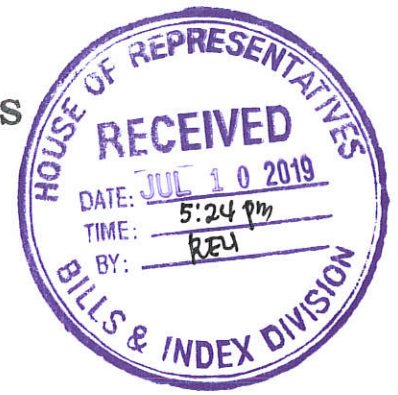


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

18TH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1935



Introduced by Representative Michael L. Romero

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines is an agricultural country where 35% of its population is engaged in farming as a main source of livelihood. Ironically, the country, for several years, has been the biggest importer of rice in the world and still striving to attain self-sufficiency. In fact, in the year 2009 alone, the country had imported 1,777,378,649 metric tons of rice and 303,148,863 metric tons of corn in the total amount of US\$952,740,091.00 and US\$95,153,146.00, respectively, which contributed to the depletion of the dollar reserve of the country.

The above unfortunate situation is further compounded by the burgeoning population with an annual growth at 2.04%. With the land area of only four (4) million hectares used for rice production in the Philippines, and this area is decreasing in big number in favor of certain industries, subdivisions, commercial establishment and other purposes, the government should take immediate and effective measures geared towards improving the yield of the farmers to ensure accessibility and affordability of rice, corn and similar farm products for all Filipinos. Studies show that 35% of the total yield increase will be attributed to the use of high quality seeds.

The enactment of Republic Act No. 7308, known as the "Seeds Industry Development Act of 1992" was a monumental step towards increasing farm productivity by developing and propagating quality seeds. However, it did not contain a proviso for a compulsory mass production of seeds for the farmers. To date, while the government has adopted a program to procure quality seeds for the farmers, it has never been as comprehensive as it should be and its volume and coverage, as well as its implementation are more matters of policy in the leadership rather than in pursuance to a well-defined enactment.

The establishment of a seeds production program will greatly enhance farm productivity by providing the farmers with quality, hybrid and affordable seeds, as well as the needed technical and other support services. It is in furtherance of the thrusts of the government to attain self-sufficiency of rice and corn production, as well to improve the lives of our famers who consistently posted the highest poverty incidences among the other sectors.



MICHAEL L. ROMERO Ph.D.

Republic of the Philippines
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AN ACT

**ESTABLISHING A CONTINUING NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR
HYBRID AND OTHER QUALITY SEEDS PRODUCTION AND
PROVIDING 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. Title - This Act shall be known as " The National Seeds
Production Act of 2019".

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy - It is hereby declared the policy of the
State to optimize the farm productivity through a systematic production of hybrid
and other quality seeds which are readily available and affordable to farmers.
Towards this end, the government shall formulate a system that will ensure the
production of hybrid and other quality seeds sufficient to address the
requirements of the farmers and whereby the farmers could buy seeds to various
accessible centers at a subsidize prize.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms - For purposes of this Act, the following
terms shall be defined as follows:

- a) Seed shall mean a plant material used for the production of food, forage, fibers, industrial crops, oil, flowers, grasses, herbs, and aquatic plants, including but not limited to, meristem and clonal propagules such tubers, corms, cuttings, seedlings, and micro-propagated plantlets;
- b) Hybrid seeds shall mean genetically improved seeds certified by the National Seed Quality Control Services under the Bureau of Plant Industries with proven capacity for high yield;
- c) Continuing program shall mean an all year round program of production based on a pre-determined volume of requirement that should be carried out on a regular basis;
- d) Local levels shall mean the regional offices of the Department of Agriculture, provincial agriculture offices and the municipal agriculture offices;
- e) Subsidize price shall mean *the value* of the seeds which is half of its acquisition and/or production cost as determined by the Department of Agriculture, through the Bureau of Plant Industries;

SECTION 4. Coverage. The National Government shall undertake a comprehensive program on the production of hybrid and other quality seeds, guided by the following objectives:

- a) Policy formulation on regulation and distribution of hybrid and other quality seeds to the farmers at a subsidize cost;
- b) Promotion and encouragement to the farmers of the use of hybrid and other quality seeds in their effort to increase farm productivity;
- c) Conduct of information dissemination, seminars and other support services to the farmers;
- d) Research and development pertaining to hybrid and other quality seeds, in coordination with the Philippine Rice Institute and other specialized agencies.

SECTION 5. Implementing Mechanism- The Department of Agriculture, through the Bureau of Plant Industries is hereby designated as the implementing

Agency of this program and shall initiate, supervise, coordinate, monitor its implementation at the national and local levels. It shall ensure the following;

- a) The active participation of the private sectors in the mass production of hybrid and other quality seeds in sufficient quantity;
- b) The seeds that shall be mass produced in sufficient quantity should only be those hybrid and other quality seeds that are certified by the National Seed Quality Control Services, created under Republic Act 7308;
- c) The establishments of areas devoted to the production of hybrid and other quality seeds in each region and province, as may be deemed necessary, to augment any deficiency of production from the private sector.
- d) The establishments of buying/distribution centers in each municipality, through the municipal agriculture office.

SECTION 6. Appropriations - The sum of One Billion pesos (Php1,000,000,000.00) shall be appropriated for the initial implementation of this Act which shall be incorporated in the Annual Budget of the Department of Agriculture, and thereafter the amount necessary to carry out the program implementation shall be incorporated in the General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 7. Annual Report - The Department of Agriculture shall render an annual report to Congress on the accomplishment of the program. A review on the viability of the program shall be made by the concerned agencies after three (3) years of its implementation.

SECTION 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations - The Department of Agriculture shall issue rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Act within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act.

SECTION 9. Penal Provisions - Any person, firm or association who shall obstruct, impedes or in any manner defeats the purpose of this act, shall, upon conviction, be punished with a fine of not more than One Hundred Thousand

pesos (Php100,000.00) or imprisonment of not more than five (5) years, or both, in the discretion of the court. Provided, that in case of a firm or association, the penalty of imprisonment shall be imposed upon the officer(s) who knowingly participated, abetted, or consented to the commission of such punishable acts.

SECTION 10. Separability Clause - If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 11. Repealing Clause — All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, presidential proclamations, rules and regulations or parts thereof contrary to or inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 12. Effectivity Clause - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation or in the Official Gazette, whichever comes first.

Approved.