

QC govt unveils community urban farm in Novaliches

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TO encourage residents to participate in food security, the **Quezon City government** launched Sharon Farm to provide food and livelihood through urban farming.

The 5,000-square meter farm is now producing nutritious and healthy vegetable seedlings such as kangkong, talong, malunggay, and okra.

Sharon Farm is one of the city's community model farms under the Growqc Food Security Program that will serve as a "feeder farm" to other urban gardens and farms by providing seedlings and other agricultural inputs. This was made possible through the partnership inked last year with the Diocese of Novaliches that allowed access to an idle land and make it productive.

As the chairman of the QC Food Security Task Force, **Mayor Ma. Josefina Belmonte** said she has been consistent in her advocacy to provide long term and sustainable food security projects to QC residents. "It is heartening to see that more and more urban farms are sprouting up in our city after the local government started this project 10 years ago. This only proves that our Joy of Urban Farming project is a success," she said in a statement.

"This project will not only enable QC residents to plant food crops and stave off hunger, but it will also allow them to earn an income."

To ensure a sustainable way of managing the farm, the **City Engineering** and **Environmental Protection and Waste Management Department** improved its drainage system including the composting biode-gester facilities. The farm also demonstrates modern and efficient farming systems like drip irrigation which helps in saving water.

QC Food Security Task Force Cochairman Emmanuel Velasco expressed his gratitude to the urban farmers and the city's partners for their commitment in helping feed the most food vulnerable and provide income opportunities through urban farming.

"We thank Bishop Gaa and Fr. Joseph Buslon in making this a reality for more residents of Quezon City here in Novaliches. Thank you all again for being here. This is just the beginning and I look forward to a lively community farm and continuous partnership with the diocese. Mabuhay po kayo," Velasco said in his speech.

This #Growqc partnership will also provide livelihood and skills training to beneficiaries in different sectors such as Boy Scouts of the Philippines High School Students, SK Gulaynihan, QCPD Station 4, LGBT sector, BEC Novaliches Proper, Unemployed returning OFWS, Kababaihan Women's Group, SMKP (Labor Ministry), 4Ps of Novaliches Proper, Community Volunteers of Novaliches, Solo Parents, and Barangay Neighborhood Watch Group.

At the same time, Barangay Novaliches Proper Captain Asuncion Visaya signed another Memorandum of Agreement with the Diocese of Novaliches, Department of Agriculture, Philippine Seed Industry Association to collaborate on more programs and improve urban agricultural practices within Sharon Farm.