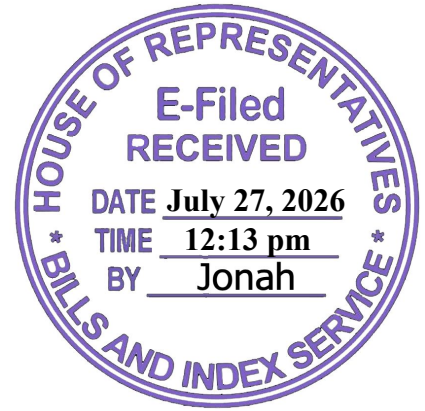


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10247



Introduced by **REP. JAVIER MIGUEL L. BENITEZ**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Malunggay, or *Moringa oleifera*, is one of the Philippines' most abundant and nutritionally dense plants. Long a staple of Filipino households and traditional medicine, it has in recent years attracted significant international attention as a superfood, valued for its exceptional concentration of vitamins, minerals, and amino acids, as well as its established and potential medicinal properties. Its applications extend well beyond food and nutrition, encompassing pharmaceutical, nutraceutical, cosmetic, agricultural, and biofuel uses, making it a plant of extraordinary commercial and developmental versatility. The global moringa market has been expanding steadily, with increasing demand from health-conscious consumers in North America, Europe, and Asia creating meaningful export opportunities for producing countries.

The Philippines, with its favorable climate and the widespread cultivation of malunggay across the archipelago, is uniquely positioned to capitalize on this growing global demand. Yet the country has not fully harnessed malunggay's economic potential, owing to the absence of a coordinated national program that integrates productivity improvement, research and development, processing, standardization, and market promotion under a unified policy framework. The malunggay industry remains largely informal and fragmented, with smallholder farmers lacking access to technical support, appropriate agricultural inputs, processing facilities, and market linkages. This bill seeks to address that gap by establishing a National Program for Malunggay Industry Development supported by a dedicated inter-agency committee, a five-year framework for development, and a comprehensive industry roadmap.

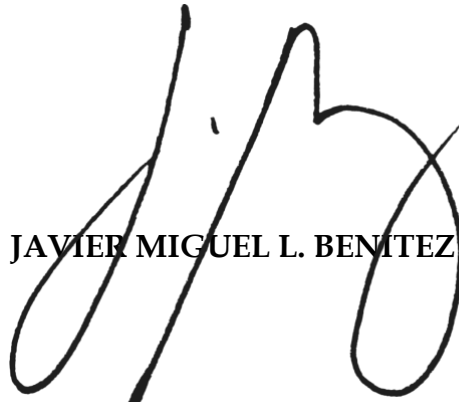
The proposed bill creates a Malunggay Industry Development Committee chaired by the Secretary of Agriculture, with the Secretary of Science and Technology as Vice-Chairperson, and composed of the Secretaries of Trade and Industry, Health, Interior and Local Government, and Education, together with representatives from state universities and colleges, farmers' groups, and the private sector. The Committee is tasked to

formulate a five-year Malunggay Framework for Development, validated and updated annually, which shall guide the harmonized implementation of policies and programs across four strategic pillars: productivity improvement, research and development, market promotion and development, and extension services. The Committee shall likewise prepare a Malunggay Industry Roadmap in consultation with all industry players, to be updated every five years.

Under the Framework, productivity improvement programs shall include the identification of optimal malunggay species and variants, the establishment of suitable planting areas, the creation of communal fields for marginalized communities, and the initiation of alternative livelihood projects. Research and development efforts shall focus on validating and maximizing malunggay's nutritional and medicinal properties, supporting the development of science-based standards and technical regulations, surveying international market potential, and exploring malunggay's applications in biofuel, animal feed, and agricultural inputs. The DA, DOST, and concerned state universities and colleges are directed to identify appropriate species for product development and establish processing facilities in suitable planting areas, while the DA shall determine proper agricultural practices and ensure conformity with applicable food safety and industry standards. The Department of Finance, in collaboration with the Land Bank, the Development Bank of the Philippines, and other financial institutions, shall provide financing modalities for malunggay-based industries, and concerned agencies shall prioritize the development and harmonization of Philippine National Standards for malunggay products across primary, processed, and non-food industrial categories.

The establishment of a national malunggay industry program represents a strategic investment in one of the country's most promising and underutilized agricultural assets. By providing a coordinated policy framework, institutional support, research backing, and market development assistance, this bill will unlock the full economic potential of malunggay for Filipino farmers, entrepreneurs, and communities, while contributing to national food security, public health, and export competitiveness.

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



JAVIER MIGUEL L. BENITEZ

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HOUSE BILL NO. 10247

Introduced by **REP. JAVIER MIGUEL L. BENITEZ**

**AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR MALUNGgay
INDUSTRY, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Malunggay Industry Development Act”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to accelerate the growth and development of the malunggay industry to improve investment climate, boost competencies and efficiency of agribusiness, promote malunggay as a source of livelihood, and maximize its utilization for health and nutrition. Malunggay or moringa oleifera is a commonly cultivated plant in the Philippines and is known not just for its nutritional value but for its medicinal herbal effects. It has been gaining international recognition as a superfood due to its health benefits.

To this end, the State shall establish productivity improvement programs, provide the needed infrastructure support, extension services, and financial assistance and enhance research and development on product diversification to qualified farmers, cooperatives, institutions and industries who are willing to cultivate malunggay.

SEC. 3. *Malunggay Industry Development Committee.* – To carry out the policies enunciated under this Act, there is hereby established a Malunggay Industry Development Committee, hereinafter referred to as the Committee. It shall be composed of the following:

- (a) Secretary of the Department of Agriculture (DA), Chairperson;

- (b) Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Vice-Chairperson;
- (c) Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI);
- (d) Secretary of the Department of Health (DOH);
- (e) Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government;
- (f) Secretary of the Department of Education;
- (g) One (1) representative from State Universities and Colleges (SUC);
- (h) One (1) representative from farmers' groups actively working with the malunggay industry; and
- (i) One (1) representative from private sector organizations actively working with the malunggay industry.

The nominees of the SUCs, farmers' groups, and the private sector shall be validated by the DA and submitted to the President not later than thirty (30) days following the effectivity of this Act. The President shall appoint the representative from a list of nominees submitted by the DA.

The government representatives shall serve only during their respective terms in office. The representatives from the farmers' groups and the private sector shall each hold a term of three (3) years unless sooner removed for cause, and may be reappointed once: Provided, That any appointment to fill a vacancy in the Committee shall be only for the unexpired term. They may appoint an official alternate with a rank of an Undersecretary or its equivalent. The official alternates shall possess the same powers as the Heads of the above-named national government agencies and whose acts shall be considered as acts of the principals being represented.

The Committee shall coordinate with the various organizations that are known to be experts in the industry to organize the Moringa producers, processors, inputs producers and suppliers, domestic and international marketers, and traders as well as allied and related industries and aggrupation into an umbrella organization.

The Committee may also call upon any department, bureau, office, agency, and instrumentality of the government for any assistance it may need in the discharge of its functions and responsibilities.

SEC. 4. *Role of Various Government Agencies.* - Government agencies shall prioritize the development of Philippine National Standards and its harmonization with relevant international and regional standards and equivalence. The DA for primary and postharvest moringa produce, DOH for processed moringa products, and DTI for non-food industrial moringa products.

The Department of Finance shall, in collaboration with the Land Bank of the Philippines, Development Bank of the Philippines, Small Business Guarantee and

Finance Corporation, Board of Investments, and Philippine Economic Zone Authority, provide the financing modalities and mechanisms for funding the loan requirements of the moringa-based industries.

The DA, DOST, SUCs, in collaboration with other industry players, shall identify the species, breeds, or variant, if any, that may be appropriate for the development of malunggay-based products. Said agencies shall also establish malunggay processing facilities within the area determined by DA as appropriate planting areas for malunggay.

The DA shall likewise determine proper agriculture practices and suitable planting areas for malunggay which must conform to Food and Drug Administration, DTL, and industry approved standards.

SEC. 5. *Malunggay Framework for Development.* – The Committee shall formulate a five-year Malunggay Framework for Development, to be validated and updated annually. Such Framework shall serve as a guide for a harmonized and collaborative implementation of policies, programs and projects for the advancement, industry-wide development, and inclusive growth of the Philippine Malunggay Industry, as follows:

- (a) *Productivity Improvement Programs.* – To boost the production of malunggay, the following activities shall be undertaken:
 - (i) Identify the species, breeds or variants, if any, to be used and developed under this Act;
 - (ii) Appropriate land usage in suitable areas to increase and sustain its productivity and agricultural output;
 - (iii) Establish systematic programs that could improve production through its seeding, cultivation, harvesting and proper processing;
 - (iv) Create communal fields and gardens for those in the marginalized or rural areas to address their problems in food and health care; and
 - (v) Initiate alternative livelihood projects for poverty alleviation.
- (b) *Research and Development.* – The Committee, in coordination with government research and development institutions, relevant SUCs, and the private sector, shall intensify research on the propagation of malunggay to maximize and validate its nutritional and medicinal properties, and to expand its other possible uses. To attain these, the following activities shall be undertaken:
 - (i) Facilitate knowledge sharing on relevant studies on malunggay, particularly those that are funded by the government in support of the development of standards and issuance of relevant policies and regulations;

- (ii) Conduct research to support the development of science-based standards and technical regulations for the malunggay industry;
 - (iii) Survey malunggay's potential in the international markets and prepare it as one of the Philippines' major commercial products, particularly in the pharmaceutical, nutraceutical, and cosmetic exports;
 - (iv) Develop the malunggay food industry by including the various parts of the plant in food preparation, various recipes and diet for health benefits;
 - (v) Explore the possibility of malunggay as a useful agricultural input (fertilizer) and animal feeds; and
 - (vi) Invest in the biofuel potential of malunggay oil as a sustainable alternative to fossil fuel for the country's power generation and in the development of new products derived from it.
- (c) *Market Promotion and Development.* — The Committee, together with the concerned government agencies and industry stakeholders, shall endeavor to:
- (i) Disseminate information regarding its uses and benefits through the use of advertising, mass media, and information technology;
 - (ii) Share information on agricultural and manufacturing practice to determine market opportunities for potential stakeholders; and
 - (iii) Collaborate with different organizations on the sharing of information and statistics on the malunggay industry.
- (d) *Extension Services.* —
- (i) Encourage and train malunggay farmers to utilize appropriate agricultural machineries and equipment necessary for the efficient planting, cultivation, care and maintenance, harvesting and handling of malunggay and its by-products;
 - (ii) Ensure the availability of good seeds and materials to ensure high yield and good quality malunggay.

All other programs that shall help attain the objectives of this Act and those that shall complement existing programs are also encouraged.

SEC. 6. Appropriations. — The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriation of the departments and agencies concerned. Thereafter, such amount shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 7. *Malunggay Industry Roadmap.* – Upon the effectivity of this Act, the Committee shall, in consultation with all the industry players, prepare the Malunggay Industry Roadmap. The Committee may call upon any instrumentality of government for any assistance it may need in the discharge of its functions as well as in the implementation of the programs and projects.

The Committee shall, in coordination with other concerned government agencies, the private sector, and other relevant stakeholders update the Roadmap every five (5) years, or sooner as may be deemed necessary.

SEC. 8. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within thirty (30) days from the date of the constitution of the Committee, it shall formulate and promulgate the rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act.

SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.* – If any part or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 10. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders, issuances, decrees, rules, and regulations inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are hereby amended, modified, or repealed accordingly.

SEC. 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,