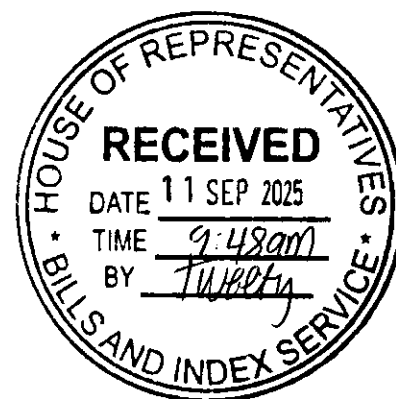


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **4536**



Introduced by **Representative RAYMOND ADRIAN SALCEDA**

AN ACT
STRENGTHENING AND EXPANDING THE HIGH VALUE CROPS
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, INSTITUTIONALIZING IT AS THE BUREAU OF
HIGH VALUE CROPS UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
PROVIDING FOR PROGRAM OFFICES, FUNCTIONS, AND SUSTAINABLE
FUNDING, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines has long relied on a narrow set of commodities—rice, corn, coconut, and sugar—as the backbone of its agricultural economy. Yet, it is high value crops such as fruits, vegetables, coffee, cacao, abaca, rubber, spices, and emerging specialty crops that offer the greatest potential for increasing farmer incomes, generating exports, improving nutrition, and creating downstream industries.

Republic Act No. 7900, or the High Value Crops Development Act of 1995, created the High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP) as the central mechanism for promoting these crops. In the years since, HVCDP has demonstrated the promise of diversification and value chain development. However, its impact has been constrained by its character as a program, lacking the institutional authority, permanent staffing, convergence mandate, and sustainable funding of a full-fledged bureau.

This bill therefore expands and institutionalizes HVCDP as the Bureau of High Value Crops (BHVC) under the Department of Agriculture. The Bureau will serve as the permanent agency tasked with making high value crops a pillar of national food security, farmer income growth, and agro-industrial transformation.

Key provisions of the bill include:

1. **Creation of Program Offices for Major Crops.** Dedicated offices will be established for fruits, vegetables, cacao and coffee, fiber crops such as abaca, spices and aromatics, and emerging crops, each with its own roadmap and program director.

2. **Convergence with Commodity Agencies.** The Bureau will operate in synergy with the Philippine Coconut Authority, Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority, Sugar Regulatory Administration, and National Tobacco Administration, harmonizing commodity strategies into a unified National High Value Crops Master Plan.
3. **Research and Innovation.** The Bureau will establish national and regional research centers, nurseries, and a Technology Commercialization Unit, in partnership with state universities, DOST, and international research institutions, to ensure that modern varieties and technologies reach farmers.
4. **Value Chain Development.** Each crop office will design value chain roadmaps covering production, storage, processing, logistics, and marketing. Agro-industrial clusters and food hubs will be developed with LGUs and the private sector.
5. **Financing and Risk Management.** The Bureau will link farmers to crop-specific financing windows under the Agricultural Credit Policy Council, expand crop insurance with PCIC, and access climate financing mechanisms and official development assistance.
6. **Farmer Consolidation and Cooperative Development.** The Bureau will support farmer clustering, cooperative formation, and agripreneurship programs, ensuring that farmers are linked to the Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture.
7. **Food Security and Nutrition.** High value crops will be integrated into government feeding and procurement programs under the Sagip Saka Act, reinforcing their role in nutrition and food security.
8. **Climate Resilience and Sustainability.** The Bureau will mainstream climate-smart agriculture, early warning systems, and risk mapping into all programs, with a Sustainable Crops Fund for adaptation projects.
9. **International Engagement.** The Bureau will represent the Philippines in international commodity councils and mobilize resources through grants and partnerships with development institutions.
10. **Digitalization.** A National High Value Crops Digital Platform will map farms, forecast supply, monitor prices, and enable traceability.
11. **Trade Remedies and Use of Funds.** The Bureau will monitor imports and assist in safeguard, anti-dumping, and countervailing petitions in coordination with DTI and the Tariff Commission. Revenues from such trade remedies will accrue to a special fund to be reinvested in productivity, facilities, insurance, and farmer support.
12. **Youth, Women, and Inclusive Agribusiness.** Programs will prioritize youth agripreneurs and women farmers through training, start-up grants, and inclusive value chain participation.

13. Infrastructure Convergence. The Bureau will coordinate with DPWH, NIA, and other agencies to prioritize farm-to-market roads, irrigation, renewable energy, and cold chain infrastructure in crop clusters.

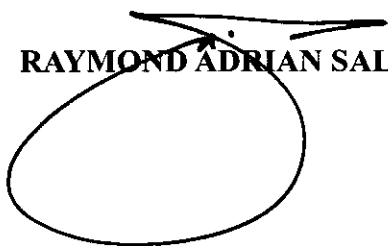
14. Monitoring and Accountability. The Bureau will establish a Data and Analytics Division, publish annual reports, and undergo independent evaluations every five years.

By establishing the Bureau of High Value Crops, this measure fills a long-standing institutional gap. It transforms HVCDP from a program into a permanent Bureau that integrates research, value chains, financing, food security, climate resilience, and trade defense.

International experience shows the importance of such institutions. Vietnam and Thailand built specialized crop agencies to anchor their fruit and vegetable export industries. India institutionalized its Spices Board and Coffee Board to globalize niche crops. ASEAN neighbors have invested heavily in value chain-focused institutions that ensure not just production, but global competitiveness.

This bill equips the Philippines with a comparable institution, one that situates high value crops as the driver of farmer prosperity, nutrition security, rural industrialization, and export diversification.

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


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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 “New High Value Crop Development Act.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* It is the policy of the State to promote food security, rural development, and agro-industrialization by strengthening the production, processing, and marketing of high value crops. The State shall institutionalize a permanent Bureau under the Department of Agriculture that advances value addition, farmer income growth, export competitiveness, and convergence across crops and industries.

SEC. 3. *Creation of the Bureau of High Value Crops.* The High Value Crops Development Program is hereby expanded, institutionalized, and elevated into a Bureau of High Value Crops, hereinafter referred to as the Bureau, under the Department of Agriculture.

SEC. 4. *Mandate.* The Bureau shall be the principal agency for the development of high value crops, including but not limited to fruits, vegetables, coffee, cacao, abaca, rubber, spices, ornamental plants, and emerging crops. It shall oversee research, production, processing, storage, logistics, market development, trade, and farmer empowerment for such crops.

SEC. 5. *Program Offices.* To ensure commodity focus, the following Program Offices shall be created within the Bureau:

- (a) National Fruit Crops Development Office;
- (b) National Vegetable Development Office;

- (c) National Cacao and Coffee Development Office;
- (d) National Fiber Crops Development Office;
- (e) National Spices and Aromatics Development Office; and
- (f) Emerging Crops Innovation Office.

Each office shall be led by a Program Director responsible for research, extension, value chain planning, and market development.

SEC. 6. *Convergence with Commodity Agencies.* The Bureau shall operate in convergence with the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA), Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority (PhilFIDA), Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA), and National Tobacco Administration (NTA).

It shall integrate commodity roadmaps into a unified National High Value Crops Master Plan, harmonize value chain strategies, align budget proposals, promote cross-commodity agro-industrial projects, and establish joint committees to avoid duplication and ensure synergy.

SEC. 7. *Research, Innovation, and Technology Transfer.* The Bureau shall establish national and regional crop research centers and nurseries. It shall partner with state universities and colleges, the Department of Science and Technology, and international agricultural research centers. A Technology Commercialization Unit shall be created to accelerate the adoption of crop varieties, post-harvest technologies, and processing innovations by farmers and agribusinesses.

SEC. 8. *Value Chain Development and Market Access.* Each Program Office shall prepare crop-specific value chain roadmaps covering production, processing, storage, logistics, and marketing. The Bureau shall establish a Market and Trade Development Division to work with the Department of Trade and Industry, Department of Tourism, and export agencies to enhance domestic and foreign market access. Agro-industrial clusters and food hubs shall be established in partnership with local governments and the private sector.

SEC. 9. *Financing and Risk Management.* The Bureau shall coordinate with the Agricultural Credit Policy Council to create crop-specific financing programs. It shall work with the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation to expand crop insurance coverage for high value crops. The Bureau shall access climate financing instruments, green bonds, and official development assistance to support resilience projects.

SEC. 10. *Farmer Consolidation and Cooperative Development.* The Bureau shall promote farmer clustering and cooperative development for economies of scale. It shall support agripreneurship programs and ensure that farmer groups are integrated into the Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture.

SEC. 11. *Regional and Local Integration.* Regional High Value Crops Offices shall be established in every Department of Agriculture Regional Field Unit. The Bureau shall assist local governments in preparing Provincial High Value Crop Development Plans and aligning

them with national roadmaps. The Bureau shall co-finance projects with LGUs for infrastructure, nurseries, and processing facilities.

SEC. 12. *Climate Resilience and Sustainability.* The Bureau shall integrate climate-smart agriculture and disaster risk reduction into all programs. It shall coordinate with PAGASA, PHIVOLCS, and the Climate Change Commission for early warning systems, risk mapping, and climate advisories. A Sustainable Crops Fund shall be established to finance climate adaptation projects.

SEC. 13. *International Engagement.* The Bureau may enter into partnerships with international organizations, financing institutions, and foreign governments, subject to DA approval. It shall represent the Philippines in relevant global commodity councils and establish an International Relations and Grants Office to mobilize donor support.

SEC. 14. *Digitalization and Data Systems.* The Bureau shall establish a National High Value Crops Digital Platform linked to the Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture. It shall use digital technologies, including predictive analytics and traceability tools, to monitor planting, prices, and supply.

SEC. 15. *Trade Remedies and Market Safeguards.* The Bureau, under DA supervision, shall monitor imports of high value crops and coordinate with the Department of Trade and Industry, the Tariff Commission, and the Bureau of Customs in recommending safeguard measures, anti-dumping duties, and countervailing duties under existing laws.

It shall assist farmer groups in preparing petitions and market data to protect against unfair trade and import surges.

SEC. 16. *Use of Funds from Trade Remedies.* Revenues from safeguard duties, anti-dumping duties, and countervailing duties imposed on high value crops shall accrue to a special account in the National Treasury to be administered by the DA through the Bureau.

The funds shall be used for productivity programs, post-harvest and processing facilities, research and crop improvement, crop insurance, and farmer capacity-building. Guidelines shall be issued by the Secretary of Agriculture.

SEC. 17. *Youth and Women in Agribusiness.* The Bureau shall implement programs to encourage youth participation and women's empowerment in high value crop enterprises, including start-up grants, training, and market linkages.

SEC. 18. *Infrastructure Convergence.* The Bureau shall coordinate with the Department of Public Works and Highways, the National Irrigation Administration, and other agencies for priority farm-to-market roads, irrigation, renewable energy, and cold storage facilities serving high value crop clusters.

SEC. 19. *Data, Monitoring, and Evaluation.* The Bureau shall establish a Data and Analytics Division to collect and publish crop statistics, forecasts, and trade data. It shall submit annual performance reports to Congress and the President. Independent evaluations shall be conducted every five years.

SEC. 20. *Governance.* The Bureau shall be headed by a Director, assisted by two Assistant Directors. Each Program Office shall be led by a Program Director. An Advisory Council composed of representatives from DA, DTI, DOST, DOF, farmer groups, and the private sector shall provide strategic guidance.

SEC. 21. *Appropriations.* The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the appropriations of the DA. Thereafter, the required sums shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

The Bureau may retain income from training fees, accreditation services, research partnerships, and PPP arrangements in a revolving fund subject to government accounting rules.

SEC. 22. *Penal Provisions.* Any person who mislabels, misrepresents, or smuggles high value crops in violation of this Act shall, upon conviction, be penalized in accordance with customs, trade, and agriculture laws, without prejudice to higher penalties if applicable.

SEC. 23. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* Within ninety (90) days from effectivity of this Act, the DA shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations.

SEC. 24. *Separability Clause.* If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall remain valid.

SEC. 25. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, decrees, orders, and issuances inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified.

SEC. 26. *Effectivity.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,