

## DOST urges PH food groups to adopt HAS

DOST is urging Philippine food groups to adopt the Halal Assurance System (HAS) in an effort to boost the country's bid to make the Philippine Halal Industry a champion.

The webinar "How to HAS: Application of Halal Assurance Management System in Food Industries," engaged on June 29, 2022 some 270 representatives of the meat, vegetable, and fruit processing firms in the country.

The inter-agency activity brought together the Industrial Technology Development Institute (DOST-ITDI) through its Halal R&D Team, the DOST S&T Halal Program, and the Malaysia Halal Consultancy and Training.

ITDI Director Dr. Annabelle V. Briones in her message said that, "We would like to promote halal awareness and assist our industry in attaining a more sustainable and inclusive food system through halal food."

Dr. Anthony C. Sales, DOST XI Regional Director and DOST S&T Halal Program Leader, on the other hand explained the importance of HAS which provides a systematic approach to ensure and preserve halal integrity of products. He added that it is based on the concept of effective recall procedure and traceability.

Adroit Market Research reported that the global halal market revenue ended at US\$7.2 trillion in 2020. It projects future revenues to reach US\$11.2 trillion by 2028.

Dr. Sales continued that the food industry stands to gain a lot because the Philippines being a Muslim-friendly travel destination. Further, the increasing demand for hygienic



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and halal-certified food products by Muslim and Non-Muslim consumers add to its bright prospects.

Other guests included Dr. Mary Jane Alvero-Al Mahdi, Chief Executive Officer of the Prime Group of Companies; and Dr. Jane B. Tranquilan, International Halal Lead Auditor and Consultant from the Malaysia Halal Consultancy and Training.

With these insights on HAS, DOST will be able to assist the Micro, Small, and Medium Scale Enterprises (MSMEs) acquire halal certification. The certificate is a seal that guarantees that a product complies with Islamic dietary requirement or Islamic lifestyle; it stands for compliance with quality, cleanliness, and health standards.

Among the most important aspects of HAS presented were the principles of HAS, general requirement for organizations supplying halal products and their responsibility; and setting up the HAS manual, among others.

ITDI Deputy Director for R&D, Dr. Christine Marie C. Montessa concluded the awareness webinar

with a statement that, "*Being halal certified and proper implementation of HAS will open opportunities for export and trade of halal products that will further uplift the Philippine food and halal food industries.*"

Adding a reminder, she ended the activity with, "*... our most important responsibility as halal food manufacturers, food researchers, and food handlers is that we must maintain the halal integrity of the products. We must eliminate the risk of haram and other hazards through HAS so that the products that we produce are guaranteed halal, safe, of high quality, and wholesome.*" (DDGotis; AMGuevarra\ ITDI S&T Media Service)

