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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
First Regular Session




Senate
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SENATE

S. B. NO. 1186

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by SENATOR LOREN LEGARDA

AN ACT
PROMOTING FOOD FOREST GARDENING, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Explanatory Note

Food forest gardening is seeing a resurgence in urban areas worldwide. A food forest is a system of gardening using perennial vegetables chosen to complement and support each other, minimizing weeds, pests and maintenance while providing a rich variety of harvest. There is a need to adopt the concept of forest gardening to ensure a sustainable method of food production with minimal cost.

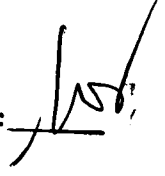
This bill seeks to promote and institutionalize food forest gardening in the country as a sustainable land use system to address the limited resources for sustainable food production with minimal farming costs but increased harvests even in small plots of land. The Philippine Food Forest Gardening Commission (PFFGC) shall be created as an attached agency to the Department of Agriculture (DA), and shall act as the policy-making body for the effective implementation of this Act. Local Government Units (LGUs), educational institutions and other stakeholders are mandated to participate in the program. Likewise, the Philippine Center for Food Forest Gardening (PCFFG) shall be established under the Commission, to provide information, training, education, expertise and best practices to implement the Food Forest Program.

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


LOREN LEGARDA
Senator

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** - This Act shall be known as the "Food Forest
2 Gardening Act."

3
4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to
5 build, preserve, and maintain a healthy ecosystem; protect and develop
6 biodiversity and habitats for wildlife; conserve the country's crop genetic
7 diversity and heirloom plants as a strategy for climate change adaptation,
8 mitigation and resiliency; and promote public awareness on ecological and
9 sustainable use of land resources for food production and other products.
10 Towards this end, the government, in coordination with the business interests,
11 such as land developers and social entrepreneurs and the civil society, shall
12 promote and integrate Food Forest Gardening by establishing and developing
13 community gardens in the country as a sustainable land use system for food
14 production and other agricultural products for economic and societal
15 development.

16
17 **SEC. 3. Definition of Terms.** - For purposes of this Act, the following terms
18 shall mean:

19 (a) **Agro-Forestry** - a land use management system in which trees or
20 shrubs are grown around or among crops or pasture land and
21 combines shrubs and trees in agricultural and forestry technologies to
22 create more diverse, productive, profitable, healthy, ecologically
23 sound, and sustainable land-use systems;

24 (b) **Companion Planting** - planting of different crops in close proximity for
25 ecological pest control, pollination, providing habitat for beneficial
26 creatures, maximizing use of space, and to otherwise increase crop
27 productivity;

- 1 (c) Crop Rotation – practice of successive planting of different crops on
2 the same land to improve soil fertility and crop yield, reduce soil
3 erosion and help control insects and diseases;
- 4 (d) Ecosystem – a complex set of relationships among the living
5 resources, habitats, and residents of an area which include plants,
6 trees, animals, fish, birds, microorganisms, water, soil and people;
- 7 (e) Forest Gardening – “multi-layered crop farming” or a low maintenance
8 and sustainable method of food production that is based on woodland
9 ecosystems, incorporating fruit and nut trees, shrubs, herbs, vines,
10 and perennial vegetables which yields directly useful to humans and a
11 system of agro-forestry that creates diverse, productive, healthy,
12 ecologically-sound and sustainable system of land use;
- 13 (f) Perennial Vegetables – plants that live for more than two (2) years;
- 14 (g) Sustainable Land-Use Management – use of land resources, including
15 soil, water, animals and plants, for the production of goods to meet
16 changing human needs while simultaneously ensuring the long-term
17 productive potential of these resources and the maintenance of their
18 environmental functions.
19

20 **SEC. 4. Institutionalization of the Philippine Food Forest Gardening**
21 **Program.** – In order to ensure food security and regenerate ecosystem
22 functions through a system of layers of vegetation, the Philippine Food Forest
23 Gardening Program, hereinafter referred to as the “Program”, is hereby
24 institutionalized. For this purpose, Food Forest Gardening may be established
25 in the following places:

- 26 a. Any parcel or portion of land;
27 b. Public spaces such as urban yards or city and municipal parks;
28 c. Unutilized and idle public land;
29 d. Community or common spaces of land developments;
30 e. Portions of rural farms;
31 f. Urban housing projects; and
32 g. Actual yards of households.
33

34 **SEC. 5. Objectives of the Program.** – The following are the objectives of the
35 Program:

- 36 a. To introduce low maintenance food production through agro-forestry;
37 b. To establish sustainable food forest gardening using mostly
38 perennial vegetables through crop rotation and companion planting in
39 the country;
40 c. To maximize land use and provide a significant source of income for
41 urban and rural communities;
42 d. To transform farmers from mere mono-crop cultivators to multi-crop
43 agripreneurs;
44 e. To utilize idle lands and consequently create beautiful living spaces;
45 f. To serve as a model for the youth inspiring them towards sustainable
46 agriculture; and
47 g. To help farmers build a productive farming communities and produce
48 high-quality crops for the country’s economy.
49

1 **SEC. 6. Creation and Composition of the Philippine Food Forest**
2 **Gardening Commission.** – There is hereby created the Philippine Food Forest
3 Gardening Commission, hereinafter referred to as the “Commission”, which
4 shall be attached to the Department of Agriculture (DA) and shall act as a
5 policy-making body for effective and continuing implementation of the
6 provisions of this Act. It shall be headed by the Secretary of the DA, as
7 Chairperson, and the Secretary of the Department of Interior and Local
8 Government (DILG) as Co-Chairperson. The following shall be its members:

- 9 (a) the Director of the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI);
10 (b) a representative of the Department of Environment and Natural
11 Resources (DENR);
12 (b) a representative of the Department of Finance (DOF);
13 (c) a representative of the Department of Science and Technology
14 (DOST);
15 (d) a representative of the Department of Education (DepEd);
16 (e) a representative of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED);
17 (f) 2 representatives of the land developers associations; and
18 (g) 2 representatives of Non-Government Organizations (NGOs).
19

20 **SEC. 7. Powers and Functions of the Commission.** – The Commission shall
21 have the following powers and functions:

- 22 1. Formulate framework, plan, and policy for the Philippine Food Forest
23 Gardening in both national and local levels;
24 2. Prepare a comprehensive Manual for the Philippine Food Forest
25 Gardening;
26 3. Formulate guidelines for the food forest gardening training program
27 for Local Government Units (LGUs), concerned government agencies
28 and offices; teachers or instructors of both public and private schools
29 teaching subjects related to agriculture, particularly those under the
30 K to 12 program, and other interested members of society, such as
31 non-government organizations (NGOs);
32 4. Devise and implement resource development scheme to ensure
33 continued allocation of funds;
34 5. Assess overall progress of the food forest training program and review
35 the monitoring and evaluation results;
36 6. Submit annual report to Congress; and
37 7. Perform such other tasks for the effective implementation of this Act.
38

39 **SEC. 8. Participation of LGUs.** – All local Government Units (LGUs) are
40 hereby mandated to establish the Program which shall focus on conducting a
41 comprehensive food forest gardening in their areas. The concerned LGUs shall
42 encourage all home developers, homeowners, neighborhood, community
43 and/or People’s Organizations to participate in the Program.
44

45 **SEC. 9. Incentives.** – Those participating in the Program shall be granted
46 incentives including, but not limited to, exemption from payment of real estate
47 tax, exemption from existing rules and regulations prohibiting farming or
48 growing food in backyards, patios or houses, and other incentives as may be
49 provided by the Commission and the law.

1 **SEC. 10. Establishment of the Philippine Center for Food Forest**
2 **Gardening.** – The Philippine Center for Food Forest Gardening is hereby
3 established, which shall be under the Commission and shall provide
4 information, trainings, education, expertise, best practices and networking to
5 implement the food forest gardening program. It shall likewise provide the
6 necessary secretariat, administrative, and technical support to the
7 Commission.

8
9 **SEC. 11. Management Fund.** For the implementation of this Act, a
10 management fund shall be established for the following purposes:

- 11 (a) Research;
12 (b) Information and educational campaign;
13 (c) Trainings; and
14 (d) Pilot programs.

15
16 **SEC. 12. Integration of the Program in School Curriculum.** – The Program
17 shall be integrated in the academic curriculum for senior high school and
18 college students taking up Agriculture, Practical Arts, Home Economics and/or
19 other subjects related to agriculture.

20
21 **SEC. 13. Appropriations.** – The amount necessary for the implementation of
22 this Act is hereby authorized to be appropriated from the budget of the DA,
23 DILG, DepEd, CHED and DENR not otherwise appropriated. Thereafter, the
24 funds shall be included in the annual budget of the aforementioned agencies.

25
26 **SEC. 14. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** - The DA, in coordination
27 with the DILG, DOST, DepEd, CHED, DENR and other stakeholders, shall
28 promulgate the rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of
29 this Act.

30
31 **SEC. 15. Separability Clause.** – If any provision of this Act, or any part
32 thereof be declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not
33 affected thereby shall continue in full force and effect.

34
35 **SEC. 16. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, presidential decrees, proclamations,
36 executive orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof, inconsistent with the
37 provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

38
39 **SEC. 17. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days
40 following its complete publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general
41 circulation.

42
43 **Approved,**