SENATE

S.B. No. 1374

Introduced by SEN. WIN GATCHALIAN

AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE AGRICULTURE INFORMATION SYSTEM IN ALL PROVINCES, CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Shortly after being sworn in, President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. declared that food security is the key to having a vibrant future for the country and emphasized that his administration will focus on agriculture to build a strong economy and to assure adequate food supply even in emergencies.[1]

Moreover, during the 35th United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific held in November 2020, the Philippines Department of Agriculture (DA) said that it would push for the digitalization of the country's agriculture sector under the "new normal" to achieve its goals of reducing poverty and attaining food security in the country. DA related that this can be achieved through teaching farm families and other vulnerable agriculture groups to capitalize on digital agriculture to increase their productivity and income, by providing them the needed technical, marketing and financial support. Furthermore,

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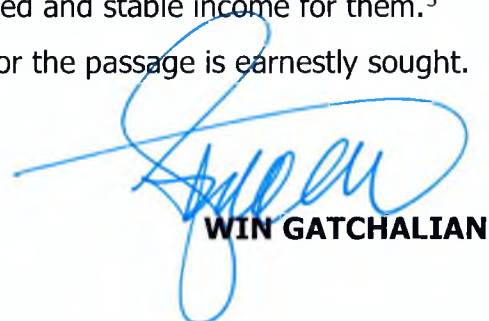[1] Philippine Daily Inquirer, "Bongbong Marcos says food inadequacy a major reason why agri is admin's focus,"
https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1622265/bongbong-marcos-says-food-inadequacy-a-major-reason-why-agri-is-admins-focus#ixzz7YJqAxwWr

the DA is "fast-tracking" the development of a digital road map for the agriculture sector to promote and integrate precision agriculture and digital technology in local farming practices to assimilate digital technologies in the food value chain and logistics, benefiting both producers and consumers.[2]

In support of this policy direction on digitalization of the DA, and in line with the President's thrust to upgrade our agriculture sector, this bill seeks to establish an Agriculture Information System (AIS), managed by the DA, which shall serve as a dynamic online computer database where information on the demand for specific agricultural and fisheries commodities is gathered and uploaded simultaneously with the production data from farmers in every barangay. The AIS shall merge and synchronize agricultural data from different sources into a cohesive database designed to facilitate linkages from place of origin or the farm to local, and ultimately, global markets. The AIS shall also be integrated with the existing systems of the DA.

The concept of AIS is likewise based on the Municipal Agriculture Information System (MAIS) developed by the Local Government Unit of Mina, Iloilo which collects, sorts, evaluates and utilizes agricultural data on farmers, their family, their activities, land, crop and livestock production in real time. It provides information to decision makers, market players and other key government and private sector interest groups based on data gathered by barangay-level volunteers and relayed by SMS or stored in flash drives and are received at the municipal level and entered in the central data bank where they are digitally collated, sorted and analyzed. Accurate information on any commodity produced in the municipality of Mina are inputs to helping farmers market their products outside, giving them assurance on better prices and volumes they can sell which directly redound to improved and stable income for them.[3]

With all these considerations, support for the passage is earnestly sought.

WIN GATCHALIAN

[2] United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, "Philippines highlights rising role of digital agriculture at FAO Regional Conference," https://www.fao.org/philippines/news/detail/ar/c/1307351/
[3]Mina, Iloilo, "What is MAIS?", https://lgu-minailoilo.com/index.php/what-is-mais/

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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 "Agriculture
2 Information System Act."

3

4   SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* — It is the policy of the State to uplift the
5 socioeconomic conditions of farmers and farming communities nationwide in
6 order to promote their welfare and empower their sector in the overall
7 development and progress of the country. Pursuant to this, an integrated,
8 computerized, web-based agricultural commodity supply inventory and registry
9 system linking farmers and organized communities all over the country needs
10 to be established to provide an easy-to-access local and global real time
11 information for agricultural commodities, with an end view of creating a wider
12 range of market linkages among farmers and agricultural buyers. Furthermore,
13 through a synchronized agriculture information system, the National
14 Government shall have access to real-time agricultural information which can
15 rationalize the objectives and policy directives in the agricultural sector.

1   SEC. 3. *Objectives.* — This Act aims to attain the following objectives:

2   (a) Provide an up-to-date database of agricultural and fisheries products

3   in a locality;

4   (b) Foster information sharing between farmers and potential buyers of

5   agricultural and fisheries products;

6   (c) Secure a market for agricultural and fisheries products and ensure

7   appropriate return of investment for farmers and fisheries stakeholders;

8   (d) Allow local government units to manage a secure and independent

9   platform that creates linkages for farmers and fisheries stakeholders;

10   (e) Provide data on specific commodities that are readily available in a

11   particular locality for purposes of production monitoring in order to meet the

12   demands of the market;

13   (f) Provide a secure, transparent, and independent modern web

14   application that may be accessed anytime by the public through a multi-

15   platform support or cross-platform support devices which can be linked to

16   existing systems in the Department of Agriculture (DA);

17   (g) Streamline training and seminars in the management of the

18   operations;

19   (h) Monitor the use of inputs given by producers, buyers, and other

20   segments of the value-chain including information during post-harvest and

21   processing; and

22   (i) Ensure that all forms of assistance given to local government units

23   (LGUs), registered cooperatives and other qualified individuals and

24   organizations are monitored.

25

26   SEC. 4. *Agriculture Information System.* — All cities and municipalities

27   are hereby mandated to establish an Agriculture Information System (AIS). The

28   AIS shall serve as a dynamic online computer database where information on

29   the demand for specific agricultural and fisheries commodities is gathered and

30   uploaded simultaneously with the production data from farmers in every

31   barangay. The AIS shall merge and synchronize agricultural data from different

32   sources into a cohesive database designed to facilitate linkages from place of

origin or the farm to local, and ultimately, global markets. The AIS shall also be integrated with the existing systems of the DA.

The AIS shall have the following features and contents:

(a) Municipal and city-wide identification of individual farmers, fish breeders, and fisherfolk as well as qualified organizations which produce specific farm and fisheries products, regardless of quantity;

(b) Crop harvest, volume, and type forecasting;

(c) Inventory of specific classification of crop varieties planted, livestock and type of fish raised in a particular LGU;

(d) Farmers' and fisherfolk demographics, including age group, gender, ethnic group, income, seminars and trainings attended, and assistance received;

(e) Selected reports presented in both tabular and graphical form:

(f) Registry of farmers' contact details and farm location to facilitate market linkages;

(g) Search engine which allows farmers, fish breeders, and fisherfolk to look for potential and actual buyers and for such buyers to search for farms, farmers, and available agricultural and fisheries products; and

(h) Customizable dashboard which is accessible only to registered farmers and fisherfolk clients and contains the farmers' and fisherfolk's profile such as the area of the farm or fishpond, crops planted, livestock and type of fish raised.

SEC. 5. *Registration.* — All cities and municipalities shall encourage and facilitate the free registration of all farmers, fisherfolk, as well as buyers transacting within their respective areas in the AIS.

SEC. 6. *Functions and Responsibilities of Cities and Municipalities.* — The LGU shall exercise the following functions and responsibilities:

(a) The Municipal Agriculture Office, in coordination with the Municipal Agrarian Reform Office, shall gather, encode, and consolidate all pertinent data on the profile and demographics of farmers, fisherfolk as well as buyers;

1   (b) Monitor and control farm inputs including machineries and
2 equipment;

3   (c) For municipalities and component cities, prepare and submit real-
4 time data under (a) and (b) to the provincial agricultural office and to the
5 respective regional offices of the DA;

6   (d) For highly urbanized cities, submit real-time data to the respective
7 regional offices of the DA;

8   (e) Establish farmer and buyer linkages and act as a gatekeeper at the
9 city or municipal level in the nationwide marketing of agricultural products; and

10   (f) Serve as the web administrator at the municipal or city level and be
11 responsible for integrating farm and fisheries locations into the geographic
12 integration system map.

13

14   SEC. 7. *Functions and Responsibilities of the Province.* — The provincial
15 government shall have the following functions and responsibilities:

16   (a) The Provincial Planning and Development Office (PPDO) is the web
17 administrator at the provincial level and is responsible for integrating farm and
18 fisheries data into the geographic integration system maps for agriculture and
19 fisheries;

20   (b) The Local Economic and Investment Promotion Office (LEIPO) acts
21 as the lead administrator of the AIS in the provincial level and ensures the
22 balance between supply and demand;

23   (c) The Provincial Agricultural Office monitors the submission of reports
24 from municipalities and component cities, and ensures the completeness,
25 accuracy, and validity of data submitted by the Municipal Agricultural Offices
26 and the Municipal Agrarian Reform Offices; and

27   (d) Except for highly urbanized cities, prepare and submit such data to
28 the regional office of the DA.

29

30   SEC. 8. *Functions and Responsibilities of the Regional Office of the DA.*
31 — The regional office of the DA shall have the following functions and
32 responsibilities:

1   (a) Integrate the data provided by the provinces and highly urbanized
2   cities in the existing information systems of the DA such as the National Farmers
3   and Fisheries Information System (NFFIS) which is a web-based data collection
4   system that serves as a platform for updating the Registry System for Basic
5   Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA);

6   (b) Collaborate with the regional offices of the Department of Trade and
7   Industry (DTI) in order to facilitate the availment of the various programs of
8   the DTI as well as strengthen market linkages through such programs;

9   (c) Recommend to the central office of the DA appropriate interventions
10   in the form of marketing, importation, and training assistance, as may be
11   needed;

12   (d) Validate the data from the LGUs acting as the system administrator
13   at the regional level and provide real-time report to the central office of the DA;
14   and

15   (e) Endorse for financial assistance the qualified fifth and sixth class
16   municipalities that can be given assistance in establishing and maintaining their
17   respective AIS.

18

19   SEC. 9. *Functions and Responsibilities of the Central Office of the DA.* —
20   The central office of the DA shall have the following functions and
21   responsibilities:

22   (a) Allocate funding for the integration of the AIS with existing
23   information systems;

24   (b) Coordinate with the Department of Information and Communications
25   Technology (DICT) to upgrade, expand, and integrate its information systems;

26   (c) Ensure that the implementation, appropriate verification processes
27   and information safeguards are in place pursuant to existing laws and
28   regulations, in coordination with the DICT, the Philippine Statistics Authority
29   (PSA), the National Privacy Commission (NPC), the Department of the Interior
30   and Local Government (DILG) and the Department of Science and Technology
31   (DOST);

(d) Approve the prioritized interventions by the regional offices and allocate corresponding funding;

€ Collaborate with other agencies for the creation of market linkages in the domestic and international markets; and

(f) Provide safety nets in the import and export of agricultural products in order to support farmers.

SEC. 10. *Duties of the Secretary.* — The Secretary of the DA, in coordination with the Secretary of the DILG, shall monitor and ensure the compliance of all cities and municipalities as provided for under this Act and shall, as soon as practicable, establish a centralized AIS that shall integrate and link all existing information systems in the country.

SEC. 11. *Reports.* — The Secretary of the DA shall prepare and submit to the President and both Houses of Congress an annual report on the implementation of the program which shall contain the list of accomplishments and recommendations for improvements.

SEC. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* — Within ninety (90) days after the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 13. *Appropriations.* — The Secretary of Agriculture shall include in the Department's programs the establishment of the integrated and centralized AIS, the funding of which shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act. The LGUs shall provide the necessary funds for the establishment of an AIS in their respective annual budgets.

SEC. 14. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision or part of this Act be declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions or parts not affected thereby shall remain valid and in full force and effect.

1   SEC. 15. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, resolutions and
2   other issuances, or portions thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions
3   of this Act, are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.
4
5   SEC. 16. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
6   publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

   Approved,