***HISTORY OF THE PHILIPPINE PLANT QUARANTINE***

 The magnitude of crop losses due to the existence of a large number of destructive pests and diseases which are causing detrimental damage to our agricultural crops and the introduction into the country of equally destructive pests prompted the government to organize the Plant Quarantine Service in the Philippines.

 On February 5 1912, the First Quarantine Act (2145) entitled “An Act to Prevent the Introduction in the Philippine Islands of Plant Diseases and Epidemic” was enacted by the Second Philippine Legislature. However, the law was not implemented until the later part of 1915 due to lack of qualified personnel.

 The Third Philippine Legislature repealed Act 2145 and on February 5, 1915 Act No. 2515 was enacted entitled “An Act Prohibiting the Exportation from and Importation into the Philippine Islands of Diseased Planting Materials”. This Act has a broader scope of legal authority and functions including the penal provisions for any person violating the act. It also provided for the control of plant pests and diseases that were already present in the country and the prevention of further spread of already introduced pests to other areas within the country.  Issuance of permits for plant materials imported into the Philippines was originally the work of a small section under the Plant Industry Division of the Bureau of Agriculture.  By virtue of this act, Plant Inspection Service was finally established.

 In 1919, the Plant Quarantine became a separate division known as Plant Pest Control Division consisting of Chief and three plant inspectors.  In 1920 four assistant plant inspectors and three junior inspectors and a number of laborers were appointed to assist in the various activities of the division.

 Act 2515 was further repealed by Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines on March 8, 1922 through the enactment of Act 3027 “ An Act to Protect the Agricultural Industries of the Philippine Islands from Injurious Pests and Diseases Existing in Foreign Countries and Further to Regulate the Domestic Movement of Plant Materials in order to Minimize Injury from Pests and Diseases”.  This Act consolidated the previous Plant Quarantine Acts that provides the authority to implement/enforce provisions to the Director of Agriculture, the Secretary of Agriculture and Natural Resources to approve Administrative Orders, Rules and Regulations that were promulgated by the Director of Agriculture whenever necessary.

 On June 27, 1923, the Division was reorganized and three distinct sections were created: the Plant Diseases Section, the Plant Pests Section and the Plant Inspection Section which is under the direct charge of the division as Chief Plant Inspector.

 Incidentally, Act 3027 had no provisions which dealt  with  importation of living animals not falling under the scope of “domestic animals” as defined in Act 3639 entitled   “ An  Act  creating the  Bureau of Animal Industry defining its powers and functions, providing for its personnel; making appropriations for its organization and operatives as amended by Act 3830 under the implementation of the Bureau of Animal Industry  and in Section 8   changing the name of Bureau of Agriculture to Bureau of Plant Industry.  This was enacted and approved by the Senate and the House of Representatives on December 7, 1929 and to take effect January 1, 1930.

 As stipulated in Section 8,  the different divisions, subdivisions, sections, experimental stations, etc. of the Bureau of Agriculture and all activities or agencies, connected therewith which have not been transferred by virtue of its  Act to the Bureau of Animal Industry shall collectively constitute and be known as Bureau of Plant Industry.

 Hence, Act 3767 known as“ Agricultural Pest Quarantine”  or an  “An Act Regulating the Importation, Bringing or Introduction Into the Philippine Islands, of Living Animals such as Insects, Birds, Crustaceans, Bats, Mollusks, Reptiles, Mammals and Other Animals not Falling Within the Scope of Domestic Animals as Provided and Defined in Section Four of  Act 3639 “In Order to Protect the Agricultural Industries of this Country and for Other Purposes” was enacted in legislature by the Senate and House of Representatives on November 26, 1930.  This Act includes the regulations on the importation of undomesticated animals.

 By virtue of Act 3027 and Act 3767, the general supervision and control of the Plant Quarantine Service of the Philippines rests upon the Director of the Bureau of Plant Industry.

 In 1972, Plant Quarantine became a Section under the Crop Protection Division handling plant quarantine programs, strategies and policies. The section has two distinct units: International and Domestic Quarantine.

 On June 10 1978, Presidential Decree No. 1433 was signed by President Ferdinand E. Marcos known as “Plant Quarantine Law of 1978 thereby revising and consolidating Plant Quarantine Laws to further improve and strengthen the Plant Quarantine Service of the Bureau of Plant Industry.  It gave the Director of Plant Industry the authority to appoint, designate through deputation of all plant quarantine officers who shall act as his representative in implementing the provisions of the said law.

 After the rationalization, the Plant Quarantine Service has become a Division with its new name National Plant Quarantine Services Division with the Central Office located in Manila and 23 Stations all over the Philippines. Each Stations has its own area coverage/s some of which have International (Import and Export) Ports both Sea Port and Airport and Domestic Ports (Sea and Airports).