
ASEAN VEGETABLE OIL INDUSTRY JOIN HANDS

Producers and exporters of vegetable oils from the three biggest producing countries of ASEAN have formed into an association which has been named ASEAN Vegetable Oil Club (AVOC).

The idea for such an organization was an offshoot of the decision of Palm Oil Refiners Association of Malaysia (PORAM), Malayan Edible Oils Manufacturers Association (MEOMA), Indonesian Palm Oil Producers Association, the United Coconut Associations of the Philippines (UCAP) and the Philippine Coconut Oil Producers Association (PCOPA) to forge a common contract on exports of coconut, palm and palm kernel oils.

It was at a meeting in Manila early last year, where the Malaysian, Indonesia and Filipino exporters of vegetable oils unanimously agreed to form a trade association that could serve as the mouthpiece for an organized global promotion of the ASEAN vegetable oils contract. The main objectives of the AVOC are, among others:

- a) To foster socio-economic solidarity and the advocacy of a strong and reputable trading community within the ASEAN sphere.
- b) To band together to protect the individual and common interest of members and to promote the general business welfare of AVOC in the global trade of vegetable oils.

The organizers, however, emphasize that AVOC is not contemplated to be a trading bloc.

By Norberto M. Boceta

AVOC has as its objective:

- 1) To strengthen trade promotions and negotiations on vegetable oil in order to improve its competitive posture and to sustain the expansion of vegetable oil exports in the international market.
- 2) Cooperation in other economic-related areas, like marketing, technology transfer and human resource development.
- 3) Recognition of the complementarity of trade and investment opportunities and the promotion of increased cooperation and exchange of information among the ASEAN private sectors, and the consideration of appropriate policies for greater intra-ASEAN investments.



AVOC's membership is open to any organization or association in the ASEAN countries engaged in the production, processing, trading and research in vegetable oils and oil seeds.

The six (6) founding members of the AVOC are:

- 1) the Indonesian Palm Oil Producers Association (GAPKI)
- 2) Federation of Indonesian Vegetable Oils and Fats Association (FAMNI)
- 3) Malayan Edible Oil Manufacturers Association (MEOMA)
- 4) Philippine Coconut Oil Producers Association (PCOPA)
- 5) Palm Oil Refiners Association of Malaysia (PORAM)
- 6) United Coconut Associations of the Philippines (UCAP).

It is expected that associations from the other Asean countries, Brunei, Thailand and Singapore will join AVOC in the near future.

The export volume of vegetable oils from the three countries, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines account for more than 8.5 million tons in 1992 and was more than 40 percent of the total world vegetable oil exports that year. With this hefty volume AVOC can be a force to reckon in the years to come.

Norberto M. Boceta
Deputy Administrator and concurrently Head Executive Assistant to the Administrator, Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA)
