

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Philippines

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2946



Introduced by Representative Kathryn Joyce F. Gorriceta, M.D.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In the Second District of Iloilo, which remains deeply rooted in agricultural tradition, the aging farming population poses a threat to long-term food security and rural development. Despite the district's rich agricultural heritage, fewer and fewer young people are entering the sector. The reasons are undeniable: lack of capital, limited access to land, outdated farming models, and no clear pathway from education to enterprise.

If this trend continues, food insecurity, rural stagnation, and generational disconnection from the land are not distant possibilities—they are imminent threats. It is not enough to call agriculture important; we must act decisively to make it accessible, modern, and dignified for the next generation.

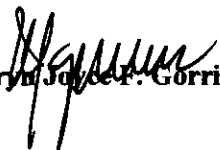
This measure affirms that youth must be central to the future of sustainable agriculture and rural progress. With the right tools and support, they can become the next generation of agri-entrepreneurs, food innovators, and community leaders.

One key asset in this effort is the Iloilo Science and Technology University (ISAT-U) Leon Campus—a respected institution in the Second District that plays a vital role in advancing agricultural education. ISAT-U Leon can serve as a pivotal partner in the implementation of training programs, research support, and enterprise incubation, bridging the gap between academic knowledge and practical application in the

field. Its presence strengthens the district's capacity to equip young Ilonggos with modern, science-based, and entrepreneurial skills in agriculture.

This is not just a development initiative; it is a lifeline for the future of our communities. The youth must no longer be seen as passive observers of agricultural decline, but as active drivers of its revival.

The time to act is now. The longer we delay investing in our youth and our fields, the deeper the consequences for food production, economic resilience, and rural identity. Through this measure, we offer young Ilonggos not just tools but a reason to believe that farming is not a dead end, but a doorway to leadership, innovation, and prosperity.


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AN ACT PROMOTING YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURE THROUGH AGRI-ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUPPORT, FARM INCUBATION, TRAINING, AND ACCESS TO LAND AND RESOURCES IN THE SECOND DISTRICT OF ILOILO, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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 “**Youth in Agriculture Empowerment Act of the Second District of Iloilo.**”

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote inclusive and sustainable rural development by empowering young people to engage in agriculture and agri-entrepreneurship. The government shall ensure access to resources, training, mentorship, and land for the youth to thrive in the agricultural sector.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. As used in this Act:

- A. **Youth** - individuals aged 15 to 30 years old as defined by R.A. 8044 (Youth in Nation-Building Act).
- B. **Agri-Entrepreneurship** - the practice of launching and managing agricultural ventures or businesses.
- C. **Farm Incubation Program** - a structured support system that helps aspiring young farmers or agri-entrepreneurs start and grow their farming ventures through training, mentorship, land use, and financing.
- D. **Youth Farmers Hub** – a shared facility established at the municipal level that serves as a center for training, co-farming, equipment access, mentoring, and agri-enterprise support for youth.

SECTION 4. Creation of the Youth Farmers Empowerment Program (YFEP). There is hereby created a **Youth Farmers Empowerment Program (YFEP)** under the Department of Agriculture (DA) in coordination with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Technical Education and Skills

Development Authority (TESDA), and the National Youth Commission (NYC), and implemented locally by municipal LGUs in the Second District of Iloilo.

SECTION 5. Components of the Program.

a. Agri-Startup Grants

- Eligible youth applicants may apply for grants ranging from **P10,000 to P25,000** to fund agri-based enterprises.
- Grants shall be used for production inputs, farm tools, seedlings, livestock, or market operations.
- The grant program shall be managed and monitored by the Municipal Agriculture Office in partnership with the Local Youth Development Office.

b. Farm Incubation Programs

- Municipalities shall designate government-owned or partner farms as **incubation areas** for youth-led agri projects.
- Participants will be given **up to 1 year of free land use**, farm equipment access, and regular mentorship.
- Cooperatives, academic institutions, and local agripreneurs shall serve as mentors and partners.

c. Youth Farmers Hubs

- Each municipality shall establish at least one **Youth Farmers Hub**, which shall serve as:
 - Training and learning center
 - Seedling and tool bank
 - Agri-cooperative registration assistance
 - Marketing and digital promotion support center

d. Agro-Tourism and Farm Business Training

- The program shall conduct quarterly training sessions on agro-tourism development, value chain processing, digital marketing, climate-smart agriculture, and business registration.

- Local Agri-tourism, Agriculture Professionals, and Iloilo Science and Technology University - Leon Campus shall be tapped as training partners.

c. Land Lease Access Program

- LGUs shall identify idle public lands, demo farms, or private landowner partnerships for **lease-to-youth** arrangements.
- Youth cooperatives or individuals can apply for **3 to 5-year land leases** at subsidized rates with option for renewal.

SECTION 6. *Funding.* The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be sourced from the available funds of the Department of Agriculture and the concerned LGUs, with possible augmentation from the DTT's Negosyo Centers and TESDA community programs. Annual funding shall thereafter be included in the General Appropriations Act (GAA).

SECTION 7. *Monitoring and Evaluation.* An inter-agency **Youth in Agriculture Oversight Committee** shall be established, composed of the following:

- Representative from the Department of Agriculture (Chair)
- National Youth Commission
- Department of Trade and Industry
- TESDA
- League of Municipalities (Second District - Iloilo Chapter)
- One youth representative from each municipality

The committee shall submit an annual report to the Congress on the status, impact, and improvements of the program.

SECTION 8. *Separability Clause.* If any part of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 9. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, executive orders, rules, or regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 10. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in two newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,