

- Quezon City Government / Hon. Ma. Josefina G. Belmonte

Interest in urban farming on an upsurge in QC

By AARON HOMER DIOQUINO

The Quezon City government said on Saturday, Jan. 20, that the number of urban farms that have been put up in the city increased from 754 in June to 1,026 in December 2023.

"This is a most welcome development, especially in addressing food security in our communities," Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte said.

The program, launched in Sept. 2010, started with just a 750-square-meter area near the chain of restaurants at the Quezon Memorial Circle (QMC). It was relocated to a 1,500-square-meter land inside QMC in 2014.

The local government said that the farms were again relocated and can now be found in all 142 barangays in the city.

Belmonte said the increase in interest in urban farms can be attributed to City Ordinance No. SP-2972 that was passed and enabled in 2020.

The ordinance exempts land owners from Idle Land Tax if they use their idle properties for urban agriculture for a minimum period of three years.

"Instead of letting their idle lands go unused while paying taxes, many property owners have decided to join our GrowQC kasama ka sa pag-unlad ng pagkain, kabuhayan at kalusugan (improvement in food, livelihood, and health) food security initiative by utilizing their idle properties through urban agriculture and food production," Belmonte shared.



'GROWQC' GROWS – With incentives being provided by the local government, farms – such as this one planted to rice in Sifio Libis, Barangay Krus na Ligas – have sprouted in Quezon City. As of Dec. 2023, there are already 1,026 farms in the highly-urbanized city. (Mark Balmores)