



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Office of the Secretary
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PRESS RELEASE

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VEGETABLE PRICES, SUPPLY IN METRO MANILA RETURNING TO NORMAL LEVELS

Prices of vegetables are expected to go back to pre-Pepeng levels in Metro Manila later this week amid the combined efforts of the Department of Agriculture (DA), Philippine Vegetable Board (PVB) and local government units (LGUs) to stabilize market supply by restoring deliveries from Benguet up north and shipping in extra harvests from as far as Northern Mindanao in the South.

DA Secretary Arthur Yap said yesterday that activity at the vegetable trading post in La Trinidad, Benguet started picking up anew on Tuesday with the partial reopening of the Marcos Highway and Naguillan Road and the instructions for authorities to give priority to vegetable delivery trucks passing through these earlier-closed roads.

An initial 40 trucks laden with an estimated cargo of 400 metric tons of “chopsuey” vegetables left Benguet and were on their way to Manila on Tuesday afternoon even as another 400-plus MT of assorted vegetables and fruits were also shipped from Cagayan de Oro City on Monday and bound for the national capital region.

“Chopsuey” vegetables refer to the main ingredients of this popular dish: carrots, cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, chayote and lettuce.

With this positive development, PVB President Lyndon Tan reported to Yap that “the supply and prices of vegetables are expected to return to normal levels in two days’ time.”

After Pepeng had induced landslides that closed Kennon Road , Marcos Highway and Naguillan Road to traffic last weekend, activities at the La Trinidad trading post ground to a halt as traders stopped buying and farmers refrained from harvesting or bringing their produce there as there were no trucks to deliver their goods to Metro Manila.

Yap said that La Trinidad Governor Nestor Fongwan had already informed the farmers and traders that Marcos Highway and Naguillan Road were already partially opened to the public—with specific traffic schedules for vehicles coming up to or going down Baguio and that vegetable delivery trucks have top priority to pass through these arteries.

Tan told Yap that the only problem left at this time was that a number of the farmers could not bring their produce to La Trinidad because of storm-triggered roadblocks from their farms to the trading post.

“But taking note of the progress of the road rehabilitation efforts of the DPWH, the flow of vegetables will normalize very soon,” Tan added.

Regional Executive Director Lealyn Ramos for Region 10 reported to the DA, meanwhile, that over 400 MT of assorted vegetables and fruits were already shipped to Manila from Cagayan de Oro last Monday yet.

The shipments included 241 MT of tomatoes, 68 MT of mangoes, 8 MT of pineapple, 45 MT of squash, 8 MT of assorted spices, 34 MT of assorted fruits and vegetables, and another 26 MT of assorted vegetables. # # # (DA Press Office