

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9732



Introduced by HON. PHILIP CONRAD "DOK BONG" M. ACOP

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, FUNDING, AND
OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The proposed bill institutionalizes the fragmented High Value Crops Development Program into a permanent Bureau under the Department of Agriculture. This structural evolution shifts the agricultural sector away from its risky, low-margin reliance on traditional monoculture staples such as rice, which have historically absorbed the bulk of national funding despite lower profit margins.

By prioritizing high-profit, resilient commodities like fruits, cacao, coffee, and spices, this legislation provides an economic safety net against the modern triple threat of severe climate volatility, cheap food imports, and changing consumer demands. Furthermore, by framing agriculture as a lucrative, tech-driven agribusiness rather than a cycle of subsistence labor, this bill directly combats the rural exodus of youth, making farming attractive to a new generation of agripreneurs.

This domestic transformation aligns seamlessly with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), serving as a localized engine for social and environmental progress. It targets SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) by doubling the income and productivity of smallholders through higher-margin crops, while also championing SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) by fostering rural agro-industrialization and local value-added processing. Additionally, the integration of climate-smart methodologies and the establishment of a dedicated Sustainable Crops Fund advance SDG 13 (Climate Action), equipping farmers with the predictive

tools and resilient crop varieties necessary to survive an increasingly volatile environment.

To execute this vision, the Act establishes six specialized commodity units—covering fruits, vegetables, cacao and coffee, fiber, spices, and emerging crops—which will integrate separate sector strategies into a singular, harmonized National High Value Crops Master Plan alongside existing agricultural agencies.

Operationally, the bill mandates a comprehensive network of national research centers, localized nurseries, and a Technology Commercialization Unit to fast-track modern farming techniques directly to the fields. It builds financial resilience through crop-specific credit lines, expanded climate insurance, and local cooperative clustering integrated with regional cold storage hubs.

Finally, the legislation builds a robust protective wall around local farmers through a new Market and Trade Development Division, which mandates that all revenues collected from import safeguards and anti-dumping duties be legally ring-fenced into a special treasury account dedicated entirely to funding local farming infrastructure, research, and startup grants for women and youth.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip Conrad', with a stylized, flowing script.

HON. PHILIP CONRAD “DOK BONG” M. ACOP

Republic of the Philippines

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS

First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9732

Introduced by HON. PHILIP CONRAD “DOK BONG” M. ACOP

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, FUNDING, AND
OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SEC. 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 Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS), and the Climate Change Commission (CCC) 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 (DTI), the Tariff Commission, and the Bureau of Customs (BOC) 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, antidumping 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 (DPWH), the National Irrigation Administration (NIA), 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,