

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

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 10890



Introduced by **Representative AGATHA "AGAY" CRUZ**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Food does not become less necessary when concrete replaces soil. But as communities urbanize, the places where people live and the places where much of their food is produced grow farther apart. That distance makes cities increasingly dependent on transport, logistics, functioning markets, and uninterrupted supply chains for something no household can postpone buying.

In 2024, 62.22 million Filipinos, or 55.2% of the population, lived in urban barangays, up from 58.93 million in 2020.¹ At the same time, food remains beyond the comfortable reach of many households with 4.84 million Filipinos lived below the food threshold in 2023,² meaning their incomes were insufficient to meet even their basic food needs.

Urbanization changes the geography of food security. It does not diminish the importance of rural agriculture, but it makes the resilience of urban food systems increasingly important.

Urban and peri-urban agriculture can be a part of that resilience. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) recognizes its potential to improve access to fresh food, support livelihoods, and strengthen food security and nutrition, particularly when integrated into broader urban and territorial planning.³

Fortunately, we are not starting from an empty garden bed. The Department of Agriculture (DA), through Administrative Order No. 03, Series of 2022, established the National Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Program (NUPAP) to promote food production in urban and peri-urban areas, improve access to nutritious food, reduce food miles and logistics costs, and create livelihood opportunities.

¹ *Highlights on the Urban Population Based on the 2024 Census of Population (2024 POPCEN)*, PHILIPPINE STATISTICS AUTHORITY, 6 July 2026, available at <https://psa.gov.ph/content/highlights-urban-population-based-2024-census-population-2024-popcen>

² *Percentage of Filipino Families Classified as Poor Declined to 10.9 Percent in 2023*, PHILIPPINE STATISTICS AUTHORITY, 22 July 2024, available at <https://psa.gov.ph/content/percentage-filipino-families-classified-poor-declined-109-percent-2023>

³ *Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture*, FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS, available at <https://www.fao.org/urban-peri-urban-agriculture/en>

This bill institutionalizes and strengthens that existing program instead of planting another bureaucracy beside it. It supports household and community gardens, rooftop and container gardening, hydroponics, aquaponics, vertical farming, controlled-environment agriculture, and other appropriate production systems. It likewise integrates food safety, site suitability, environmental protection, structural safety, and responsible resource use into the national framework.

As our towns and cities continue to build upward and outward, their capacity to nourish the people who live in them should not be left behind. Progress may change the landscape, but it should never put the most basic necessities farther out of reach.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of this bill is respectfully urged to ensure that, where food can be grown safely, sensibly, and sustainably, government can help make room for it.



AGATHA "AGAY" CRUZ

Representative, Fifth Legislative District of Bulacan



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HOUSE BILL NO. 10890

Introduced by **Representative AGATHA “AGAY” CRUZ**

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING AND STRENGTHENING THE NATIONAL URBAN AND
PERI-URBAN AGRICULTURE PROGRAM, PROMOTING VERTICAL FARMING
AND OTHER SPACE-EFFICIENT AND CLIMATE-RESILIENT FOOD
PRODUCTION SYSTEMS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

1 **Section 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “Urban and Peri-Urban
2 Agriculture Act.”
3

4 **Section 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
5 promote food security and nutrition by strengthening resilient, safe, sustainable, and
6 inclusive local food systems and expanding opportunities for food production in urban
7 and peri-urban communities.
8

9 Towards this end, the State shall promote appropriate urban and peri-urban
10 agriculture technologies and practices; support household, community-based,
11 institutional, and commercially-oriented food production; encourage the productive and
12 environmentally sound use of suitable spaces; strengthen research, extension, skills
13 development, enterprise development, and market linkages; and integrate urban and
14 peri-urban agriculture, where appropriate, into local development, land use, climate
15 resilience, and food security planning.
16

17 Urban and peri-urban agriculture shall complement, and shall not be used to
18 justify the displacement of existing productive agricultural activities or the unlawful
19 conversion or reclassification of agricultural lands.
20

21 **Section 3. Objectives.** – This Act shall:

- 22 (a) Increase access to safe, nutritious, and locally produced food in urban and peri-
23 urban communities;

- (b) Institutionalize and strengthen government support for urban and peri-urban agriculture, including vertical farming and other space-efficient production systems;
- (c) Promote technologies and production systems appropriate to local conditions, available space, water and energy resources, climate risks, production objectives, and, where relevant, market demand;
- (d) Develop livelihood, enterprise, and employment opportunities throughout the urban and peri-urban agriculture value chain;
- (e) Encourage the productive use of suitable public and private spaces without impairing their primary lawful use, legal character, ownership, environmental integrity, or public safety;
- (f) Strengthen research, technology development, extension, education, and technical-vocational training on urban and peri-urban agriculture;
- (g) Encourage resource-efficient and climate-resilient practices, including rainwater harvesting, water-efficient irrigation, composting, renewable-energy applications, protected cultivation, and appropriate controlled-environment agriculture;
- (h) Strengthen postharvest systems, value addition, entrepreneurship, market access, and institutional linkages for urban and peri-urban producers; and
- (i) Establish a results-based framework for the allocation, monitoring, and evaluation of public assistance and investment in urban and peri-urban agriculture.

Section 4. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act:

- (a) *Controlled-environment agriculture* refers to the production of crops within a partially or fully controlled growing environment in which one or more conditions, including temperature, humidity, light, nutrients, water, or air circulation, are managed to improve production efficiency, productivity, or crop quality;
- (b) *Peri-urban area* refers to an area adjacent to or functionally connected with an urban area and characterized by a mixture of urban and agricultural land uses, subject to such operational criteria as may be prescribed in the implementing rules and regulations;
- (c) *Peri-urban agriculture* refers the production, processing, and related activities involving food and agricultural products in peri-urban areas, using production systems and practices appropriate to the area's transition between urban and rural land uses, as may be further specified in the implementing rules and regulations;
- (d) *Urban area* refers to an area classified as urban by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) under its prevailing official urban-rural classification;

(e) *Urban agriculture* refers to the production of food and other agricultural products within urban areas using available land, buildings, rooftops, containers, community spaces, and other suitable areas. It may include crop production, horticulture, nursery operations, agroforestry, aquaculture, and, where permitted under applicable laws and local regulations, small-scale animal production, as well as related postharvest, processing, distribution, composting, and enterprise activities; and

(f) *Vertical farming* refers to the cultivation of crops in vertically stacked or vertically integrated growing layers, whether in indoor facilities, greenhouses, rooftops, or other suitable structures, using soil-based, substrate-based, hydroponic, aeroponic, aquaponic, or other appropriate production systems.

Section 5. Institutionalization of the National Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Program. – The existing National Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Program (NUPAP) of the Department of Agriculture (DA) is hereby institutionalized and strengthened as the principal national government program for the promotion and development of urban and peri-urban agriculture.

The DA shall be the lead implementing agency of this Act. It shall implement the NUPAP through its existing offices, bureaus, attached agencies, regional field offices, and other appropriate instrumentalities, in coordination with concerned national government agencies, local government units (LGUs), state universities and colleges (SUCs), academic and research institutions, and other relevant public and private entities.

The implementation of this Act shall, to the extent practicable, utilize existing government programs, personnel, facilities, appropriations, and administrative structures.

Section 6. National Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Development Framework. – Within one (1) year from the effectivity of this Act, the DA, in consultation with concerned government agencies, LGUs, SUCs, farmers and growers, cooperatives and associations, community organizations, academic and research institutions, technical experts, civil society organizations, and the private sector, shall formulate a National Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Development Framework, hereinafter referred to as the Framework.

The Framework shall provide national strategies, standards, and guidelines for:

- (a) Appropriate urban and peri-urban production systems and technologies;
- (b) Research, extension, education, skills development, and technology assessment;
- (c) Access to production support, infrastructure, and technical assistance;
- (d) Food safety, environmental sustainability, climate resilience, and efficient use

- 1 of water, energy, and other resources;
- 2 (e) Postharvest development, enterprise development, financing, and market
- 3 access; and
- 4 (f) Integration with relevant local planning, government programs, and
- 5 monitoring and evaluation systems.
- 6

7 The Framework shall recognize differences in land availability, population

8 density, climate, water and energy conditions, food-security needs, production systems,

9 technological capacity, and market conditions among localities. No single production

10 technology or system shall be prescribed as the preferred approach for all areas.

11

12 The Framework shall be periodically reviewed and updated, as may be necessary.

13

14 **Section 7. Program Assistance and Support.** – Subject to applicable laws, rules and

15 regulations, and the availability of appropriations, the DA may provide or facilitate the

16 following forms of assistance under the NUPAP:

- 17 (a) Production inputs, equipment, infrastructure, and shared facilities;
- 18 (b) Technical, extension, training, and technology-transfer services;
- 19 (c) Enterprise development, access to financing, and market-linkage assistance;
- 20 and
- 21 (d) Such other support as may be necessary to achieve the objectives of this Act.
- 22

23 Public assistance shall be allocated pursuant to transparent criteria that take into

24 account the nature and scale of the project, its expected public benefit, its viability, and its

25 reasonable prospect of continuity.

26

27 Household, community-based, educational, demonstration, nutrition-oriented,

28 food-security, and other public interest projects may receive grants or higher levels of

29 government assistance, subject to applicable rules.

30

31 Commercially oriented or innovative projects shall ordinarily be supported

32 through cost-sharing arrangements, access to financing, technical assistance, shared

33 facilities, or market support. Grants may be extended only when the project demonstrates

34 substantial food-security, research, technology demonstration, climate resilience, or

35 comparable public benefits that justify direct public assistance, subject to applicable

36 accountability requirements.

37

38 In determining whether a grant is warranted, consideration shall be given to

39 whether the intended public benefits may reasonably be achieved through cost-sharing,

40 financing, technical assistance, or other forms of support requiring less direct public

41 subsidy.

42

43 **Section 8. Technical and Financial Feasibility.** – Government funding or material

44 assistance for capital-intensive vertical farming, controlled-environment agriculture, and

1 similar technology-based projects shall be subject to an appropriate technical and financial
2 feasibility assessment proportionate to the scale of the proposed investment.

3
4 The assessment shall be based on criteria prescribed in the implementing rules and
5 regulations and shall take into account, at a minimum, technical suitability, life-cycle costs
6 and resource requirements, operational capacity, market viability where relevant,
7 expected public benefit, and the availability of reasonable lower-cost alternatives.

8
9 Government support for capital-intensive technologies shall be based on
10 demonstrated suitability and cost-effectiveness and not solely on novelty or technological
11 sophistication.

12
13 **Section 9. Research, Development, Innovation, and Technology Assessment.** – The
14 DA and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), through their appropriate
15 offices, bureaus, councils, attached agencies, research institutions, and partner SUCs, shall
16 promote coordinated research, development, demonstration, technology assessment, and
17 technology-transfer activities on urban and peri-urban agriculture.

18
19 Research and technology development under this Act shall prioritize locally
20 appropriate solutions that are safe, affordable, resource-efficient, maintainable, and
21 responsive to food security and climate resilience needs.

22
23 **Section 10. Use of Government Lands, Buildings, and Facilities.** – National
24 government agencies, government-owned or -controlled corporations, SUCs, and LGUs
25 may identify portions of idle, vacant, or underutilized lands, buildings, rooftops, and
26 other facilities under their administration that may be suitable for urban and peri-urban
27 agriculture.

28
29 Subject to applicable laws and the legal character of the property, such property
30 may be made available for demonstration farms, community gardens, food production,
31 training, research, or related activities under appropriate lawful arrangements, without
32 altering the legal classification or character of the property.

33
34 No government property shall be made available under this Act unless:

- 35 (a) its proposed use is compatible with the primary public purpose for which the
36 property is held;
37 (b) the property is not immediately required for an existing or programmed
38 government project;
39 (c) the proposed use complies with applicable land-use, environmental, building,
40 safety, and other regulatory requirements and does not materially impair
41 public access or the delivery of government services; and
42 (d) in the case of buildings, rooftops, or elevated structures, the proposed use is
43 determined to be structurally safe in accordance with applicable laws and
44 standards.

1
2 The terms, conditions, safeguards, and accountability requirements governing the
3 use of government property under this Section shall be prescribed in the implementing
4 rules and regulations. No transfer of title, vested proprietary right, tenancy, or permanent
5 possessory right shall arise solely from participation in a project under this Act.
6

7 **Section 11. *Participation of Private Property Owners and Communities.*** – Private
8 property owners, homeowners’ associations, condominium corporations, commercial
9 and industrial establishments, property developers, religious institutions, civil society
10 organizations, academic institutions, and other entities are encouraged to voluntarily
11 make suitable spaces available for urban and peri-urban agriculture, subject to the consent
12 of the lawful owner or administrator and applicable laws, contracts, deed restrictions,
13 zoning ordinances, and other lawful restrictions.
14

15 LGUs may, within the scope of their authority under existing laws, provide
16 appropriate non-fiscal incentives, technical assistance, recognition programs, streamlined
17 local procedures, or access to locally funded agricultural support for qualified urban and
18 peri-urban agriculture projects.
19

20 Fiscal incentives may be granted only when expressly authorized by law and in
21 accordance with applicable fiscal and local government laws.
22

23 **Section 12. *Local Government Participation and Planning.*** – Cities and
24 municipalities shall, where appropriate and consistent with local conditions and
25 development priorities, consider urban and peri-urban agriculture in their relevant land-
26 use, zoning, development, climate change, food security, and nutrition plans.
27

28 The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Department
29 of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD), in coordination with the DA
30 and other concerned agencies, shall provide technical guidance and model policies to
31 assist LGUs in identifying suitable areas, adopting appropriate zoning and development
32 standards, avoiding incompatible land uses, and integrating food system resilience into
33 local planning.
34

35 LGUs may establish or support appropriate urban and peri-urban agriculture
36 programs, facilities, and inter-local initiatives, subject to applicable laws and the
37 availability of local resources.
38

39 **Section 13. *Protection of Agricultural Lands.*** – Urban and peri-urban agriculture
40 projects under this Act shall comply with applicable laws governing agrarian reform,
41 tenancy, indigenous peoples’ rights, ancestral domains, public lands, environmental
42 protection, protected areas, land use, zoning, heritage conservation, and other relevant
43 matters. Such projects shall not:

44 (a) Result in or facilitate the conversion or reclassification of agricultural land

- 1 contrary to existing laws, rules, and regulations;
- 2 (b) Displace lawful occupants, agricultural lessees, tenants, farmworkers, or
- 3 existing productive agricultural activities except as may be authorized by law
- 4 and with due process; or
- 5 (c) Constitute, by reason of the establishment of a vertical farm, greenhouse,
- 6 controlled-environment facility, or similar project, a basis for the conversion or
- 7 reclassification of agricultural land.
- 8

9 Government programs under this Act shall, where practicable, prioritize idle,

10 vacant, underutilized, or built-up spaces suitable for urban and peri-urban agriculture

11 and shall complement the protection and continued productive use of agricultural lands.

12

13 **Section 14. Food Safety, Public Health, and Environmental Standards.** – Urban

14 and peri-urban agriculture projects shall comply with applicable food safety, public

15 health, environmental, land-use, building, occupational safety and health, veterinary,

16 biosecurity, agricultural input, and other applicable laws, standards, and regulations.

17

18 The DA shall coordinate with the Department of Health (DOH), Department of

19 Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), DOST, DHSUD, LGUs, and other

20 concerned agencies in the review and harmonization of standards and technical guidance

21 applicable to urban and peri-urban agriculture. Each agency shall, within its respective

22 mandate, update or supplement applicable standards and technical guidance, when

23 necessary, including those concerning site suitability, safe production and handling, soil

24 and water safety, waste management, animal health and biosecurity, and postharvest

25 safety.

26

27 Where prior land use, environmental conditions, or other available information

28 indicates a material risk of soil, water, or site contamination, appropriate site assessment

29 and risk-management measures shall be undertaken before food production is supported

30 with public funds.

31

32 **Section 15. Education and School-Based Urban Agriculture.** – The Department of

33 Education (DepEd) shall promote age-appropriate knowledge and practical learning on

34 food production, nutrition, sustainability, food safety, environmental stewardship, and

35 urban agriculture through relevant learning areas and existing school-based gardening,

36 nutrition, environmental, and related programs, where pedagogically appropriate.

37

38 Urban agriculture activities in schools shall be designed primarily for educational,

39 nutritional, environmental, or demonstration purposes and shall not unduly burden

40 teachers or learners, displace essential school facilities, or interfere with the primary

41 educational use of school property.

42

43 **Section 16. Higher Education, Extension, and Technical-Vocational Training.** –

44 Consistent with institutional academic freedom, the Commission on Higher Education

(CHED) shall encourage higher education institutions to undertake, as appropriate, instruction, research, extension, innovation, entrepreneurship, and technology incubation related to urban and peri-urban agriculture.

SUCs and other higher education institutions with relevant expertise are encouraged to undertake relevant research, extension, technology development, demonstration, and technical assistance activities.

The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), in consultation with the DA, industry, training institutions, and other relevant stakeholders, shall develop, review, or update, as appropriate, competency standards and training programs relevant to urban and peri-urban agriculture and related occupations and skills.

Section 17. *Enterprise Development, Financing, and Market Linkages.* – The DA, in coordination with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), LGUs, relevant government financial institutions, cooperatives, private buyers, institutional consumers, and other stakeholders, shall facilitate enterprise development and market access for qualified urban and peri-urban agriculture producers.

Such assistance may include producer organization, value addition, access to financing, logistics, enterprise development, and linkage with public and private markets.

Eligible farmers and fisherfolk cooperatives and enterprises participating in the NUPAP may avail themselves of direct government procurement and other market-access mechanisms under Republic Act No. 11321, otherwise known as the “Sagip Saka Act,” subject to applicable procurement laws, rules, regulations, and issuances.

Section 18. *Priority in Public Assistance.* – In allocating publicly funded assistance under this Act, the DA and participating LGUs shall give appropriate priority to projects that demonstrably advance food security, nutrition, livelihood, community resilience, public education, technology demonstration, or other substantial public benefits.

Priority may be given to projects serving low-income or food-insecure communities, public schools and other public institutions, community organizations, small producers, cooperatives and associations, and micro and small enterprises, subject to transparent and objective eligibility and selection criteria.

The criteria and procedures for determining eligibility and priority shall be prescribed in the implementing rules and regulations.

Section 19. *Regulatory Coordination; No Separate License.* – No separate national license shall be required solely by reason of engaging in urban or peri-urban agriculture under this Act. The DA, DILG, DHSUD, DTI, and other concerned agencies shall, consistent with existing laws, promote the simplification, coordination, harmonization,

1 and digitalization of applicable procedures and shall avoid unnecessary or duplicative
2 documentary requirements.

3
4 All persons, enterprises, activities, structures, facilities, products, and locations
5 covered by this Act shall remain subject to applicable permits, licenses, certifications,
6 standards, and other regulatory requirements prescribed by law.

7
8 **Section 20. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting.** – The DA shall establish a
9 results-based monitoring and evaluation system for programs and projects receiving
10 public assistance under this Act.

11
12 The monitoring and evaluation system shall use measurable indicators aligned
13 with the objectives of this Act, as may be prescribed in the implementing rules and
14 regulations. Monitoring and reporting requirements shall be proportionate to the nature
15 and amount of public assistance received.

16
17 The DA shall submit an annual report on the implementation of this Act to the
18 President and the appropriate committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives.
19 It shall periodically assess the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of the technologies and
20 forms of assistance supported under the NUPAP and may redesign, discontinue, or scale
21 interventions based on demonstrated results.

22
23 **Section 21. Appropriations.** – The amount necessary for the initial implementation
24 of this Act shall be charged against the current appropriations of the DA for the NUPAP
25 and of other concerned agencies for related programs. Thereafter, such amounts as may
26 be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual
27 General Appropriations Act.

28
29 LGUs may appropriate funds and provide counterpart resources for local urban
30 and peri-urban agriculture programs in accordance with the Local Government Code and
31 applicable budgeting, accounting, auditing, and procurement laws.

32
33 **Section 22. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – Within one hundred eighty
34 (180) days from the effectivity of this Act, the DA, in consultation with concerned
35 government agencies, LGUs, SUCs, and relevant stakeholders, shall promulgate the rules
36 and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act.

37
38 Existing rules, regulations, guidelines, and issuances governing the NUPAP shall
39 continue to apply insofar as they are not inconsistent with this Act until amended,
40 repealed, or superseded pursuant hereto.

41
42 **Section 23. Separability Clause.** – If any part or provision of this Act is held
43 unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder thereof not otherwise affected shall remain in
44 full force and effect.

1
2 **Section 24. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, executive orders, presidential decrees,
3 administrative orders, rules and regulations, issuances, or parts thereof inconsistent with
4 or contrary to the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.
5

6 **Section 25. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
7 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.
8

9 *Approved,*