

# The Philippines aims to be a destination for high-value tropical flavors

*The Philippines aims to deliver innovative sourcing solutions to the global food stage*

MANILA, METRO MANILA, PHILIPPINES, March 17, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Philippines is reintroducing itself as a destination for tropical [food](#) products.

Through the 19th edition of IFEX Philippines, the country's premier export-oriented trade show for authentic, innovative, and [tropical flavors](#), scheduled for May 21–23, 2026, at the World Trade Center Metro Manila (WTCMM) in Pasay City, the Philippines will highlight its natural resources and rich raw materials to cater to the world's food requirements.

The food trade event comes at a timely moment, as the world increasingly looks to the Philippines as the ultimate source of high-value tropical ingredients. "We are not just navigating global challenges; we are defining the flavor profile of the future," says CITEM Executive Director Leah Pulido

Ocampo. "Under the Philippines' regional leadership as the Chair of ASEAN 2026, IFEX Philippines serves as a definitive platform for the world to discover the vibrant tropics the country is known for, positioning our MSMEs as the gold standard for innovation in the global food value chain." This landmark year further solidifies IFEX Philippines as a premier global sourcing hub,



Serving as a premium gateway for high-value tropical flavors, IFEX Philippines 2026 is delivering innovative sourcing solutions to the global food stage.



An array of curated food and beverages ranging from beloved Filipino snacks and delicacies to natural oils and supplements available at Gallery 6 of Likhang Filipino.



Greening the way toward a more circular economy is another edition of the Sustainability Solutions Exchange (SSX), the country's first sourcing platform dedicated to a more resilient food ecosystem, featuring eco-friendly packaging, green technologies, and waste management solutions across sectors, such as agriculture, home and fashion, manufacturing, and technology.

SSX will also introduce the Start-up Pitching Competition and Networking, an avenue that connects sustainable innovations from MSMEs and startups with key partners for capital and collaboration.

### Immersive show features

Buyers and visitors can expect a high-value sourcing experience, featuring specialized halls and curated spaces that bring the best of Philippine and international offerings to the fore.

The FOODPhilippines Trade Hall serves as the hub for top Philippine brands. It also features a Business Solutions Zone, as well as regional brands showcasing heritage crops and regional specialties through their respective pavilions.

Recognizing the show's established role in the global scene, the International Hall continues to host an array of foreign participants, reflecting global flavors and industry trends. This integration with Philippine exhibitors provides a competitive edge for both participating international food buyers and companies, reinforcing a strategic environment for cross-border collaboration and diversified sourcing.

Finally, the Marketplace provides a designated area for direct retail, allowing visitors to purchase in-demand quality products and the latest food finds on the spot.

### Driver of global competitiveness

Beyond offering quality products that address the continuous shift toward health-conscious, plant-based, and sustainable options, IFEX Philippines 2026 serves as a smart growth investment as the only food trade show in the country that guarantees face-to-face, direct B2B meetings with international buyers, specifically matched to the needs of participating brands.

Local and foreign exhibitors gain direct access to world decision-makers—including qualified importers, retail giants, and HORECA specialized purchasers from the Americas, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. Through strategic partnerships with trade facilitators like the Philippine International Trading Corporation (PITC), the event ensures that even small-volume players can consolidate to fulfill extensive global orders, making entry into international supply chains seamless and economical.

### Components for B2B success

Over the years, the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions (CITEM) has nurtured its relationships with these key buyer authorities. Through programs designed for very important buyers (VIB), travel arrangements, and social activities, buyers can directly engage with the growing cluster of food MSMEs, such as manufacturers, processors, traders, distributors, consolidators, cooperatives, and institutional suppliers, among others. This is made possible through facilitation of pre-arranged B2B meetings and business matching with seasoned and reliable food exhibitors whose products fill the various food categories at IFEX Philippines, such as fresh, organic, and processed fruits and vegetables, meat, seafood, snacks, and ready-to-eat offerings, to fine food and specialties; as well as industry-related business solutions.

The trade event is further interspersed with interactive trade show components designed to nurture lasting B2B relationships with the growing cluster of food MSMEs. Aside from IFEX Kitchen, these include:

- G-Mart (Grocer's Exchange Mart): A business-matching platform connecting MSMEs with retail giants for private and white labeling, and toll manufacturing services.
- IFEX Talks: A knowledge-sharing platform covering strategies from food certification to international logistics from leading industry authorities.
- Flavor Finds: A collection of emerging or new flavors, products, and trends reflective of authentic food innovated for the global market. This includes the latest winners of the KATHA Award for Food.
- KATHA Award for Food: Recognizing excellence in Philippine food creativity across 10 categories, including functional foods and plant-based alternatives.
- Open House: A showcase of the latest programs from government partners toward the export development of Filipino entrepreneurs.

Enhancing the sourcing experience is IFEXConnect, which is the 24/7 digital platform for year-round B2B networking, exhibitor and product listings, and sales opportunities beyond the trade event.

CITEM continues to go the extra mile with the newly launched Likhang Filipino Exhibition Halls, located at the International Trade Center Complex (formerly PhilTrade) along Roxas Boulevard in Pasay City. A permanent home for the country's best MSME products with dedicated galleries open to the public for B2B opportunities and retail sales. Just like the trade fair's digital platform, this showroom breaks down the barriers of seasonal sourcing by offering a "year-round" platform where local producers and mandated stakeholders can connect with global buyers any day of the year. Gallery 6 is the vibrant retail space dedicated to food and wellness products.

By institutionalizing this space, CITEM provides a reliable, high-traffic avenue for the country's food and lifestyle exports, ensuring that the best of the Philippines is always within reach. The Likhang Filipino is open Tuesdays through Sundays, from 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM.

## Join IFEX Philippines 2026

Be part of the country's most significant sourcing trade event for food, beverage, and tropical ingredients. Whether you are an exporter ready to scale or a buyer seeking the best in innovation, your journey begins here. Visit [ifexconnect.com](https://ifexconnect.com) to join or know more about IFEX Philippines.

## About CITEM

The Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions (CITEM) is the export promotion arm of the Philippine Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). CITEM advances the country's image as a premier sourcing destination for quality export products and services.

CITEM is committed to developing, nurturing, and promoting micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), brands, designers, and manufacturers by implementing an integrated approach to export promotion in partnership with other government and private entities.

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