

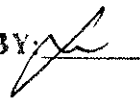
FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC
OF THE PHILIPPINES
Second Regular Session



'11 JUL 19 P2:10

SENATE

S. No. 2893

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The coconut industry is a dominant sector of Philippine agriculture. Data from the Department of Agriculture (DA) indicate that out of the 12 million hectares of farmlands in the country, 3.1 million hectares are devoted to coconut production. The data also indicate that there are about 25 million Filipinos who are directly or indirectly dependent on the coconut industry.

Our country's coconut industry supplies amounts to 59% share in the world's coconut exports market and is considered to be among the top 5 net foreign exchange earners, averaging to about US\$760M per year. Coconut farms are widely distributed nationwide, largely in regions of Southern Luzon in the north and Mindanao in the south. There are around 324 million coconut trees in the country, about 85% of which are considered productive.

One of the most recent by-products discovered by experts that the coconut tree can provide is "coco sugar". Coconut sugar is a by-product from coconut sap (tuba) obtained by boiling freshly harvested sap until it evaporates and thickens then allowed to cool and become granular. Chemical analysis shows that it contains higher amount of nutrients compared to brown and refined cane sugar. Coco sugar has higher amount of nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, chlorine, magnesium, sulfur and micronutrients levels. Health experts indicate that coco sugar can help in the proper management and control of diabetes mellitus by lowering the total cholesterol level.

Health experts reveal that coconut sugar is good for people with diabetes since it has low glycemic index (GI) of 35 compared to cane sugar's glycemic index of 50. The glycemic index is the indicator used to measure and rank various food substances in relation to how they affect blood glucose.

This proposed measure seeks to further boost the coconut industry in the country by providing the mechanisms to fund the research and development (R&D) of coco sugar in order for this product to conform with internationally accepted standards for food and safety. It is hoped that this measure will help alleviate the lives of millions of Filipino families who are directly and indirectly dependent on the coconut industry.

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


MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID
Senator

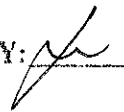
FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
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'11 JUL 19 P2:09

SENATE

S. No. 2893

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid

AN ACT
PROVIDING THE ENABLING MECHANISMS FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (R&D) OF COCONUT SUGAR IN THE COUNTRY, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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 "**Coconut Sugar Research and Development (R&D) Act of 2011**".

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote the right to health and health consciousness of its people.

Towards this end, the State shall provide the enabling mechanisms to promote the production of coconut sugar in order to help and boost the coconut industry in the country.

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. - For purposes of this Act, the term "coconut sugar" shall refer to the product derived from coconut sap or "tuba" (as it is known locally) obtained by boiling freshly harvested sap until it evaporates and thickens, and thereafter solidifying to become honey syrup or granular sugar. Coconut sugar is 100% natural, free from additives and artificial flavoring.

SEC. 4. Promoting Research and Development (R&D) on Coconut Sugar. - The Department of Science and Technology (DOST), in coordination with the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA), Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI), shall conduct an extensive research and development (R&D) on the health benefits and nutritional value of coconut sugar in order to develop it and comply with internationally accepted standards on food and safety.

The DOST shall facilitate and support interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and international research activities to advance the knowledge and understanding on the health and nutritional benefits of using coconut sugar, and disseminate their findings to various stakeholders involved in the production and promotion of coco sugar.

The DOST, in coordination with the Philippine Coconut Authority, Department of Agriculture and the Food and Nutrition Research Institute, shall conduct a year-round information, education and communication (IEC) campaign to inform and educate the general public on the various health benefits of utilizing coco sugar. It shall also publish the latest research findings, studies and materials on the nutritional value of coco sugar;

SEC. 5. Coconut Sugar Credit Facility and Loan Package. – The Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) is hereby mandated to formulate a Coconut Sugar Credit Facility and Loan Package Window which shall provide low interest loans for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) seeking to venture into the business of promoting the consumption and utilization of coconut sugar.

Within six (6) months from the date of effectivity of this Act, the Land Bank of the Philippines is mandated to formulate the necessary guidelines, procedures and requirements for the various stakeholders to avail of the Coconut Sugar Credit Facility and Loan Package, as provided under this Section.

SEC. 6. Annual Appropriation. - The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) shall include in its annual programming and annual appropriation the amount necessary to fully implement the objectives of this Act.

SEC. 7. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). - Within six (6) months from the date of effectivity of this Act, the Department of Science and Technology, in coordination with the Philippine Coconut Authority, Department of Agriculture and the Food and Nutrition Research Institute, shall promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 8. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof not consistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision or part of this Act, or the application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder of this Act shall not be affected thereby.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from the date of its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,