

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Third Regular Session)

Senate
Office of the Secretary

24 JUN 20 P3:15

SENATE

Senate Bill No. 2713

RECEIVED BY



Introduced by Sen. CYNTHIA A. VILLAR

AN ACT
URGING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT, AND EXPORT
PROMOTION OF THE MORINGA (*MORINGA OLEIFERA*), LOCALLY KNOWN
AS "MALUNGgay", AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Malunggay "*Moringa oleifera*", often called the "miracle tree" is a plant of great nutritional value and cultural significance in the Philippines. Its leaves are packed with essential vitamins, minerals, and amino acids that are crucial for combating malnutrition and enhancing public health. The leaves of this nutrient-rich plant help boost the immune system, improve skin health, and support metabolic functions, making it a valuable resource for the health of children, pregnant women, and the general population.

Economically, Malunggay presents significant opportunities for local farmers and entrepreneurs. It is an easy-to-cultivate crop that thrives in various soil types and climates, requiring minimal use of water and pesticides. Leaves can be harvested after plants grow up to 2 meters, usually after a year. The plant's versatility allows for the production of a wide range of products, including nutritional supplements, cooking oil, teas, and cosmetics, which have growing markets both locally and internationally. Promoting Malunggay cultivation and processing can drive rural development, create jobs, and alleviate poverty in the Philippines.

Environmentally, Malunggay is a sustainable crop that supports soil health and adapts to climate change. Its deep root system helps prevent soil erosion and enhances nutrient retention, while its drought resistance and minimal water needs make it an ideal crop for sustainable agriculture. These characteristics contribute to more flexible farming systems and better environmental stewardship.

Culturally, Malunggay is deeply embedded in Filipino culinary traditions and everyday life. It is a staple ingredient in many traditional dishes, reflecting its role in promoting dietary diversity and food security. This widespread cultural acceptance further underscores the importance of supporting and enhancing Malunggay cultivation and use. All its parts, including leaves, pods, bark, seeds, fruits, and roots, are packed with nutritional and healing properties, earning it the nickname

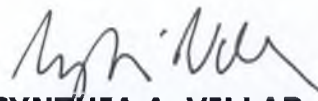
"The Miracle Tree." It is a source of 49 vitamins and minerals and essential amino acids, and it is also known for its abundant medicinal benefits.

Undernourishment and malnutrition have been long-standing problems in the Philippines, affecting millions of its population. Various technologies have been developed to address these issues. Malunggay (*Moringa oleifera*)—one of the featured commodities in a Technology and Investment Profiles monograph series published by the Southeast Asian Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA)—has shown high potential in combating malnutrition and hunger. Its use and consumption have been promoted by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a low-cost health enhancer in poor countries around the globe.

Moringa powder is typically sold to domestic markets such as pharmaceutical companies, natural health product manufacturers, bakeries, and supermarkets, and is also exported to countries such as Japan, South Korea, the United States, and various European nations. The global moringa market is estimated at US\$4 billion, according to the India-based Advanced Biofuel Center, which conducts the annual global Moringa Meet in India to help Moringa farmers worldwide understand the crop and add value to their businesses. India currently supplies 80% of the world's demand for moringa products.

Encouraging partnerships between government, academic institutions, and the private sector will help develop a robust Malunggay industry, ensuring its contributions to health, economic development, and environmental sustainability for the benefit of the entire nation.

Given the importance of the Malunggay in the Philippines, the immediate passage of this Bill is necessary.



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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "*Moringa Development Act.*"

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to develop and promote a globally competitive moringa industry with the objective of increasing moringa farmers' income, addressing the nutritional and health needs of our people, and encouraging trade and industry.

SEC. 3. *Development of Moringa.* – The Department of Agriculture (DA), in consultation with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), moringa growers' cooperatives and organizations, local government units, and the private sector, shall formulate a one-year framework to be validated and updated annually. Such framework shall serve as guide to the formulation and implementation of plans, programs and projects for the production, marketing, processing and distribution of moringa for food and commercial needs, as envisioned in this Act. The framework shall likewise provide for the following:

1 a. National Framework – The DA, DOST, state universities and colleges
2 (SUCs) and other stakeholders shall strengthen the conduct of
3 researches on moringa particularly on areas of crop improvement, crop
4 protection, harvesting and postharvest handling supply chain analysis,
5 marketing and promotion;

6 b. Investment Promotion and Facilitation – The DA and DTI shall develop
7 programs establishing links between stakeholders in the moringa
8 industry and Government Financial Institutions (GFIs) and other financial
9 cooperatives. The DA and DTI shall likewise develop and implement
10 programs that would establish reasonable and innovative investment
11 incentive to attract more players in the moringa industry;

12 c. Export Promotion Support – An integrated and strategic export
13 promotion program for moringa industry shall be created. The export
14 promotion program shall be responsive to market conditions, needs of
15 the exporters, and possibilities offered by new products and
16 technologies. It shall likewise provide foreign trade and export promotion
17 activities through trainings, technical assistance, capacity building,
18 generating awareness on export opportunities and export planning
19 assistance;

20 d. Strengthen Trade Policies and Support Network – The DA shall be
21 responsible in coordinating a consultative approach for the various
22 stages of the trade policy making process. The Department of Foreign
23 Affairs (DFA) shall lead the negotiation of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)
24 to provide a competitive environment for moringa exports abroad; and

25 e. Monitoring and Evaluation – The DA shall continuously monitor, track,
26 and analyze the progress and outcomes of the programs to be
27 implemented to determine over-all effectiveness.

28 **SEC. 4. Appropriations.** – The amount necessary to implement this Act shall be
29 included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA). Thereafter, such funds as

1 may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in
2 the succeeding annual GAA.

3
4 **SEC. 5. *Repealing Clause.*** – All provisions of existing laws, orders and
5 regulations contrary to or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified
6 accordingly.

7
8 **SEC. 6. *Separability Clause.*** – If for any reason any part or provision of this
9 Act shall be deemed unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions hereof
10 shall not be affected and shall remain in force and effect.

11
12 **SEC. 7. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) after its publication
13 in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

14 Approved,