bananas.

4 f. *Monitoring and Evaluation* - The BREPC shall continuously monitor, and evaluate the
5 results of programs implemented by the various stakeholders and government agencies,
6 providing overall coordination and end-to-end management of 2 the export process.

7 **Sec. 5. BREPC Secretariat.** The BREPC Secretariat shall be constituted and be under
8 the direct supervision of the Department of Agriculture under the High-Value Crops
9 Development Program (HVCDP) (RA 7900) which helps promote the production,
10 processing, marketing and distribution of high-value crops. A position of an Executive
11 Director shall be created to supervise the day-to-day operations of the BREPC.

12 **Sec. 6. Appropriation.** The amount necessary to implement this Act shall be included
13 in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA). Thereafter, such funds as may be necessary
14 for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the succeeding annual
15 GAA.

16 **Sec. 7. Repealing Clause.** All provisions of existing laws, orders and regulations
17 contrary to or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

18 **Sec. 8. Separability Clause.** If for any reason any part or provision of this Act shall be
19 deemed unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions hereof shall not be
20 affected and shall remain in force and effect.

21 **Sec. 9. Effectivity.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its
22 publication in three (3) newspapers of general circulation.

23
24 Approved,