

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **7405**



Introduced by Representatives ERIC G. YAP and EDVIC G. YAP

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to strengthen the protection of agricultural workers and their families from the health and environmental hazards arising from pesticide use in agricultural sites. The duty of the State to protect the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology, extends to the millions of Filipinos whose livelihoods depend on agriculture. As one of the country's largest employment sectors, agriculture sustains a significant portion of the population, making the safety and welfare of farm workers a matter of national concern.

Despite existing government programs that support farmers through equipment, training, and research, protection in actual farm working conditions remain inadequate, particularly in areas where pesticides are heavily used. International and local studies have long documented the prevalence of unintentional pesticide poisoning worldwide, resulting in serious illness and thousands of deaths annually.

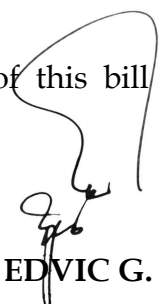
Many farmers and farm workers also lack sufficient knowledge on the proper use, handling, and disposal of pesticides. These conditions endanger not only workers but also their families through secondary exposure in homes and communities.

This measure therefore establishes concrete obligations for farm owners and operators to adopt safety standards that reduce pesticide-related risks, ensure early detection of exposure, and promote awareness and accountability. By prioritizing the health and dignity of agricultural workers and their families, the bill places their welfare at the forefront of public service and recognizes their indispensable role in sustaining the nation's food security.

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



HON. ERIC G. YAP



HON. EDVIC G. YAP

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AN ACT
TO PROTECT WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES FROM THE HAZARDS OF
WORKING IN AGRICULTURAL SITES

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 “*Farm Workers’ Protection Act*”.

SEC. 2. *Requirements.* — The following requirements shall be imposed at any agricultural site to which pesticides have been or will be applied. Farm owners or operators shall:

a. Conduct or cause to have conducted mandatory testing for the presence of organophosphate pesticides for all handlers of pesticides, including applicators and mixers of pesticides. This testing shall be conducted within one week of the departure of such workers from the site;

b. Provide personal protective equipment (PPE) which has been fit-tested to all individuals who are required to wear such in the course of their work, and which is readily available to any worker needing to wear or use such equipment;

c. Provide education and information to farm workers and their families about the hazards of exposure to pesticides, how to avoid such exposures among children, personal clothing and possessions, and what to do if pesticide exposure or contamination occurs;

d. Report to the Department of Agriculture (DA) every incident of pesticide exposure among farm workers or their families, whether by direct exposure to pesticide applications or from drift of pesticides from the application site. Such reporting shall occur within twenty-four (24) hours of such pesticide exposure and shall include the day and time of day the exposure occurred and the pesticides to which the individuals were exposed;

e. Provide on-site washing machines for workers to clean pesticide-contaminated clothing, which are separate from clothes washing facilities used by families. The farm owner or operator shall be responsible for providing instruction on the proper handling of clothing contaminated with or exposed to pesticides;

f. Provide one shower facility for every five workers, with separate facilities for males and females, for the removal of pesticide residues and other contaminants;

g. Provide one or more public telephones for workers to report medical emergencies, including pesticide exposures or contamination; and

h. Ensure that all new housing for farm workers are located at least fifty (50) feet from any field or site, except for enclosed facilities such as greenhouses, which may be treated with pesticides. Existing housing which does not comply with this paragraph shall be replaced within five (5) years or ceases to be used after that time.

SEC. 3. *Penalty.* — The DA is hereby empowered to establish and assess penalties or fines against the farm owners and operators for violations of this Act. In no circumstance will any penalty or fine exceed One Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php 100,000.00).

SEC. 4. *Annual Report.* — The Department of Agriculture shall issue an annual report of all farm inspections done in the previous calendar year to the legislature on or before the 1st of March, including compliance with the requirements contained in this Act, enforcement action, fines and penalties for non-compliance resulting from such inspections, and pesticide exposure or contamination reports submitted to the DA.

SEC. 5. *Separability Clause.* — If, for any reason, any provision of this Act is declared to be unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions hereof which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 6. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 7. *Effectivity.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,