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**PERFORMANCE OF PHILIPPINE AGRICULTURE  
JANUARY TO MARCH 2017**

Agriculture has recovered with a high of 5.28 percent growth in the first quarter of 2017 after several quarters of declines. All subsectors posted output increments with the crops subsector as the major growth driver during the period. At current prices, gross value of agricultural production amounted to P407.6 billion. This was 8.79 percent higher than the previous year's record.

Production in the crops subsector went up by 8.28 percent during the reference quarter. It contributed 53.66 percent to the total agricultural production. Outputs in palay and corn farms increased by 12.38 percent and 23.44 percent, respectively. Production gains were also noted among sugarcane, banana, pineapple, tobacco, peanut, mungo, cassava, tomato, garlic, onion, eggplant and rubber. At current prices, the subsector grossed P233.5 billion which was 10.45 percent more than last year's gross receipts.

The livestock subsector posted a 3.22 percent growth in output in the first three (3) months of 2017. It accounted for 16.85 percent of total agricultural output. All components of the subsector recorded production increases. Hog, the major contributor to the subsector's performance registered a 3.50 percent growth in production. The subsector's gross value of output amounted to P65.4 billion at current prices, representing an increase of 9.37 percent compared to the same period last year.

The poultry subsector with its 15.35 percent contribution to total agricultural production came up with 1.88 percent increment in the first quarter of 2017. Output gains were recorded by all components of the subsector. At current prices, gross value of poultry production amounted to P52.9 billion, or 2.18 percent higher than previous year's record.

The fisheries subsector produced 0.73 percent more output during the period. It contributed 14.15 percent to total agricultural output. Production increases were noted for skipjack at 43.10 percent, yellowfin tuna at 17.32 percent, tilapia at 2.08 percent and seaweed at 1.26 percent. At current prices, the subsector grossed P55.7 billion. This indicated a 7.95 percent improvement compared to last year's gross earnings.

On the average, prices received by farmers increased by 3.34 percent in the first quarter of 2017. Price gains were higher in the livestock and fisheries subsectors at 5.96 percent and 7.17 percent, respectively. The crops subsector posted an average price increase of 2.01 percent, while prices in the poultry subsector inched up by 0.29 percent from the 2016 record.

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