

Headline	Fake vinegar top agenda in multi-agency meeting today	
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Fake vinegar top agenda in multi-agency meeting today

Officials of the departments of agriculture, health, science and technology, and trade and industry are scheduled to meet today to address reports that “fake” vinegar products using the synthetic acetic acid are being sold in the market.

Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel “Manny” Piñol said on his Facebook post Sunday that the meeting was an offshoot of a study conducted by the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute, an agency of the Department of Science and Technology, which showed that many commercial vinegar brands use synthetic acetic acid in producing the popular Filipino condiment.

A news item posted by [scitechanddigital.news](#) said a study made by the DOST has established that of the 17 vinegar brands tested in the Philippines, most of them were made from “synthetic”—and not from natural—sources, making them fake and adulterated and therefore dangerous to people’s health.

The report further said that only three brands passed the PNRI’s nuclear-based analysis while 15 brands were manufactured using synthetic acetic acid, which is a raw material for making vinyl, among other products. Synthetic acetic acid is a by-product of petrochemicals.

However, the PNRI did not identify these brands, citing that naming them is against the law. Moreover, the tests were done using only codes for the products bought from across the country.

Since it is not in PNRI’s mandate to issue advisories on matters of food safety, Piñol said his department, through the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Standards, will initiate a move to establish standards of vinegar, an agricultural product.

“The DA [Department of Agriculture] will also officially ask DOST-PNRI to submit the list of vinegar brands using acetic acid and passing these off as natural vinegar, which then will be referred to the DOH [Department of Health], which has supervision over the Food and Drug Administration (FDA),” he said.

The agriculture chief further said that his position on the issue is that pending the FDA’s validation of the PNRI study, “an advisory should be issued and the brands using acetic acid must be pulled out of the market.”

This is where the Department of Trade and Industry comes in, as it has the mandate to monitor products sold in the market, Piñol said.

Pending the results of the meeting, consumers are advised to exercise caution and discernment in buying vinegar from commercial establishments.

Natural vinegar made out of coconut sap and water, sugarcane, nipa, and fruits are readily available in the market.