

**Republic of the Philippines  
House of Representatives  
Quezon City**

**Eighteenth Congress  
First Regular Session**

**House Bill No. 284**



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**Introduced by Representatives  
Estrellita B. Suansing and Horacio P. Suansing, Jr.**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**


Agriculture is the perennial backbone of the Philippine economy. Using contemporaneous Philippine statistics, the sector employs a substantial 65%-70% of our workforce. While farming has always been associated with rural areas and done on vast farmlands, farming can also be done in the cities – a practice called urban agriculture. In fact, urban agriculture is now being practiced in many countries all over the world, and in recent years, has been introduced in the country.

This proposed measure seeks to promote integrated urban agriculture development in all metropolitan areas nationwide to address food security concerns.

The world population will double in 50 years. Studies have shown that new land will be needed to grow enough food for everyone. Urban agriculture and vertical farming will not only clean our environment and avoid further climate change, but will also provide residents with sufficient, safe, and nutritious food. Furthermore, urban agriculture and vertical farming will help reduce poverty.

This bill is a re-file of House Bill No. 9105, which passed Third and Final Reading during the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress, thus, a study has been made. In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnest sought.

  
**REP. ESTRELLITA B. SUANSING**  
1<sup>st</sup> District, Nueva Ecija

  
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2<sup>nd</sup> District, Sultan Kudarat

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**AN ACT  
PROMOTING INTEGRATED URBAN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN  
ALL METROPOLITAN AREAS NATIONWIDE TO ADDRESS FOOD  
SECURITY CONCERNS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “Integrated Urban  
2 Agriculture Act”.

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

12 **SEC. 3. Definition of Terms.** – As used in this Act:

13 (a) *Food security* refers to a situation wherein food is available and  
14 affordable at all times, and where people have access to sufficient, safe and  
15 nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life;

16 (b) *Integrated urban agriculture* refers to the development paradigm  
17 that encompasses principles, management technologies, and the policies  
18 relating to the practice and application of agricultural production of food and  
19 goods in urban areas; and



(c) *Vertical farming* refers to the method of farming that is brought to the urban space by employing concepts of indoor agriculture in skyscrapers and other modern buildings.

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

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

- (a) Secretary of the Department of Agriculture (Chairperson);
- (b) Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management;
- (c) Secretary of the Department of Education;
- (d) Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources;
- (e) Secretary of the Department of Health;
- (f) Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government;
- (g) Secretary of the Department of Finance;
- (h) Secretary of the Department of Labor and Employment;
- (i) Secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways;
- (j) Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology;
- (k) Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development;
- (l) Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry;
- (m) Secretary of the Department of Transportation;
- (n) Chairperson of the Commission on Higher Education;
- (o) Chairperson of the National Anti-Poverty Commission;
- (p) Director General of the National Economic and development Authority;
- (q) Director General of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority;
- (r) Chairperson of the Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor;
- (s) Representative from the Academe;
- (t) Representative from the private sector who has the expertise in urban agriculture and vertical farming; and
- (u) Lead Convenor of the Urban Agriculture Practitioners Network of the Philippines.

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

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

(a) Develop a unified strategy to link agricultural production to nutrition programs;

(b) Conduct policy studies, program monitoring and comprehensive researches on food production, sustainable food systems and the country's urban agriculture agenda;

(c) Ensure that department resources are used to effectively encourage agricultural production in urban communities;

(d) Provide technical assistance in support of vertical farming, backyard food production and community gardening programs consistent with the goals of poverty reduction, food security and healthy eating habits in urban communities; and

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

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

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

**SEC. 8. Responsibility of Local Government Units.** – The local government units (LGUs), in coordination with the NAF Council, shall formulate policies on the practice of urban agriculture and on utilizing urban spaces, unused spaces and idle lands, consistent with its existing policy on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) and zoning ordinances: *Provided, That*



spaces for urban agriculture shall not be prime lots or areas suitable for investments. The LGUs in cities and urban areas are required to enact local legislation institutionalizing urban agriculture as a regular component in the annual appropriations of the LGUs.

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

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

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

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

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

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

**SEC. 14. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,