

Speech for Chief Representative SAKAMOTO Takema
Kick off Meeting of the Implementation Phase and 1st JCC Meeting for MV2C-TCP
April 17, 2023 | 10:00 AM

Our MV2C counterparts, and all participants,
Magandang umaga po sa inyong lahat!
おはようございます。

I am pleased to be here today to kick off the implementation phase of the “Project for Market-Driven Enhancement of the Vegetable Value Chain in the Philippines”, or “MV2C” TCP, and to attend the 1st Joint Coordinating Committee Meeting of the project.

I recall the Philippines and Japan are “friends closer than brothers” and the exceptionally important “strategic partners”. The recent successful state visit of the President BBM is leading two nations’ relationship and partnership to the historic highest level and beyond.

Also, the President BBM is scheduling his re-visit to Japan to attend the Japan-ASEAN special summit in the coming December. Moreover, we also expect the 1st official visit of Japanese PM Kishida sometime in this year.

JICA is thrilled to work harder to contribute to the prosperity of the Philippines, and to further strengthen two nations' friendship, especially in this momentous year.

JICA is strongly committed to make a greater impact of our various active cooperation in this beautiful country. I have been emphasizing, on many occasions, the importance of the agriculture sector development in this country, as the core of the sustainable and inclusive development strategy in many aspects, including equitable growth, job creation, healthy lives of Filipino friends.

So, I would like to stress how our technical cooperation project, "MV2C" is very timely and in line with the priorities of the Marcos Administration and JICA.

Our project is expected to directly contribute to the framework for agricultural cooperation between Japan and the Philippines, which was agreed upon during President BBM's state visit to Japan this February.

This highlights the great significance of the MV2C TCP among JICA's wide-ranging cooperation in this country.

For this, I also would like to acknowledge the collective efforts and dedication of all counterparts in ①the DA central and regional offices, ②the LGUs, and ③the JICA expert team, especially during the Planning Phase of this project.

Moving forward, we will again rely on the unwaveringly strong commitment and fully productive collaboration of all our counterparts even in the implementation phase of this project.

To provide a holistic solution, our project envisions to cooperate not only with farmers, relevant government institutions and LGUs, but also with private sector and consumers.

JICA recognizes the importance in addressing development needs in every node of the value chain, especially in the post-harvest and marketing sides.

We deem that the participation of the private sector will be key to the success of our project. As such, I encourage our counterparts to promote the maximum involvement of private sector in our activities.

Our project's ultimate goal is to develop an Inclusive Food Value Chain model, which should be replicable in other areas of the whole country.

The development of an inclusive Food Value Chain model will be dependent on the success of individual pilot projects in Benguet, Quezon, and Metro Manila.

At this implementation stage of our project, I also encourage everyone to give your utmost efforts to every pilot project in order to achieve the ultimate goal of our MV2C TCP as a whole.

I believe that the success stories of the pilot projects will catch more attention of the private sector to cooperate with our project, while they also will bring the direct and quick impact to the better quality of life in each targeted LGU.

Given the vital roles played by Benguet and Quezon along the vegetable value chain, we are confident that this MV2C TCP will be able to have a greater impact in the development of the whole vegetable industry in the Philippines.

From now, we are dispatching excellent professionals to Benguet, Quezon, and Metro Manila to provide technical guidance and to share their experiences and know-how for modernized Food Value Chain.

If given the chance, I look forward to personally visiting your beautiful provinces to witness your achievements.

Subsequently, we will count on our DA colleagues to sustain and expand the results of the MV2C-TCP, not only within the target provinces, but also to the whole country.

We are excited to see the success of our MV2C-TCP and its benefits to the Philippine vegetable industry through the developed inclusive Food Value Chain models.

This is just the start of a new chapter. And, I look forward to further expanding our collaboration in the agriculture sector.

Kasama niyo po kami sa pag-abot ng “Masaganang Agrikultura, Maunlad na Ekonomiya”¹

Maraming salamat po sa inyong lahat.
Mabuhay, and good morning to all of you!
ありがとうございました。

¹ This is the new tagline of DA, as shown in their website
Direct Translation: *We are with you in achieving a “Prosperous Agriculture, Flourishing Economy”*