

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
2nd Regular Session

House Bill No. **10465**



Introduced by Representative ERIC GO YAP

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Benguet Province is known to be characterized by its mountainous terrains and cool weather all year round—the same traits which the province’s rich cultivated lands and thriving variation of the fruits and vegetables are being attributed to. Apart from being hailed as the “Salad Bowl of the Philippines”, Benguet is known for their strawberries, most especially the Municipality of La Trinidad. To note, there are over 700 strawberry farms in La Trinidad alone which produce over a thousand metric tons of the said fruit every year—making the province the central and biggest producer of strawberries in this country.

The province annually holds the Strawberry Festival in pursuit of recognizing the success of strawberry farming as being one of the major economic drivers in the province, as well as encouraging more farmers to be in the industry. Therefore, given such accomplishments, it is timely to institutionalize a National Program for the Strawberry Industry, which this Bill seeks, not only to promote the said industry for income generation of farmers but also to increase farm productivity of strawberries in pursuit of the industry’s sustainable development.

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


HON. ERIC GO YAP

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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE STRAWBERRY INDUSTRY
PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Title. - This act shall be known as the "*Strawberry Industry Development Act of 2024.*"

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote the strawberry industry as an income source of farmers and increase farm productivity for sustainable development.

SEC. 3. Creation of a National Strawberry Board. - There shall be a National Strawberry Board, hereinafter referred to as the Board, that shall direct, supervise and monitor the development and promotion of the strawberry industry. The board shall be composed of:

- a. Secretary of the Department of Agriculture (DA) as Chairman;
- b. Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) as Vice Chairman;
- c. Secretary of Department of Science and Technology (DOST);
- d. Secretary of Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG);
- e. One (1) representative from State Universities and Colleges; One (1) representative from the League of Municipalities where strawberry is primarily grown;
- g. One (1) representative from a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) working on strawberry production, research and development, processing or promotion; and

h. One (1) representative from strawberry growers; One (1) representative from strawberry traders; and One (1) representative from strawberry processors.

SEC. 4. *Development of the Strawberry Industry* - The Board, in consultation with the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), state universities and colleges, farmer groups, local government units, and the private sector, shall formulate necessary programs and projects for the advancement and industry-wide development of strawberry in the Philippines, as follows:

- a. Create and maintain a strawberry roadmap that will outline the planned programs and projects to develop the strawberry industry on a national scale;
- b. Organize systematic programs that could improve strawberry production including the development of effective production systems;
- c. Promote the strawberry industry to investors;
- d. Provide technical assistance on planting systems and rehabilitation of farms;
- e. Develop efficient and productive processing technologies for strawberry produce;
- f. Allow and facilitate the establishment of credit programs in government banks for strawberry farmers;
- g. Conduct research and other scientific studies on strawberry;
- h. Establish and maintain a germplasm collection and gene bank for strawberry;
- i. Provide marketing and promotions of strawberry for domestic and export markets;
- j. Classify strawberry as a high value crop;
- k. Establish a strawberry-processing facility for farmers and farmer's organizations; and
- l. Coordinate and collaborate with other government and non-government agencies involved in the development of the strawberry industry.

SEC. 5. *Secretariat of the Strawberry Board* - The Undersecretary of Agriculture in Charge of Crops and the Head of the Bureau of Plant Industry shall be the Secretariat of the Board. The Office of High Value Crops Development shall establish an office space for the Strawberry Board for their meetings.

SEC. 6. *Appropriation* - The amount of fifty million pesos (Php50,000.000.00) shall be allocated from the Special Activities Fund of the President of the Republic of the Philippines or from any other sources that may be identified for the purpose for the operation, industry development as contained in Section 4 hereof. Thereafter, such sum required shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act of the Department of Agriculture.

SEC. 7. *Separability Clause* - If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SEC. 8. *Repealing Clause* - All existing laws, rules and regulations or part thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, superseded or modified accordingly.

SEC. 9. *Effectivity Clause* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,