

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 5923




Introduced by **MAGDALO Party-List Representative**
HON. MANUEL DG. CABOCHAN III

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The continuous increase in population poses a challenge in the government's capacity to provide food to its citizens. Studies have shown that new land is needed to grow enough food for everyone. This is why urban farming is increasingly being promoted. Urban farming, or urban agriculture is the production, processing and marketing of food in response to the demand of consumers within a town, city, or metropolis, with the application of intensive production methods, such as the using and reusing urban sources and wastes, to yield a diversity of crops and livestock.

This bill seeks to institutionalize urban agriculture and vertical farming in the highly-urbanized cities nationwide to address food security. The proposed measure advances the use of idle and/or abandoned government lots or buildings owned either by the national or local government for urban agriculture. It also Integrates Urban Agriculture and Vertical Farming in the academic curriculum for secondary and tertiary level students of both public and private academic institutions studying courses on Agriculture, Practical Arts, Home Economics, and/ or other subjects related to agriculture. It also incorporates the concept of Urban Agriculture and Vertical Farming in the National Service Training Program (NSTP) or the Citizens Military Training (CMT). The bill further encourages the Participation of the Local Government Units by mandating them to formulate the policy on the practice of urban farming, utilizing unused spaces, and idle lands.

In view of the foregoing approval of this bill is earnestly sought.


MANUEL DG. CABOCHAN III
Representative
Magdalo Para Sa Pilipino Party-List

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AN ACT
PROMOTING THE USE OF URBAN FARMING IN THE COUNTRY'S
METROPOLITAN AREAS TO ADDRESS FOOD SECURITY CONCERNS AND
REGENERATE ECOSYSTEM FUNCTIONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR, AND FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE.

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 "*Urban Agriculture Act*".

2
3 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to ensure
4 the fundamental right of every person to adequate food and to be free from hunger. As such, the
5 achievement of self-sufficiency in food production is adopted as a primary state policy. Towards
6 this end, the State shall develop climate-resilient communities in the metropolitan areas through
7 the promotion of modern, appropriate, cost-effective, and environmentally safe agriculture
8 technologies to ensure food security, promote a healthy citizenry and an improved quality of life
9 for urban dwellers.

10
11 **SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.*** – For the purpose of this Act, the following terms shall
12 refer to:

- 13
14 (a) *Food Security* – a situation wherein food is available and affordable at all times, and
15 where all people have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to maintain a healthy
16 and active life;
17 (b) *Urban Agriculture* – development paradigm that encompasses principles, management
18 technologies, and the policies relating to the practice and application of agricultural
19 production of food and goods in urban areas;
20 (c) *Vertical Farming* – method of farming that is brought to the urban space by employing
21 the concepts of indoor agriculture in skyscrapers and other modern buildings.
22

1 **SEC. 4. *Scope.*** – This Act shall apply to all urban spaces such as idle, government or private
2 lots or buildings, available land resources in State or private universities and colleges suitable
3 for growing crops and raising poultry, livestock and aquaculture.
4

5 **SEC. 5. *National Agriculture and Fisheries Council.*** – The National Agriculture and Fisheries
6 Council (NAF) Council is hereby mandated to monitor and ensure the proper implementation of
7 this Act. The Council shall be composed of the following members:

- 8 (a) Secretary of the Department of Agriculture as Chairperson;
- 9 (b) Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management;
- 10 (c) Secretary of the Department of Education;
- 11 (d) Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources;
- 12 (e) Secretary of the Department of Health;
- 13 (f) Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government;
- 14 (g) Secretary of the Department of Finance;
- 15 (h) Secretary of the Department of Labor and Employment;
- 16 (i) Secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways;
- 17 (j) Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology;
- 18 (k) Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development;
- 19 (l) Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry;
- 20 (m) Secretary of the Department of Transportation;
- 21 (n) Chairperson of the Commission on Higher Education;
- 22 (o) Chairperson of the National Anti-Poverty Commission;
- 23 (p) Director General of the National Economic and Development Authority;
- 24 (q) Director General of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority;
- 25 (r) Chairperson of the Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor;
- 26 (s) Representative from the Academe;
- 27 (t) Representative from the private sector who has the expertise in urban agriculture and
28 vertical farming; and
- 29 (u) Lead Convenor of the Urban Agriculture Practitioners Network of the Philippines.
30

31 Cabinet secretaries who are members of the Council may designate their duly authorized
32 and permanent representatives whose ranks shall in no case be lower than assistant secretary.
33

34 **SEC. 6. *Powers and Functions of the NAF Council.*** – The NAF Council shall have the
35 following additional powers and functions:

- 36 (a) Develop a unified strategy to link agricultural production to nutrition programs;
- 37 (b) Conduct policy studies, program monitoring and comprehensive researches on food
38 production, sustainable food systems and the country's urban agriculture agenda;
- 39 (c) Ensure that department resources are used to effectively encourage agricultural
40 production in urban communities;
- 41 (d) Provide technical assistance in support of vertical farming, backyard food production
42 and community gardening programs consistent with the goals of poverty reduction, food
43 security and healthy eating habits in urban communities; and

1 (e) Submit periodic reports and policy recommendations to Congress for the proper
2 implementation of this Act.
3

4 **SEC. 7. *Inclusion of Urban Agriculture in the Educational System.*** – Urban
5 agriculture shall be integrated in the academic curriculum for elementary, secondary and tertiary
6 level students of both public and private academic institutions offering courses in Agriculture,
7 Practical Arts, Home Economics, and/or other subjects related to agriculture. A course
8 curriculum on gardening shall be developed and included in the regular curriculum of
9 elementary and secondary education. Instructional materials shall likewise be developed.
10

11 For universities and colleges, urban agriculture shall form part of the required period of
12 time spent by students in the National Service Training Program or the Citizens' Military
13 Training. A plans for the utilization or maximization of space occupied by schools shall be
14 formulated specifically for urban agriculture purposes.
15

16 **SEC. 8. *Responsibility of Local Government Units.*** – The local government units
17 (LGUs), in coordination with the NAF Council, shall formulate policies on the practice of urban
18 agriculture and on utilizing urban spaces, unused spaces and idle lands, consistent with its
19 existing policy on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) and zoning ordinances. *Provided,*
20 That spaces for urban agriculture shall not be prime lots or areas suitable for investments. The
21 LGUs in cities and urban area are required to enact local legislation institutionalizing urban
22 agriculture as a regular component in the annual appropriations of the LGUs.
23

24 All homeowners' associations, neighborhood associations, community associations,
25 people's organizations, and local business establishments shall be encouraged by the LGU to
26 participate in urban agriculture activities.
27

28 **SEC. 9. *Information and Education Campaign.*** – In order to raise public awareness,
29 provide information and engage the public to participate in activities and projects on urban
30 agriculture, the NAF Council shall engage the assistance of the Philippine Information Agency,
31 through the Public Information Office in each city and municipality, to undertake a nationwide
32 information campaign.
33

34 **SEC. 10. *Appropriations.*** – The funds necessary to carry out the initial implementation
35 of this Act shall be charged against the current year's budget of the Department of Agriculture.
36 Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be
37 included in the annual General Appropriations Act.
38

39 **SEC. 11. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within six (6) months from the date
40 of effectivity of this Act, the NAF Council, in coordination with the concerned agencies, shall
41 promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations to implement the provisions of
42 this Act.
43

1 **SEC. 12. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or
2 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain
3 valid and subsisting.
4

5 **SEC. 13. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, presidential decrees or issuances, executive
6 orders, letters of instruction, administrative orders, rules and regulations contrary to or
7 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified or amended
8 accordingly.
9

10 **SEC. 14. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
11 publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,