

FIRST NATIONAL PRICE COORDINATING COUNCIL MEETING ONLINE FOR 2021

Thursday, 28 January 2021

The National Price Coordinating

Council called a Special virtual Meeting in the morning of 28 Jan. 2021 which lasted for more than three hours to analyze why vegetables, pork and chicken prices have shot off the roof in recent weeks. Chaired by DTI Sec. Mon Lopez, he used fishbone analysis and had his key staff from the head & regional offices join in to focus on what's been causing the run-away inflation the country's been experiencing for these commodities. Supermarket operators from PAGASA & PCCTA were asked to label meat produce for sale as either local or imported. Local connotes fresher but more expensive meats as compared to the imported but frozen ones (not recently slaughtered). Consumers have a choice but must be informed. As it seems, a lot of imported meats are thawed to make them look like they are local & fetch higher prices. The idea of government allowing importation is to offer the public cheaper alternatives at a volume that does not negatively impact the produce of local growers.

The

major stakeholders for pork producers: (Upper Left, clockwise) Jesse Cham/Pres.-Meat Importers & Traders Assn., Jason/Spokesman for Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura (SINAG), Chester Warren Yeo Tan of National Federation of Hog Farmers and Edwin G. Chen/Pres.-Pork Producers Federation of the Phils. (ProPork). Cham contends that importation will solve the shortness of supply of meats. The other three object. Says no producer will stay in business if government allows importations freely. All object to the President who is about to sign into law a price freeze for meats as this will disrupt supply and prices some more. The Dept. of Agriculture's recommendation for a price freeze just needs the Pres.' signature to make it executory. There was urgent appeal to stop this from happening. Meat transported by land from Mindanao have also been stopped by governors in view of COVID lockdowns and fear of ASF contamination before they reach Luzon; resulting to a further lack of supply.

Also

posted are the two major stakeholders for poultry: (L-R) Atty. Jose Elias "Bong" Inciong/Pres.-United Broiler Raisers Assn. (UBRA) and Gregorio San Diego, Jr./Chairman-Phil. Egg Board Assn & UBRA. They contend that the cost of production has run wild. Day old chicks which sold for P14.07 apiece in Nov.'20 (and P16.00 in Jan.'19) were selling at P48.00 today! Feed prices have increased and every grower stands to lose heavily if a price freeze/ceiling takes place. As for supermarkets, STC mentioned in an interview two days ago by the Phil. Daily Inquirer that all supermarket owners need to do when price freeze takes place is to simply not carry these commodities if price limits are found to be untenable.