

Republic of the Philippines
CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES
Metro Manila

Sixteenth Congress
Third Regular Session

Begun and held in Metro Manila, on Monday, the twenty-seventh day of July, two thousand fifteen.

REPUBLIC ACT No. 10816

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF FARM TOURISM IN THE PHILIPPINES

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 “Farm Tourism Development Act of 2016”.

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – The State recognizes the importance of agriculture in making available food and other products necessary to sustain and enhance human life, and in providing livelihood to a major portion of the population.

The State further recognizes that tourism, coupled with agriculture extension services, can disseminate the value of agriculture in the economic and cultural development of the country, serve as a catalyst for the development of agriculture and fishery communities, and provide additional income for farmers, farmworkers, and fisherfolk.

The State shall also seek to promote environment-friendly, efficient and sustainable farm practices; provide alternative recreation facilities and farm tourism activities for families, students and other clientele; and promote health and wellness with high-quality farm-produced food.

To maximize the benefits that can be derived from agriculture and tourism combined, it is therefore the declared policy of the State to provide the policy and enabling environment for the encouragement, development and promotion of farm tourism in the country.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. – As used in this Act, the following terms shall mean as follows:

- (a) Farm tourism – the practice of attracting visitors and tourists to farm areas for production, educational and recreational purposes. It involves any agricultural – or fishery – based operation or activity that brings to a farm visitors, tourists, farmers and fisherfolk who want to be educated and trained on farming and its related activities, and provides a venue for outdoor recreation and accessible family outings;
- (b) Farm tourism activity – any activity carried out on a farm that allows visitors and tourists to enjoy farming or fishing experience through education, recreation or leisure;
- (c) Farm tourism camp – any farm area that allows visitors and tourists to visit, get involved in farm activities, and to enjoy and learn rural lifestyle;

(d) Farm tourism operator – any person, company or recognized group, who is the owner or overall in charge of a farm tourism camp;

(e) Farm tourism practitioner – any person who is engaged in providing one or more farm tourism activities; and

(f) Accreditation – a certification officially recognizing a farm tourism camp as having complied with the minimum standards for farm tourism.

SECTION 4. *Farm Tourism Strategic Action Plan.* – There is hereby mandated the formulation and implementation of the Farm Tourism Strategic Action Plan, herein referred to as the Plan, which shall be the comprehensive set of programs, projects and activities for the growth of farm tourism in the country. The Plan shall be integrated and be made consistent with the National Tourism Development Plan.

The Plan shall cover, among others, the following areas of concern: investment promotion and financing; market research, trends, innovations, and information; accreditation of farm tourism camps; market promotion and development; agriculture and fishery research, development and extension; institutional and human resource development; and infrastructure support. It shall likewise define the roles and responsibilities of national government agencies, local government units (LGUs), farm tourism operators, tour operators, educational institutions, and other industry stakeholders in the implementation of the Plan.

SECTION 5. *Creation of the Farm Tourism Development Board.* – To ensure the attainment of the objectives of this Act, there is hereby created the Farm Tourism Development Board, herein referred to as the Board, which shall be attached to the Department of Tourism (DOT). The Board shall formulate plans and programs for the development and promotion of farm tourism in the country and shall set the overall direction for the implementation of the Plan.

The Board shall have the following powers and functions:

(a) Formulate, advocate, coordinate, oversee and assess the implementation of the Farm Tourism Strategic Action Plan;

(b) Increase awareness on the value of farm tourism through advocacy campaigns and marketing activities;

(c) Recommend infrastructure projects and transportation programs for funding by the DOT, the Department of Agriculture (DA), the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA), the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC), and other concerned government agencies;

(d) Formulate and oversee the conduct of farm tourism research and development projects to ensure sustainability of the country's farm tourism program, such as on market research, trends and innovations, and information dissemination; financing requirements; industry manpower development; resource productivity and utilization improvement; and sustainable agriculture practices and education;

(e) Create technical panels, working groups, or task forces that will assist the Board in the performance of its functions;

(f) Establish cooperation among, and/or request the assistance of, departments, bureaus, offices, agencies or instrumentalities of the government, farm tourism stakeholders, financial and educational institutions, nongovernment organizations, people's organizations and other like-minded institutions and individuals in the implementation of its functions and the attainment of the objectives of this Act; and

(g) Perform such other powers and functions which shall advance the development and promotion of farm tourism camps and activities.

SECTION 6. *Composition.* – The Farm Tourism Development Board shall be composed of the following:

- (a) Secretary of the DOT as Chairperson;
- (b) Secretary of the DA as Vice-Chairperson;
- (c) Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI);
- (d) The president of an educational institution providing farm tourism programs, to be identified by the DOT and the DA;
- (e) The president of a national farm tourism organization;
- (f) The president of a national inbound tour operators association; and
- (g) The president of a national federation of farmers cooperatives.

The DOT Secretary may designate the Undersecretary for Tourism Development as his/her alternate, and the DA and the DTI Secretaries may designate their respective alternates who shall be at least Bureau Director in rank, and their acts shall be considered the acts of their principals.

SECTION 7. *Board Secretariat.* – There shall be a Board Secretariat to be composed of the DOT Office of Tourism Development Planning, Research and Information Management, and other technical personnel of the DOT, the DA and the DTI as assigned by their respective Secretaries. The Director of the Office of Tourism Development Planning, Research and Information Management shall head the Board Secretariat.

SECTION 8. *Investment Promotion, Financing and Incentives.* – The DOT, the DA and the DTI shall develop programs linking stakeholders in the farm tourism industry, government financial institutions (GFIs), government-owned or -controlled corporations (GOCCs), private banks, financial cooperatives and other lending institutions to increase access to credit for farm tourism. The Land Bank of the Philippines, the Development Bank of the Philippines, the Small Business Corporation, and other government corporations and instrumentalities providing financing programs shall create lending windows to cater to the development of farm tourism camps and activities.

The TIEZA and the Board of Investments, and other investment promotion agencies, shall develop and implement programs that shall establish reasonable and innovative investment incentives to attract more investors and farm tourism practitioners in the farm tourism industry.

Farm tourism operators and practitioners may avail of incentives under existing laws.

SECTION 9. *Market Research and Information.* – The DOT Office of Tourism Development Planning, Research and Information Management and the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) and the DA shall conduct researches and studies on farm tourism market, trends and innovations, industry manpower needs and development; sustainable agriculture practices and education, and other issues that may be identified by the Board.

The DOT and the DA shall collaborate and maintain a comprehensive farm tourism information system to assist the government in formulating plans and programs on farm tourism development and to enable industry stakeholders respond to the needs of the market. The information system shall contain information and statistics on farm tourism camps and activities, market researches, accessibility and available modes of transportation, publications and research materials, and other information as identified by the Board.

SECTION 10. *Accreditation of Farm Tourism Camps.* – The DOT and the DA shall jointly promulgate and enforce the standards and guidelines on the accreditation of farm tourism camps.

Accreditation shall be on a voluntary basis and shall be valid for two (2) years.

Accreditation may be suspended or revoked for any violation of the standards.

SECTION 11. *Market Promotion and Development.* – The DOT and the Tourism Promotions Board, the DA, the DTI and LGUs shall include farm tourism in their marketing and promotions programs, and support operators of accredited farm tourism camps and their associations in conducting and joining local and international conferences, congresses, trade fairs, and exhibits.

Inbound tour operators shall include accredited farm tourism camps as part of their suggested itineraries.

The ATI and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) shall showcase farm tourism camps and activities as a way of promoting sustainable agriculture. The ATI shall encourage farm tourism camps to become learning sites and accredited extension service providers, and the TESDA shall accredit farm tourism camps as technical vocational institutions for agriculture and tourism courses.

The DTI Bureau of Small and Medium Enterprise Development and the Bureau of Domestic Trade Promotion and the DA – Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Service shall assist farm tourism operators and practitioners in the marketing and distribution of their products, and link them with consumers cooperatives and organizations, and retailers.

The DOT, the DA, and the Philippine Information Agency (PIA) shall launch and pursue a nationwide campaign to promote farm tourism and accredited farm tourism camps, and promote the principle of sustainable development. For this purpose, the DOT and the DA shall encourage the establishment of at least one (1) farm tourism camp in every province in the country.

SECTION 12. *Agriculture and Fishery Research, Development and Extension.* – The Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development and the Bureau of Agricultural Research shall include the technology needs on farm tourism camps in the research and development programs in agriculture, aquatic and natural resources and shall disseminate such results to the DOT, the DA, the DTI, other concerned government agencies, farm tourism operators and practitioners, state universities and colleges (SUCs) and private educational institutions offering educational programs on farm tourism development, and organizations engaged in farm tourism

The ATI, together with the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), SUCs, educational and research institutions and other relevant government agencies shall develop and implement programs for the adoption of technologies appropriate for farm tourism, provide adequate training and agricultural extension services for farm tourism practitioners and operators and strengthen farm tourism cooperatives and organizations.

SECTION 13. *Institutional and Human Resource Development.* – The DOT, the DA, the DTI, the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the TESDA, SUCs, private educational and research institutions, and other private sector groups shall establish and implement an institutional and human resource development program for farm tourism development, which shall include, but not be limited to:

(a) Capacity building for farm tourism operators to enable them to comply with the DOT, the ATI and the TESDA accreditations standards as primary or secondary tourism enterprises, as extension service providers, and as technical vocational institutions, respectively;

(b) Technical-vocational education and training for farm tourism industry practitioners, including farm tourism camp workers, to actively contribute to productivity, the practice of good agricultural, animal husbandry and manufacturing practices, compliance to food safety, health, hygiene and sanitation standards, and adherence to hospitality management practices;

(c) Formulation and implementation of competency standards and training regulations for technical-vocational education and training for the farm tourism industry; and

(d) Capability building for LGUs in the promotion, development and sustainability of farm tourism camps and activities.

SECTION 14. *Infrastructure Support.* – The DPWH, the DOTC, the DA, and other infrastructure agencies shall include in their annual development plans and priority investment programs infrastructure projects and transportation programs to expand access to farm tourism camps. The DOT and the DA shall coordinate with these agencies the infrastructure requirements of established and potential farm tourism camps.

SECTION 15. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The Board, in consultation with concerned government agencies, LGUs and their leagues, and farm tourism industry stakeholders, shall issue the implementing rules and regulations within ninety (90) days starting from the effectivity of this Act.

SECTION 16. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations and other issuances or parts thereof, inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 17. *Separability Clause.* – If any part or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, other parts or provisions herein which are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 18. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a nation newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,

(Sgd.) **FRANKLIN M. DRILON**
President of the Senate

(Sgd.) **FELICIANO BELMONTE JR.**
Speaker of the House
of Representatives

This Act which is a consolidation of Senate Bill No. 3002 and House Bill No. 5299 was finally passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives on February 2, 2016.

(Sgd.) **OSCAR G. YABES**
Secretary of the Senate

(Sgd.) **MARILYN B. BARUA-YAP**
Secretary General
House of Representatives

Approved: MAY 16 2016

(Sgd.) **BENIGNO S. AQUINO, III**
President of the Philippines