



CropLife Philippines statement

CropLife Philippines (CLP), an organization representing the plant science industry, supports our national government efforts to prevent the further spread and severe impact of COVID-19 to our population while committed to the sustainability of Philippine agriculture.

As the nation reels from the crisis, our organization has been working hard in partnership with government agencies and the private sector to ensure that farm inputs are readily available to support farmers livelihood and safeguard our country's food production capabilities.

We believe that “the tenuous balance of food security in the Philippines is wholly dependent on farmers’ access to fundamental agricultural inputs – including crop protection products and quality seeds. “

In our sustained efforts to support the agricultural sector, our member companies continue their critical operations to ensure availability of seeds, crop protection products and other modern technologies while intensifying stewardship initiatives in the use of these products .

We are continuously mobilizing company technicians, while ensuring their health and safety at this time of adversity, to provide technical assistance and farm advisory services to farmers in the agricultural communities, while linking with government and other private sector groups.

With the enhanced community quarantine, we urge government to continue the implementation of existing measures to ensure the unhampered and quick movement of foods and agricultural inputs and reinforce further its implementation on the ground by ensuring that local government units adhere to the national policies crafted by the Inter-Agency Task Force.

Unnecessary delays in the movement of farm inputs will adversely impact the timing of planting, and will not be aligned with the government push for early cropping in priority production areas.

The agricultural supplies stores, farm input processing and warehouse operations must continue to remain open. Farm advisory and extension services by private agri-inputs companies are equally essential and should be allowed to support our farmers’ crop management activities.

Likewise, farmers and fisherfolks showing no signs of COVID infection should be continuously allowed to work subject to the established protocols. Those involve in the

aforesaid services and activities should be accorded clearance for travel as already allowed by prior government issuances, in the most expedient manner by the Department of Agriculture and concerned Local Government Units.

In the process, we hope that the national government, particularly the regulatory agencies, will continue to accept and process applications for the approval of permits and licenses , whether new or for renewal, via the available tools and options so as not to disrupt the availability of seeds , crop protection products and new technologies .

It is laudable that due to limitations in transportation, movement of people and operations in government regulatory agencies, extension of validity of permits were granted. In the event that the quarantine period be further extended, modified or expanded, we request the concerned agencies to also modify accordingly the validity of the permits.

As we close ranks in pursuing massive restoration efforts in the agriculture sector, the immediate task at hand is to enable the farmers to recover losses from the crisis by allowing them to continue planting with strong support.

During this crisis, we acknowledge and thank the government and the Department of Agriculture for crafting and implementing the “Plant, Plant, Plant Program” or Agri 4Ps to increase the country’s food adequacy level.

The industry adheres to the call of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Trade Organization (WTO) and World Health Organization (WHO) that “we must ensure COVID-19 does not intentionally create unwarranted shortage of essential items and exacerbate hunger and malnutrition.”