

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 965



Introduced by HONORABLE LUIS RAYMUND F. VILLAFUERTE JR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Fruit-bearing trees are a resource that is ubiquitous yet underutilized and underdeveloped, especially in the local level. Beyond aesthetic value, they can provide shade, prevent soil erosion, and provide a source of food that can be used simply by the household or sold or even turned into a full-scale enterprise.

By providing a very localized access to technology and training, as well as the seeds and seedlings to grow fruit-bearing trees and plants, there is an opportunity for the local population to engage in enterprise and contribute to the strategy of the National Government to create an additional six million jobs in the agricultural sector in the next six years.

Moreover, in the Philippines, the fruits industry could be transformed into a booming industry, with great domestic as well as export market potential. It is therefore the intent of this bill to establish local community orchards that will serve as initial core training and research facilities and experimental plant stations with capabilities to disperse and distribute planting materials which are all designed to spark interest in the growth, harvest, and potential income generation provided by fruit-bearing trees and plants.

Considering the merits of this Bill, its early approval is earnestly requested.


LUIS RAYMUND F. VILLAFUERTE JR.

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Introduced by **HONORABLE LUIS RAYMUND F. VILLAFUERTE JR.**

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A COMMUNITY ORCHARD IN EVERY CITY OR MUNICIPALITY OF EVERY PROVINCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, ALLOCATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. Declaration of Policy. There is hereby authorized to be established a community orchard of not less than five thousand square meters (5,000 sq.m.), preferably one (1) hectare or more, in every City of Municipality of every Province of the Philippines.

The establishment of said community orchards shall be provided with technical assistance by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and the latter shall also arrange to provide the said community orchards with the initial core of planting materials of different types of fruit-bearing trees and plants.

The community orchards shall be located in such appropriate locations with appropriate topsoil conditions and climactic characteristics as shall be suitable for the growing of fruit-bearing trees and plants.

SECTION 2. Powers and Functions of the Community Orchards. The community orchards established in every City and Municipality in every Province of the Philippines as herein specified shall have the following powers and functions:

- a. establish experimental plantations of different fruit-bearing trees and plants;
- b. establish a center within the garden where the said trees and plants can be processed, packaged and sold, or where seeds, seedlings or cutting could be dispersed to barangays;
- c. create information programs and seminars that will educate the local populace about the growing and harvest of fruit-bearing trees and plants for food and profit; and
- d. provide technical and other advisory services to those already engaged or are interested in engaging in enterprises related to fruit-bearing trees and plants.

SECTION 3. The cost of acquiring the land, constructing the appropriate building thereon and the complement of equipment and machinery, required to start the operation of the community orchards shall be provided by the respective Provincial Governments in which they are established, in cooperation with the respective Cities and Municipalities in which said community orchards are to be established. Acquisition of the land site for the community orchards may also be acquired by donation, bequeath, expropriation or through lease or usufruct.

Thereafter, such sums as shall be necessary to operate and conduct the training programs and other projects of the community orchards shall be incorporated in the Annual General Appropriations Ordinances of the Provincial Governments and the respective Cities and Municipalities in which they shall be established. Other funding support to the community orchards may be provided from allocations of funds that may be provided by other executive departments of the National Government or any of its agencies and/or from such financial assistance as may be arranged by the District Representatives in Congress or other legislators. Grants from local or foreign sources may also be obtained or availed of.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take immediate effect upon its approval.

Approved,