

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10816, May 16, 2016]

**AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION
OF FARM TOURISM IN THE PHILIPPINES**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Farm Tourism Development Act of 2016”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The State recognizes the importance of agriculture in making available food and other products necessary to sustain and enhance human life, and in providing livelihood to a major portion of the population.

The State further recognizes that tourism, coupled with agriculture extension services, can disseminate the value of agriculture in the economic and cultural development of the country, serve as a catalyst for the development of agriculture and fishery communities, and provide additional income for farmers, farmworkers, and fisherfolk.

The State shall also seek to promote environment-friendly, efficient and sustainable farm practices; provide alternative recreation facilities and farm tourism activities for families, students and other clientele; and promote health and wellness with high-quality farm-produced food.

To maximize the benefits that can be derived from agriculture and tourism combined, it is therefore the declared policy of the State to provide the policy and enabling environment for the encouragement, development and promotion of farm tourism in the country.

Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following terms shall mean as follows:

(a) *Farm tourism* – the practice of attracting visitors and tourists to farm areas for production, educational and recreational purposes. It involves any agricultural – or fishery – based operation or activity that brings to a farm visitors, tourists, farmers and fisherfolk who want to be educated and trained on farming and its related activities, and provides a venue for outdoor recreation and accessible family outings;

(b) *Farm tourism activity* – any activity carried out on a farm that allows visitors and tourists to enjoy farming or fishing experience through education, recreation or leisure;

(c) *Farm tourism camp* – any farm area that allows visitors and tourists to visit, get involved in farm activities, and to enjoy and learn rural lifestyle;

(d) *Farm tourism operator* – any person, company or recognized group, who is the owner or overall in charge of a farm tourism camp;

(e) *Farm tourism practitioner* – any person who is engaged in providing one or more farm tourism activities; and

(f) *Accreditation* – a certification officially recognizing a farm tourism camp as having complied with the minimum standards for farm tourism.

SEC. 4. *Farm Tourism Strategic Action Plan.* – There is hereby mandated the formulation and implementation of the Farm Tourism Strategic Action Plan, herein referred to as the Plan, which shall be the comprehensive set of programs, projects and activities for the growth of farm tourism in the country. The Plan shall be integrated and be made consistent with the National Tourism Development Plan.

The Plan shall cover, among others, the following areas of concern: investment promotion and financing; market research, trends, innovations, and information; accreditation of farm tourism camps; market promotion and development; agriculture and fishery research, development and extension; institutional and human resource development; and infrastructure support. It shall likewise define the roles and responsibilities of national government agencies, local government units (LGUs), farm tourism operators, tour operators, educational institutions, and other industry stakeholders in the implementation of the Plan.

SEC. 5. *Creation of the Farm Tourism Development Board.* – To ensure the attainment of the objectives of this Act, there is hereby created the Farm Tourism Development Board, herein referred to as the Board, which shall be attached to the Department of Tourism (DOT). The Board shall formulate plans and programs for the development and promotion of farm tourism in the country and shall set the overall direction for the implementation of the Plan.

The Board shall have the following powers and functions:

(a) Formulate, advocate, coordinate, oversee and assess the implementation of the Farm Tourism Strategic Action Plan;

(b) Increase awareness on the value of farm tourism through advocacy campaigns and marketing activities;

(c) Recommend infrastructure projects and transportation programs for funding by the DOT, the Department of Agriculture (DA), the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA), the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC), and other concerned government agencies;

(d) Formulate and oversee the conduct of farm tourism research and development projects to ensure sustainability of the country's farm tourism program, such as on market research, trends and innovations, and information dissemination; financing requirements; industry manpower development; resource productivity and

utilization improvement; and sustainable agriculture practices and education;

(e) Create technical panels, working groups, or task forces that will assist the Board in the performance of its functions;

(f) Establish cooperation among, and/or request the assistance of, departments, bureaus, offices, agencies or instrumentalities of the government, farm tourism stakeholders, financial and educational institutions, nongovernment organizations, people's organizations and other like-minded institutions and individuals in the implementation of its functions and the attainment of the objectives of this Act; and

(g) Perform such other powers and functions which shall advance the development and promotion of farm tourism camps and activities.

SEC. 6. *Composition.* – The Farm Tourism Development Board shall be composed of the following:

(a) Secretary of the DOT as Chairperson;

(b) Secretary of the DA as Vice-Chairperson;

(c) Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI);

(d) The president of an educational institution providing farm tourism programs, to be identified by the DOT and the DA;

(e) The president of a national farm tourism organization;

(f) The president of a national inbound tour operators association; and

(g) The president of a national federation of farmers cooperatives.

The DOT Secretary may designate the Undersecretary for Tourism Development as his/her alternate, and the DA and the DTI Secretaries may designate their respective alternates who shall be at least Bureau Director in rank, and their acts shall be considered the acts of their principals.

SEC. 7. *Board Secretariat.* – There shall be a Board Secretariat to be composed of the DOT Office of Tourism Development Planning, Research and Information Management, and other technical personnel of the DOT, the DA and the DTI as assigned by their respective Secretaries. The Director of the Office of Tourism Development Planning, Research and Information Management shall head the Board Secretariat.

SEC 8. *Investment Promotion, Financing and Incentives.* – The DOT, the DA and the DTI shall develop programs linking stakeholders in the farm tourism industry, government financial institutions (GFIs), government-owned or -controlled corporations (GOCCs), private banks, financial cooperatives and other lending institutions to increase access to credit for farm tourism. The Land Bank of the Philippines, the Development Bank of the Philippines, the Small Business Corporation, and other government corporations and instrumentalities providing financing programs shall create lending windows to cater to the development of