

QC rolls out 'trash to cash' program

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The **Quezon City government** will roll out its “trash to cashback” program to promote solid waste management and encourage the public to recycle and adopt a more sustainable lifestyle.

First launched in March at the city hall, the program enables residents to trade recyclable materials for environmental points that may be exchanged for basic commodities such as rice, eggs, vegetables and other grocery items.

“Together with our partner, Basic Environmental Systems and Technologies (BEST), we are bringing this project down to the barangays to make it more accessible and convenient to residents who are willing to trade their trash into groceries. Hopefully, we can launch it by June in celebration of the Environment Month,” **Mayor Joy Belmonte** said yesterday.

The city government requested barangays to identify drop-off points in their areas where residents can bring their waste.

In addition to recyclable items such as metal, paper products and PET bottles, single-use plastics such as shampoo sachets and coffee packs will also be accepted at the drop-off points.

“Single-use plastics that we usually disregard are also included on the list of recyclables that can be traded for environmental points. This is part of our campaign to reduce plastic waste,” Belmonte said. Residents are also allowed to donate their points to beneficiaries identified by the barangays.

Andrea Villaroman, head of the city’s **Environmental Protection and Waste Management Department**, said the chosen beneficiaries would receive groceries or “incentive bags” from BEST in exchange for the accumulated points donated by the residents.

“The incentive bag will include rice, vegetables and other essentials. We will ensure that these food packages and groceries will be given to those in need, especially the most vulnerable sectors,” Villaroman said.

Aside from barangays, city hall is also planning to introduce the program to commercial establishments such as malls, hotels and restaurants.

“We are also encouraging malls, hotels and restaurants to collect recyclables and donate their earned environmental points to the communities in their areas. They don’t have to bring their recyclables to the Quezon City hall. The city government and BEST will pick these at drop-off points,” Villaroman said.

To participate in the program, residents must register at bXTRA.com.ph.

Accumulated points are converted and may be used to redeem grocery items from the mobile redemption store or bXTRA outlet and food deliveries.