

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 1234



Introduced by Representative MICAELA S. VIOLAGO

EXPLANATORY NOTE


Ruminants are mammals that are able to acquire nutrients from plant-based food by fermenting it in a specialized stomach prior to digestion, principally through bacterial actions. There are about 150 species of ruminants, which include both domestic and wild species. Ruminating mammals include cattle, goats, sheep, giraffes, yaks, deer, camels, llamas, antelope, and some macropods.

Although such plant parts as stems and leaves are impossible for most mammals to digest, ruminants are anatomically equipped to thrive on just such a diet. These ruminants have four-chambered stomachs quite unlike the single-chambered stomachs of humans and other mammals. The four parts of the stomach are the rumen, reticulum, omasum, and abomasum. Ruminants eat quickly, storing masses of grass or foliage in the first chamber of the stomach, the rumen, where it softens. They later regurgitate this material, called cud, and chew it again to further break down its cellulose content, which is difficult to digest. The chewed cud goes directly to the other chambers of the stomach (the reticulum, omasum, and abomasum), where it is further digested with the aid of various essential microorganisms that live in the stomach.

In the Philippines, the Small Ruminants Center (SRC) at Central Luzon State University (CLSU) in the Science City of Munoz, Nueva Ecija has been designated as the lead national center for research and development in small ruminants and it has been in operation for almost 20 years now. Its main responsibility is to conduct R&D activities in various disciplines that lead to the overall improvement of the productivity of Philippine goats and sheep. Over the years, the center has developed technologies for broodstock improvement, feeding management, cultural practices, pasture establishment, and products development. The SRC was designated by the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development of the Department of Science and Technology (PCARRD-DOST) as the first and only Center of Excellence in small ruminant research. It is also chosen as the national broodstock center, and accredited as a quarantine facility by the Bureau of Animal Industry of the Department of Agriculture.

The proposed bill, if enacted and passed into law, will enhance and accelerate the development of the small ruminants sector as a sunshine industry that will lead to increased meat and milk production for the country, better income to farmers, employment opportunities for rural folks, establishment of agro-enterprises, and ultimately improved living conditions in our farming communities especially in the province of Nueva Ecija.

Support and approval for this proposed legislation are hereby earnestly sought.


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AN ACT
ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE SMALL RUMINANTS CENTER

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 "**Philippine Small Ruminants Act of 2019.**"

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. - It is hereby declared to be the policy of the State to:

- a) Conserve, improve and develop the Philippine goat, sheep and other small ruminants as sources of animal milk, meat and fiber;
- b) Enable the farmers, particularly smallholder farmers, to avail themselves of good quality goat and sheep stocks at all times and at reasonable prices through an organized program of breeding and development;
- c) Increase the local supply of meat, milk and fiber from goats, sheep and other small ruminants; and
- d) Encourage backyard goat, sheep and other small ruminants development in rural areas by raising goat and sheep which are good milk and meat producers so as to reduce importation of milk and milk by-products;

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms. - As used in this Act, the following terms shall be construed to mean as follows:

- a) Crossbreed - refers to the offspring of two (2) purebred animals;
- b) Performance Testing - refers to the systematic selection of the best

animal from a population raised under the same environment. The basic consideration is its genetic potential;

- c) Philippine Small Ruminant Center - refers to the Philippine Small Ruminant Center with the National Center based in the Central Luzon State University;
- d) Research Network - refers to the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCARRD), Department of Agriculture (DA), and private organization conducting researches geared towards developing technology that will increase productivity of smallholder farmers;
- e) Smallholder Farmers - are basically farmers owning below twenty (20) heads of goats or sheep;
- f) Small Ruminants – refers to any hooved animal belonging to the division of *Artiodactyla* having four stomachs, such as but not limited to goat and sheep;
- g) Upgraded – refers to the offspring of a cross between a native stock and an exotic breed of animal.

SEC. 4. *Creation of the Philippine Small Ruminant Center.* - The Philippine Small Ruminant Center is hereby created with the National Center based in the Central Luzon State University and with satellite centers in the other goat and sheep centers in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. The Center in Visayas shall be the Visayas State University (VSU) in Leyte. The center in Mindanao shall be the DA-Bagalupa Stock Farm in Zamboanga del Sur.

OTHER SATELLITE CENTERS IN ANY REGION OF THE COUNTRY MAY ALSO BE ORGANIZED AND OPERATIONALIZED WHENEVER THERE ARE STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (SUCs) IN AGRICULTURE IN SUCH AREAS.

SEC. 5. *Scope.* - The activities of the Philippine Small Ruminant Center encompass all research and development efforts in all disciplines that lead to the improvement of the over-all productivity of the Philippines goat and sheep. In addition, research efforts to increase the annual population growth rate of small ruminants to meet existing and future demand shall be pursued.

SEC. 6. *Priorities.* - The following shall be the priority areas of the Philippine Small Ruminant Center and such other priorities or programs that the Board shall formulate:

- a) Research and development efforts in the areas of biotechnology, breeding, nutrition, reproduction, animal health and product development utilization, socio-economics, technology promotion and environmental impact shall take priority. Research activities geared towards development of appropriate technologies shall be the primary concern. These technologies

are those that would increase productivity of the goat and sheep in a cost effective, simple and practical manner. Socio-economic researches shall be undertaken hand in hand with the development of the technologies to ensure economic appropriateness and acceptance of the technology by farmers;

b) Development of goat and sheep with improved performance as milk-meat animals shall be the main focus in breeding;

c) Development of feeding systems for backyard and semi commercial production, nutrition, improving reproductive efficiency, physiology and schemes to reduce losses by parasites and diseases shall likewise receive priority. Emphasis shall be put on technology transfer on the developed appropriate technologies; and

d) Development for dairy meat, fiber and hide production for domestic and/or export market.

SEC. 7. *Philippine Small Ruminant Center Board.* - The Board shall formulate policies and oversee the implementation of the Philippine Small Ruminant Center, in consonance with the National Research and Development policies. The Philippine Small Ruminant Center Board shall be composed of the following:

1. President of the Central Luzon State University (CLSU);
2. Directors of Department of Agriculture – Bureau of Animal Industry/Bureau of Agricultural Research (DA-BAI-BAR);
3. Executive Director of the Livestock Development Council;
4. Executive Director of the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCARRD);
5. Farmers representative; and
6. Executive Director of the Philippine Small Ruminant Center.

The CLSU President shall be the Chairperson, the Director of DA-BAI shall be the Vice-Chair, while the Executive Director of the Philippine Small Ruminant Center shall serve as the Ex-Officio Secretary.

SEC. 8. *Implementation and Coordination of the Program of the CLSU.* - The Philippine Small Ruminant Center Board shall be tasked to coordinate and monitor the implementation of all programs relative to small ruminants. It shall identify, through the Department of Agriculture, the Director of the Philippine Small Ruminant Center and Project Leaders from various implementing stations of the research and development projects in the areas of breeding, nutrition, animal health, reproductive physiology, socio-economics, techno-transfer, product development and utilization and environmental impact assessment. It shall formulate strategies concerning performance testing of bucks and rams, multiplication and distribution of elite germplasm purebreds, crossbreds and native bucks and rams.

The CLSU in Nueva Ecija shall be the Philippine Small Ruminant National Center which specializes in the development of breeding system of the goat, sheep and other small ruminants of smallholder farmers with exotic breeds and shall specialize in the breeding of purebred small ruminants and its crossbreds and generation of technology on goat dairying and sheep fiber. Furthermore, the center shall specialize in the development of technology on nutrition, reproductive physiology animal health, product development and utilization, socio-economics and

techno transfer.

The other centers shall take responsibility of the regional research needs and spearhead implementation of development activities in their respective geographical area of responsibility. It shall include field testing and verification of technologies developed by the National Center.

SEC. 9. *Farmers' Participation.* - The farmer cooperators shall be encouraged to strengthen existing farmers' cooperatives or establish strong farmers' association to serve as focal point for government assistance, production and multiplication of upgraded small ruminants and on the dissemination of new knowledge on goat dairying and fiber production from sheep.

SEC. 10. *Funding.* - To fund the Philippine Small Ruminant Center, the amount of TWENTY MILLION PESOS (Php 20,000,000.00) shall be appropriated by the Department of Budget and Management from the unexpended balance of the National Treasury and thereafter, shall be included in the General Appropriations Act. The salaries of permanent staff and maintenance and operating budget shall be appropriated and released directly to the various agencies of the Philippine Small Ruminant Center Network, in accordance with the approved program of activities.

Any income derived from the sale of goats, sheep and other small ruminants shall be placed in a Revolving Fund to be used in the propagation and distribution of goats, sheep and other small ruminants.

SEC. 11. *Repealing Clause.* - All provisions of law, presidential decrees or issuance, orders, including rules and regulations inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 12. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following the completion of its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,