

# Tighten 'botcha' watch, QC urged

By **CHITO A. CHAVEZ**

A Quezon City councilor said the city government should always be "on its toes" in its fight against the illegal sale and distribution of tainted meat products which are expected to flood the markets as the Yuletide season approaches.

Councilor Ranulfo Ludovica, president of the city's Liga ng mga Barangay, urged the city's agencies to conduct random and regular inspections in wet markets, particularly those that are commonly the drop-off points of "botcha" or spoiled meat.

"With the coming holiday season botcha will likely flood the market again due to the high demand for meat products," Ludovica said.

He expressed concern over reports that some botcha suppliers are trying to evade authorities by delivering their products directly to the end consumers.

Ludovica said that based on his investigation, the tainted meat is delivered to carinderia owners and school canteen proprietors during unholy hours to escape detection.

Ludovica harked back to his experience as the prime mover of the very

first food terminal at the barangay level.

He said he was puzzled why some of the canteen and carinderia owners and households in his barangay refused to purchase his safe meat products at prices lower than the local market.

Business was slow despite the fact that the fresh meat was delivered right at the doorsteps of the consumers where payment was asked only the following day.

"We charged them five pesos less per kilo than the market and had them pay the following day, but still business has not been good. It only shows the possibility of double dead meat being sold in the barangay," Ludovica added.

He asked the concerned offices of city hall to regularly inspect the school canteens to spare the schoolchildren from any health risks.

Earlier, Senator Francis Pangilinan, chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Food, proposed raising the fine for selling tainted meat, now ranging from P1,000 to P5,000, to P50,000 to P200,000.

Aside from the fine, Pangilinan also wants to increase the jail term for botcha sellers to six to 12 years from the current six months.

Ludovica supported Pangilinan's proposal, citing that harsher penalties should be imposed on trading in tainted meat since it puts lives at risk.

*anti - hot meat*



**BIG CATCH** — Quezon City Police District director Chief Supt. Benjardi Mantele and Dr. Anna Maria Cabel, chief of the Quezon City Hall's Veterinary Office, inspect the 1,200 kilos of confiscated double-dead meat seized at the Baiintawak Market in Quezon City during a presentation at Camp Karingal. (Art Torres)

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LOCAL HISTORY

*double-dead meat*

Fast  
Scan

## 1,200 kilos of 'hot meat' seized in Quezon City

By **JEFFREY G. DAMICOG**

A supplier of double-dead pork and a vendor were arrested as a total of 1,200 kilos of the "hot meat" were found and seized from their possession at the Balintawak market in Quezon City during a pre-dawn operation conducted by police and city hall officials.

Quezon City Police District (QCPD) director Chief Supt. Benjardi Mantele identified those arrested as Rose Garcia, 30, who has been found supplying hot meat and a resident of 102 Tabi, Guiguinto, Bulacan, and meat vendor

Raymund Roxas, 26, of 245 F. Santos St. Wawa, Balagtas, Bulacan.

Meanwhile, Dr. Anna Maria Cabel, chief of the Quezon City Hall's Veterinary Office, called the arrest of Garcia as a "big catch" since this was the first time authorities apprehended a supplier of double-dead meat.

Cabel said suppliers buy double-dead pork from hog farms in nearby provinces like Bulacan and then sell the hot meat at a low price to vendors at the Balintawak market.

The City Hall official cited that they have seized around eight tons of double-dead meat during the weekly operations being conducted at the

Balintawak market for the past five weeks including the 1,200 kilos of hot meat seized yesterday.

With this, Mantele assured that operations will continue against the selling of double-dead meat in the hope that no more hot meat will be sold at the Balintawak market.

Mantele said the arrests were made when members of the QCPD and the Veterinary Office swooped down at the Balintawak market at 2:30 a.m. yesterday.

During the operation, authorities first arrested Roxas when he was found in possession of 400 kilos of double-dead meat that was seized

from his stall.

More than an hour later, the operatives received a tip that a bigger volume of double-dead meat would be dropped off as soon as authorities leave the area.

Authorities eventually arrested Garcia when they discovered another 800 kilos of hot pork inside a white Mitsubishi vehicle that she owned that was parked along the Caltex gasoline station in EDSA Balintawak.

Cabel said the two arrested will be charged with violating Meat Inspection Code, Sanitation Code, Consumer's Welfare Act, and Quezon City Revenue Code.

anti-hot meat  
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## QC officials seize

# ₱180,000 worth of 'hot meat'

By Julie M. Aurelio

**AUTHORITIES SEIZED** around 1,000 kilos of foul-smelling "double-dead" pork during a regular inspection Thursday night at the Balintawak area in Quezon City.

The seized meat was estimated to be worth P180,000 or more.

Authorities were unable to take anyone into custody.

Neil Lina, chief of the city's Market Development and Administrative Department, said they suspected the hot meat came from Bulacan or Nueva

Ecija province.

Lina's team chanced upon the 1,000 kilos of pork in styrofoam coolers around 10 p.m.

Following the seizure, Mayor Feliciano Belmonte said he had ordered an intensified drive against contaminated meat in the city.

"When we first checked the area at 8 p.m., it looked very 'clean.' So we decided to wait a while longer," said Lina.

He added that the meat was dropped off between North Diversion market and MC market.

Lina said they were looking into the involvement of a cer-

tain "Romero" who was allegedly funding deliveries of the hot meat in the Balintawak area.

Lina said vendors would not give details about "Romero," who allegedly supplied the meat to the Cloverleaf market and nearby areas.

The market official said the meat had a foul odor and a greenish tint.

"I noticed that some of the meat looked fresher, so the person responsible probably mixes fresh meat with the tainted kind before selling it," he said.

The hot meat was stored in ice-filled styrofoam boxes, al-

though Lina said the dealers probably put tainted pork in bags and hid it under other items during transport.

He said the meat was probably transferred to styrofoam boxes after passing the tollgate.

Meanwhile, Mayor Belmonte told vendors selling "double-dead" meat to keep the public safe by not selling hot meat.

"While the city government can't file a case against the alleged owner because there is no strong evidence against him yet, we are trying to find the link so we can press charges," Lina said.

hot meat

## QC to create task force vs 'hot meat' vendors

By PERSEUS ECHEMINADA

The Quezon City government is now finalizing plans to create a task force that would go after "hot meat" vendors and operators of illegal slaughterhouses to rid the city of unsafe meats.

The plan cropped up after a meeting called by the city Market Development and Administration Department (MDAD), with officials from the National Meat Inspection Service (NMIS), Department of Public Order and Security (DPOS), Environmental Protection and Waste Management Department (EPWMD), City Health Department, City Legal Office and the Quezon City Police District-City Hall Detachment.

It was reported that at least 3,000 kilos of hot meat are being peddled daily in Quezon City, particularly in the Balintawak area.

Reports showed that to date, a total of 12 tons of hot meat have been seized by police operatives and personnel from the city Veterinary Office in several operations in the city from January to August this year.

Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. has designated the Market Development and Administration Department as the task force's lead agency, with Neil Lina as its chairman.

Lina, MDAD head, cited the need for the creation of a task force that will run after unscrupulous individuals selling hot meat and operating illegal slaughterhouses, in violation of city ordinances and laws banning the sale and illegal slaughtering of animals.

Belmonte had earlier instructed Lina "to do something about the hot meat and illegal slaughtering problem in the city."

The mayor noted the great danger the illegal practice poses to the health of city residents, like food poisoning, diarrhea and other intestinal diseases.

Lina said a composite team is necessary to be able to immediately put to a stop the vending of hot meat and illegal slaughtering in the city. He stressed the need for all government agencies to join hands in the campaign to ensure immediate results.

The MDAD head said that while the city government is encouraging backyard livestock or poultry raising as a means of livelihood, it should not be contrary to existing ordinances or laws on slaughtering, transporting and selling them.

Lina said the operation of the task force, once created, shall also include inspections in restaurants for possible stocks of hot meat.

Dr. Rolando Marquez Sr., Dr. Fernando Lontoc, both from NMIS, and Dr. Anna Marie Cabel, officer-in-charge of the Veterinary Office, and officer-in-charge of the city health department Dr. Antonietta Inumerable, urged the city government for the permanent closure of the Tambunting area, a portion of Balintawak market, where hot meat is allegedly sold.

They said this was the only way to eliminate the proliferation of hot meat in the Balintawak area.

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Sunday, September 17, 2006

# Metro Manila

## QC running after 'hot meat' vendors

By SEL A. BAYSA

A task force will be formed soon by the Quezon City government to go after "hot meat" vendors and operators of illegal slaughterhouses amid reports that at least 3,000 kilos of the dubious meat are being peddled everyday in the city.

The creation of the watchdog surfaced after a meeting was called by the QC Market Development and Administration Department (MDAD) and attended by officials from the National Meat Inspection Service (NMIS), the Department of Public Order and Security; Environmental Protection and Waste Management Department (EPWMD), QC Health Department, City Legal Office and the QC Police District (QCPD)-City Hall detachment.

They (conferees) gathered that a total of 12 tons of "hot meat" products were seized by police operatives and fieldmen from the QC Veterinary office in operations conducted in the city from January to September this year.

Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. has designated the QC MDAD as the task force lead agency with Neil Lina, MDAD chief, at the helm.

Lina cited the need for the creation of the anti "hot meat" body that will run after unscrupulous individuals selling the stuff and operating illegal slaughterhouse, in violation of city ordinances and laws banning the sale and illegal slaughtering of animals such as hogs and fowls.

Mayor Belmonte instructed Lina "to do something about the "hot meat" and illegal slaughtering problem in the city."

Also, he noted the great dangers the unlawful practice poses to the health of city residents.

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