

APEC Seminar Workshop on the Assessment of Good Animal Husbandry Practices in APEC Economies  
25 October 2011  
Tagaytay City

***Talk Points of Secretary Proceso J. Alcala***

(Read by Executive Director Manuel R. Jarmin, Livestock Development Council)

(Pleasantries)

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Secretary Proceso Alcala sends his apologies for being unable to join us today. He has asked me to deliver this message on his behalf.

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Honored Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen: Good morning and welcome to the Philippines. I would like to thank each of you for your participation in this initiative. In particular, we wish to honor our pool of experts who have agreed to lend their time and talents for this workshop.

At a time when the combined forces of globalization, changing global climate and threats of animal diseases are exerting tremendous pressure on the Filipino agri-fishery sector, the objectives that define APEC gain greater relevance and appreciation.

For nearly two decades, APEC has evolved not only as a powerful medium for regional prosperity through free trade and investments. It has also created avenues for greater interchange in food and agriculture, in keeping with the vision of regional food security and more meaningful rural development.

And it is that promise of free trade and cooperation that drives reforms and increase investments in the farm and fishery sector by many developing economies of APEC, including the Philippines.

The initial results have been truly noteworthy.

Within the last few months, and indeed over the course of the first half of this decade, unmistakable evidence has established the truth that Philippine agriculture has entered a more prosperous era.

And the Filipino livestock and poultry industry has been a consistent leader in the sector's transformation and development.

The livestock and poultry industry managed to increase its production by nearly two percent (2%) between January and June of this year alone. It claimed more than a quarter (25.6% or P180.9 billion) of the nation's agricultural output valued at P706.3 billion. This makes the animal industry the second major contributor to the agriculture economy behind agricultural crops.

In spite of difficulties, the industry earned around 1 billion a day over the same period – providing employment and greater incomes for countless Filipinos, notably our small farmers.

More importantly, the livestock and poultry industry is undeniably every Filipino's major source of nutritious and affordable food, animal protein and energy.

Globally, consumption trends are changing. And it drives the demand for assurance that food is safe to eat, and is of the best possible quality.

Along with this assurance, consumers now also demand food that is produced in a manner that does not harm the environment, or jeopardize the safety and welfare of producers, and other workers in food production and trade.

And so, it is now among the priorities of the Department to promote the principles of Good Animal Husbandry Practices in a more comprehensive scale.

Our aim is plain and simple: provide our small farmers the opportunity to compete in the global market through a system that is people-centered and globally recognized.

The heart and soul of the GAHP is the certification part.

*(criteria for certification includes: 1. Compliance to Good Animal Husbandry Practices as set out by the standards created by BAFPS; 2. Implementation of biosecurity measures and transparent and traceable systems; 3. Documentation of farm management at least (2) years of farm records and if in case new farms are applying at least 6 month of farm records).*

We wish to make farmers understand that while application for a GAHP certification is voluntary, the benefit of getting one is immense. GAHP serves as a mark of excellence, the ticket for success in an open market.

In all, GAHP forms part of the Department's blueprint for national livestock and poultry development and modernization, as being implemented by our livestock agencies. These include the Bureau of Animal Industry, Livestock Development Council, Philippine Carabao Center, National Dairy Authority, and National Meat Inspection Service.

With this blueprint, we work to ensure viability and sustainability of the industry through the provision of infrastructure, technical and policy assistance.

It means continuing research, technology development and extension, making access to cutting-edge animal treatments and disease prevention measures easier for our smallholders.

It also means helping provide the vital production, processing and marketing facilities that will enhance efficiency and productivity, and thus encourage more investments and jobs in the industry.

We will also continue to formulate, monitor and evaluate government policies and programs to ensure that the interests of every sector involved in the supply chain—from animal growers, feed millers, processors and exporters – are ably protected.

For instance, we support regular meetings with industry players, either separately or jointly, to discuss and resolve pressing issues and concerns. This will ensure that any course of action we have to undertake are done in close consultation with the industry, and will not unnecessarily disadvantage any of them.

The completion of these tasks will not only ensure the production of wholesome and world-class livestock, poultry and dairy products, but also guarantee the well-being of our animal population even under strenuous conditions.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Indeed, amidst the sea of challenges that we have to overcome, the potential of the Philippines and developing APEC members to become a major producer and exporter of meat, milk and other dairy products is apparent.

And it is very clear that the most effective form of shield for the industry against the emerging challenges it is confronted with is an enduring domestic support system.

We therefore hope that the proceedings of this three-day workshop will provide the needed impetus towards ensuring the health and safety of our respective country's animal and human population, in speeding up the growth of the livestock and poultry sector, and in achieving food security and sustainable prosperity for our people.

We at the Philippine Department of Agriculture are confident that this growth shall continue, and that our partnership will gain strength as we work to attain our shared goals.

Thank you.

***Muli, magandang araw at maraming salamat po sa inyong lahat. (Again, Good morning and thank you very much to everyone.)***