

QC gov't urges more checks on weighing scales in public markets

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With the soaring prices of prime commodities, several Quezon City (QC) councilors asked the city's market development and administration department (MDAD) and other concerned offices to conduct more frequent surprise inspections of weighing scales in wet markets and similar establishments.

Councilors Allan Benedict Reyes, Victor Ferrer Jr., Eufemio Lagumbay, and Allan Francisco issued the call after receiving complaints that some consumers were victimized by errant traders and vendors using defective weighing scales.

In the past, joint forces of the Quezon City Police District (QCPD) and the city hall teams of the Treasury Office and MDAD have seized unregistered and defective weighing scales at Commonwealth Markets and Litex wet and dry market.

The two markets have constantly been the subject of complaints of having defective weighing scales prompting Reyes to call concerned offices to start their rounds of such establishments.

With pork meat being sold at roughly 1240 per kilo, Reyes said that wet market clients are being shortchanged by 124 for every 100 grams of underweight items given to them.

"I am not trying to single out Commonwealth Market and Litex Market. My call is for the concerned agencies to conduct an intensified and all-out campaign against unscrupulous vendors," Reyes said.

Reyes also urged the public to purchase their daily market needs from reputable markets and supermarkets.

Aside from selling double dead meat (botcha), Reyes said defective weighing scales are also one of the perennial problems facing consumers.

Ferrer said city hall personnel conducting market inspections should be accompanied by armed policemen as goons and vendors tend to inflict harm on the raiding team. Ferrer said that he would like longer jail terms and stiff fines for the guilty parties who are duping the public of their hard-earned money.

Several years ago, 132 weighing scales were seized from the Commonwealth Market while 48 others were confiscated at the Litex wet and dry market which is located just across the Commonwealth Market.

Julius Avenido of the city's **Business permit and Licensing Office (BPLO)** vowed to conduct a more intense market inspection adding that the confiscated weighing scales in the past were not properly calibrated and were vulnerable to manipulation.

“This is not only to increase tax collection. The public, especially the poor sector, should be protected from erring businessmen,” Avenido said.

The city government is currently using “sealing equipment and gadgets” to be used on weighing scales and other measuring instruments, which he said, are tamper proof and easily identifiable.

As provided under the Quezon City Revenue Code, Avenido explained that instruments of weights and measures used in business should be tested and sealed annually.