

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL NUTRITION COUNCIL

NNC GOVERNING BOARD RESOLUTION
Resolution No.2, Series of 2016

***Supporting and Adopting the Propagation
and Consumption of Sweet Potato (Camote)***

Whereas, rice is considered as the staple food of the Philippines and is being consumed daily by Filipinos;

Whereas, the country is experiencing challenges in the production of rice which have resulted to increase in the price of the commodity;

Whereas, sweet potato (camote) is the second most widely produced root crop in the Philippines, next to cassava, as it is widely grown by both subsistence and commercial farmers and can be grown in almost all agro-ecological conditions (DA);

Whereas, sweet potato (camote) is a commodity with high commercial value (RA 7900), as well as high nutritive value specifically in vitamin A in the form of beta-carotene, calcium, phosphorus, and vitamin C (FNRI. Food Composition Table, 1997);

Whereas, several studies have also proven the effectiveness of sweet potato (camote) in improving vitamin A intakes in women and children, which in turn helps in combating vitamin A deficiency, as well as its acceptability in taste among children (Hotz, 2012; Low, 2007; Van Jaarsveld, 2005);

Whereas, sweet potato (camote)-based formulations were also found to be good complementary food for infants in low-income countries, as these are naturally sweet and have relatively low phytate levels compared to a formulation made of maize, soybean, and fish powder. High phytate diets may result in mineral deficiencies such as calcium and magnesium (Amagloh, 2012);

Whereas, a similar Philippine study (Nguyen-Orca et al, 2014) showed that instant complementary food blends from various varieties of sweet potato (camote) and corn “were acceptable in terms of aroma, mouth feel and are potential complementary food for the improvement of the nutritional status of children”;

Whereas, sweet potato (camote) can be considered as a functional food or food with health benefits (FNRI, 2015) with its high dietary fiber that can prevent the re-absorption of bile acids (a steroid acid that is converted to cholesterol and goes to the blood to increase serum cholesterol that is responsible for developing plaques in the arteries). Thus, a study concluded that “continuous intake of root crops such as *camote*

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and cassava may not only modify serum cholesterol composition but lower total cholesterol levels in a longer period of time (Trinidad, TP et al, 2011). In addition, dietary fiber ferments in the large intestines into short-chain fatty acids that bind with cancer-causing toxins and are excreted;

Whereas, studies in other countries have shown that sweet potato (camote):1) is an anti-oxidant due to the presence of sporamins that help promote healing, 2) has anti-inflammatory properties, 3) can help regulate blood sugar levels due to its low glycemic index, and 4) can reduce both the prevalence and duration of diarrhea (IFPRI, 2015);

Whereas, sweet potato (camote) can also be considered as a complement and alternative to rice since its calorie and nutrient content are almost the same as rice;

Whereas, current efforts in promoting sweet potato (camote) are still limited and need more actions;

Whereas, the National Nutrition Council (NNC) is the highest policy-making and coordinating body on nutrition and as such formulates the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition (PPAN), and is also responsible for promoting good nutrition;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, in consideration of the foregoing, that we the National Nutrition Council Governing Board hereby support and adopt the propagation and consumption of sweet potato (camote) in the Philippines as a way of improving the health and nutrition of the Filipinos;

RESOLVED FURTHER, for the National Nutrition Council Secretariat and the NNC Governing Board member agencies to help in the promotion of consumption of sweet potato (camote) by the population through support in increasing acceptability of the product, nutrition education among household managers on the nutritional value and effects of consuming sweet potato (camote), and help in the promotion of micro-enterprise development;

RESOLVED FURTHER, for the following agencies to undertake the following specific actions:

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| Department of Health (DOH) | Include sweet potato (camote) in related messages on complementary feeding and healthy diets, among others. |
| Department of Education (DepEd) | Promote the consumption of sweet potato (camote) to students by including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sweet potato (camote) in the list of commodities for supplementary feeding programs for school children; |

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nutritional value of sweet potato (camote) in nutrition education activities for school children; and• Sweet potato (camote) in school gardens and canteens.
Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include sweet potato (camote) in the list of commodities for supplementary feeding programs for pre-school children;• Include the nutritional value of sweet potato (camote) in nutrition education activities for program beneficiaries.
Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG)	Promote to local government units the propagation of sweet potato (camote) in communities and households.
Department of Agriculture (DA)	<p>Promote the propagation of sweet potato (camote) to farmers through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provision of incentives or subsidy for planting materials;• Propagation and distribution of high-yielding sweet potato (camote) to farmers;• Identification of markets for the commodity in coordination with DTI;• Establishment of community-based processing facilities to increase market potentials and add value to the commodity, also in coordination with DTI; and• Encouragement of private sector investment in production, processing and marketing of sweet potato (camote) through its Agribusiness Marketing Assistance Service (AMAS).
Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)	<p>Assist in the market promotion of sweet potato (camote) products as follows:</p> <p><u>Bureau of Small and Medium Enterprise Development (DTI-BSMED)</u></p> <p>Increase competitiveness of sweet potato (camote) and its processed products in both</p>

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domestic and foreign markets, through the provision of needed trainings through the SME Roving Academy on methods to increase economies of scale, enhancing product positioning, and improving pricing strategy.

Bureau of Domestic Trade Promotion
(DTI-BDTP)

- Assist in the development and promotion of processed products of sweet potato (camote) through national and regional trade fairs, market matching, product development and packaging, product sourcing and market information.
- Conduct local trade missions to promote the efficient marketing of sweet potato (camote) products and services.

Department of Science and Technology (DOST)

Food and Nutrition
Research Institute (DOST-FNRI)

- Conduct R&D activities/ efficacy studies on sweet potato (camote).
- Develop more recipes and complementary food formulations using sweet potato (camote).

Philippine Council for
Agriculture, Aquatic
and Natural Resources
Research and Development
(DOST-PCAARRD)

- Conduct R&D on high-yielding varieties of sweet potato (camote) and new production and processing technologies.

RESOLVED FURTHER, for the National Nutrition Council Secretariat to ensure that this policy is disseminated as widely as possible and adopted accordingly, and to monitor implementation and review of the resolution after five (5) years.

RESOLVED FURTHER, for the National Nutrition Council Secretariat to report to the NNC Governing Board after one year on specific actions taken by agencies concerned to implement this resolution.

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