



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **1790**



Introduced by Rep. Edwin Ongchuan

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The agricultural sector sustains the livelihoods of millions of Filipinos; however, it continues to face major challenges such as low productivity, limited market access, vulnerability to climate change, and an aging farming workforce that is often unwilling or unable to adopt modern practices.

In particular, rural areas suffer from inadequate infrastructure, limited digital connectivity, and a lack of access to appropriate technologies. These barriers discourage the youth from pursuing farming as a viable and rewarding career, further aggravating the sector's generational crisis.

The proposed ***Agricultural Technology Access and Innovation Act*** aims to address these challenges by establishing a comprehensive support program under the Department of Agriculture that will promote youth- and farmer-driven research and innovation initiatives while also strengthening market linkages.

By ensuring that modern agricultural technology are more affordable, accessible, and suited to local conditions, this measure seeks to empower farmers—especially the rural youth—to boost productivity, increase incomes, and establish resilient, sustainable livelihoods.

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

EDWIN ONGCHUAN
Representative
Second District, Northern Samar



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AN ACT PROMOTING RURAL AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY ACCESS AND INNOVATION THROUGH A NATIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR FARMERS AND YOUTH, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. Short Title – This Act shall be known as the “Agricultural Technology Access and Innovation Act”.

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote inclusive, modern, and sustainable agricultural development by ensuring that farmers and the rural youth have equitable access to technology, knowledge, and innovation. Toward this end, the State shall foster rural economic growth by supporting the adoption of appropriate technologies, improving digital connectivity, and empowering the next generation of farmers and agriculture entrepreneurs.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms – As used in this Act, the following terms shall mean:

- a. “Agricultural Technology” - refers to any machinery, equipment, software, digital platform, or process innovation that improves agricultural productivity, sustainability, market access, or resilience to climate change.
- b. “Farmers” – refer to individual farmers, farmer cooperatives, associations, and agrarian reform beneficiaries.
- c. “Rural Youth” – refers to persons aged 15–35 residing in rural areas engaged or intending to engage in agriculture.
- d. “Eligible Entity” – includes individual farmers, youth agriculture entrepreneurs, cooperatives, accredited NGOs, and enterprises involved in agricultural technology solutions.

SECTION 4. Rural Agricultural Technology Access and Innovation Program -There is hereby established a *Rural Agricultural Technology Access and Innovation Program (RATAIP)* under the Department of Agriculture, with the following components:

- a. *Agricultural Technology Grants and Subsidies* - To ease the financial burden of adopting modern tools, qualified farmers shall be entitled to partial subsidies to acquire certified agricultural machinery, equipment, and digital solutions.
- b. *Digital Connectivity and Infrastructure Support* – The RATAIP shall include the establishment of rural agriculture digital centers offering internet access and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) training, as well as support for the development of ICT infrastructure in farming communities through partnerships with local government units (LGUs) and accredited private service providers.
- c. *Capacity-Building and Technical Training* – In cooperation with Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), state universities and colleges (SUCs), and accredited private training providers, subsidized training shall be made available to qualified farmers and rural youth, covering the use of agricultural technology solutions, farm management software, e-commerce platforms, and climate-resilient technologies.
- d. *Research and Development Support* -To promote innovation, the RATAIP shall provide funding for qualified youth-led or farmer-led research projects focused on appropriate and sustainable agricultural technology solutions.
- e. *Market Linkage and E-Commerce Promotion* – The RATAIP shall help farmers access online platforms as an avenue for the sale of products and promote the development of farmer-owned digital marketplaces.

SECTION 5. Technology Accreditation - The Department of Agriculture, in coordination with the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), shall establish a system for the accreditation of agricultural technology products and services to ensure safety, appropriateness, and quality standards for rural deployment.

SECTION 6. Inter-Agency Support - The Department of Agriculture shall coordinate with the following agencies and entities for program implementation:

- a. Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)
- b. Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT)
- c. Department of Science and Technology (DOST)
- d. Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA)
- e. Local Government Units (LGUs)
- f. State Universities and Colleges (SUCs)
- g. Private sector partners and NGOs.

SECTION 7. Incentives - Private companies providing accredited agricultural technology solutions, training, or connectivity infrastructure in rural areas under this program may avail of fiscal incentives as provided by law, subject to guidelines issued by appropriate agencies.

SECTION 8. Appropriations - The necessary funds for the implementation of this Act shall be sourced from the existing budget of the Department of Agriculture. Thereafter, funding requirements shall be duly incorporated into the annual budget of the Department of Agriculture, in accordance with the regular budgetary process.

SECTION 9. Separability Clause - If any provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, the provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 10. Repealing Clause – Existing laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, proclamations or administrative regulations that are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby amended, modified, superseded or repealed accordingly.

SECTION 11. Effectivity - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,