

## “AGREE TO AGRI: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF AGRICULTURE AS PART OF HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM”

*by:*

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Amidst Bataan's lush greenery and agricultural heritage, the focus on Agricultural Specialization in the Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE) program is more than just a subject – it's a way of life.

As the dictionary defined, agriculture is the preparation of developing natural resources to sustain human life and providing economic gain. It combines the creativity, imagination, and skill involved in planting crops and raising animals with advanced production methods and newfound technologies.

According to Department of Agriculture (DA) in 2021, Bataan in its region is heading the way towards a modern, market-driven, and industrialized Philippine agriculture sector through the “1Bataan Agriculture Innovation and Technology Center (AITC)”. However, the challenge that we are facing today is that the average age of farmers in the Philippines is from 55 to 59 years old. Specialists predict the Philippines will face a shortage of farmers in 10 to 12 years. This threatens not only the plans for attaining rice self-sufficiency but also food security.

In line with that action, we can all agree that agriculture education is important in shaping the growth of humanity. One important way to start cultivating this knowledge is to begin with our students. Teaching and learning agriculture in high school is vital as it equips students with essential knowledge, skills, and perspectives necessary for sustainable living, career development, and addressing challenges related to food production and security.

High schools can effectively prepare students with sufficient knowledge in agriculture through AGRI method:

**A-pply hands-on learning.** Applying practical, hands-on experiences such as planting on the school gardens, agricultural plots, or farm visits. These activities allow students to engage directly with agricultural practices, fostering a deeper understanding of the field.

**G-ather partnerships and collaborations.** Collaborating with local farms, agricultural experts, industry professionals, and government agencies such as DA. Partnerships offer opportunities for students to learn from experts, gain real-world insights, and participate in workshops or internships related to agriculture.

**R-evival of Traditional Farming Methods.** Exploring and learning about traditional and Time-and-tested farming practices. This includes reviving or studying age-old farming techniques and indigenous knowledge systems that have sustained communities for generations.

**I-mplement trainings and seminars for teachers.** Providing continuous training and professional development opportunities for teachers involved in teaching agricultural subjects. Well-trained teachers can effectively convey agricultural concepts and methodologies to students.

By implementing AGRI method, high schools have the potential to develop thorough and captivating agricultural educational programs, enabling students to acquire the necessary knowledge, abilities, and practical experiences essential for success in the realm of agriculture and its associated industries.

In addition, learning the importance of agriculture from a wide perspective at a young age provides a holistic outlook on the environment and to its community advantage.

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