

LETTER OF INSTRUCTIONS NO. 405, May 19, 1976

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TO:

The Secretary of Agriculture

The Secretary of Local Governments and Community Development

WHEREAS, the Masagana 99 rice production program is the principal component of the government's success in achieving food self-sufficiency for the nation, and the government is determined to assure the continuing success of that program;

WHEREAS, there has lately emerged a strong need to formulate and implement a medium and long term solution to the perennial rat infestation problem in Central Luzon and other parts of the country, a problem which again threatens to minimize gains already achieved as well as those programmed in this forthcoming Phase VII of the Masagana 99 rice program;

WHEREAS, the annual damage on rice crops wrought by rat infestation is estimated at four percent, equivalent to a huge loss of about P293 million, despite the continuing implementation of several rat control measures by the government;

WHEREAS, other pests and diseases are causing similar significant damage to the country's food crops, thus negating much of the crop gains that are otherwise achieved through proper technology and modern farm methods;

WHEREAS, on the whole, there is now an urgent need for a coordinated, and systematic approach to the country's pest control problems.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Republic of the Philippines, do hereby order the following:

- The Department of Local Government and Community Development shall fully involve all barangays in the pest control program by forming Barangay Rat and Pest Patrols henceforth to be known as RAPPS, to be coordinated by the Crop Protection Coordinators of the Bureau of Plant Industry. These Patrols shall be the principal instruments of implementation of the national rat control program and other pest control activities.

The DLGCD shall also use its discretion to devise ways and means to quicken barangay group action toward this end, such as the holding of contests and other incentives with the use of resources available at the local level.

- All municipal and provincial governments shall actively support, participate in and encourage the work of all Barangay RAPPS in their respective jurisdictions.

- The Secretary of Agriculture is hereby directed to confer with the manufacturers and distributors of pesticides and rodenticides in order to prevent any price increases and if possible to even reduce prices whenever warranted by cost considerations.

- The Department of Agriculture, with the assistance of the military if necessary, shall see to it that all owners of land which have become breeding places for rats shall take appropriate measures to eradicate such breeding places using rat extermination methods and conforming to timetables prescribed by the Bureau of Plant Industry. Should they fail to do so, the government will itself, or through authorized entities, undertake such measures for the account of the landowners.
- The Department of Agriculture, through the Bureau of Plant Industry, shall develop for my approval a comprehensive and integrated medium — and long-term plan to protect our agricultural crops from all types of rats, pests and diseases.
- In connection with the nationwide plan, the Secretary of Agriculture is hereby directed, in consultation with the leading agricultural colleges and universities, to immediately draw up a program to establish a National Crop Protection Center which will integrate all scientific and technical information and research facilities with an effective field network of crop protection centers strategically located throughout the country. This should be presented to me for my approval at the soonest possible time.

This Letter of Instructions takes effect immediately.

DONE in the City of Manila, this 19th day of May, in the year of Our Lord, Nineteen Hundred and Seventy-Six.

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