



## Sec. Piñol vows to make food available and affordable

On his first official visit to Bicol, newly installed Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel F. Piñol presented the department's thrusts, directions, and first one hundred days target under President Rody Duterte's administration in a dialogue with some 145 agri-stakeholders composed of Bicol region's provincial governors, district and partylist representatives, and farmer leaders. The event dubbed as Pres. Rody delivers... TAPATAN: Gobyerno at Mamamayan was held on July 12, 2016 at the RIARS Training Center inside the DA Regional Office compound.

With the Secretary were Undersecretaries and Assistant Secretaries of the Department of Agriculture and chiefs of the services/divisions of the DA

(Please turn to page 7)



## PH can be rice self-sufficient thru hybrid rice seeds, farm mechanization

The country's rice industry faces a bright future, and in the next two to three years it could be self-sufficient and ably compete with its Asian counterparts.

This is the sentiment of more than 3,000 farmers, private seed producers and government officials who attended the 3rd national rice technology forum from September 27 to 29, 2016, in Polangui, Albay.

The key is planting quality inbred and hybrid rice varieties, adopting the recommended package of technologies and farm mechanization — which was successfully demonstrated

to thousands of Bicol farmers at a contiguous, commercial-scale 20-hectare technology demonstration farm in Barangay Balangibang, Polangi, Albay.

To date, it is the largest techno-demo area planted to various wet season hybrid and inbred rice varieties, said Recher Ondap, president of the Rice Productivity Advocacy, Inc. (Rice Board).

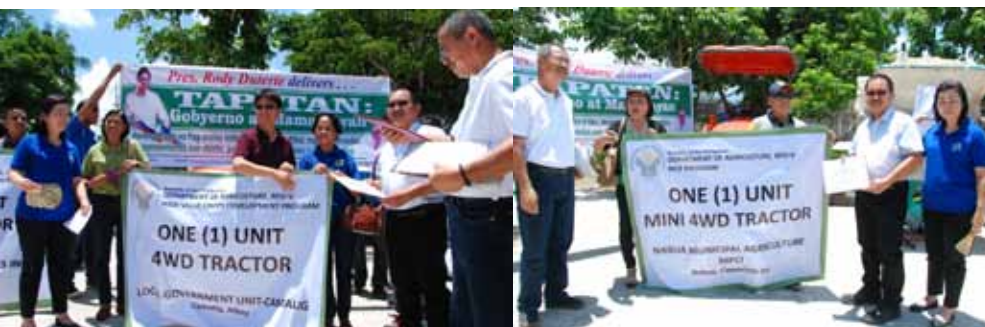
The farmer-cooperators, led by farmer-technician Edgar Pesebre, are expected to harvest at least eight metric tons per hectare (mt/ha), double than the country's national average yield of only 3.9 mt/

ha, said Dr. Santiago Obien, former executive director of the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhiRice) and Rice Board member.

The three-day event is a joint undertaking of the Rice Board, the Department of Agriculture (DA) Bicol Region, DA national rice program, municipal government of Polangui and provincial government of Albay.

The rice board member companies are Bayer, Dupont, Pioneer SL Agritech, Bioseed, Seedworks, Syngenta, PhilRice, PhilSCAT, Prasad Seeds, US Agriseeds, and Longpin Seeds, Inc., said Dr. Frisco Malabanan

(Please turn to page 6)



## Rediscovering the potentials and benefits of hybrid rice

When hybrid rice was introduced in the late 90's, Bicolano farmers were at first hesitant and apprehensive. But soon interest on hybrid gained ground after an aggressive information and advocacy campaign, techno demonstrations and other promotional schemes such as the 50:50 discounting scheme; the buy-one-take one scheme, and a credit scheme in the form of production inputs. After only three years since its introduction a number of Bicolano farmers have become adoptors and have achieved record high yields. But just when adoption of hybrid rice was gaining momentum the DA management in the previous administration opted to focus more on inbred. Hybrid rice production was not aggressively promoted. Some analysts say that had the promotion of hybrid rice been sustained, rice self-sufficiency would have already been attained under the Aquino administration.

Today, hybrid rice is again being aggressively promoted by the DA and private seed companies as one of the strategies to increase palay production from the current 18.150 million metric tons to self-sufficiency at 21.6 million metric tons by 2019. Along with increased

or expanded irrigated rice areas, availability of improved and climate resilient hybrid varieties, adoption of farm mechanization and modern and appropriate postharvest technologies, rice sufficiency is likely to be achieved.

Hybrid rice is at present is still the best available genetic tool for increasing the yield potential of rice over that of the current high-yielding rice varieties. It offers higher income opportunities for farmers either through commercial cultivation or seed production as it has a yield advantage of at least 15% to 20% over inbred. The average hybrid rice yield nationwide is 5.7 metric tons per hectare which is much higher than the current national average of inbred rice yield of 3.90MT. There are even hybrid yields of 8 to 12 MT per hectare per crop. More than just a table rice with its pleasant taste, aroma and good eating quality hybrid rice also commands high price as seed.

Through the years and through aggressive research many hybrid varieties have been developed from an initial one variety (Mestizo 1) today there are already 78 hybrid varieties developed by private companies, PhilRice, IRRI and UPLB.

From these varieties there are those pest resistant varieties and there are those which can be planted during wet and dry season. This was proven during the recent conduct of a compact techno demo trial in the 20-hectare contiguous areas in barangay Balangibang in Polangui, Albay for wet season (June to October) where 11 hybrid varieties were planted for main crop yield and yield component. Yield results after harvest showed that the Bigante variety has the highest yield at 7.64 ton per hectare followed by SL-18H with 7.12 tons per hectare and PHB 79 with a yield of 6.9 tons per hectare. This despite the damage due to rat infestation, flooding and intrusion of weeds and other field problems.

Now that the Bicolano farmers have rediscovered the great potentials and benefits of hybrid rice, they are again ready and eager to plant hybrid. Even LGUs are putting their stake on hybrid production. The private seed companies must therefore make hybrid seeds available, affordable and strategically positioned and the DA must also make the necessary support and interventions so that rice farmers can enjoy its full benefits and potentials.



Published quarterly by the Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Information Division of the Department of Agriculture, Regional Field Unit No. 5, San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur, Tel No.(054) 477-5113 Fax 477-0381 E-mail Address: [darafid5@yahoo.com](mailto:darafid5@yahoo.com)

*Re-entered as a Second Class Mail Matter at the Pili Post Office, Pili, Camarines Sur under Permit No. 2014-13 on March 26, 2014.*

### Advisers:

**Dr. Elena B. Delos Santos**  
Regional Executive Director

**Dr. Edgar R. Madrid**  
Regional Technical Director  
for Research and Regulations

**Editor-in-Chief: Emilia B. Bordado**

**Writers: Lovella P. Guarin**  
**Jayson M. Gonzales**  
**Blesilda A. Nuñez**  
**Annielyn L. Baleza**  
**Michelle Angela G. Alfigura**

**Lay-out Artist: Lovella P. Guarin**  
**Photographer/Liason Officer:**  
**Eduardo D. Collantes, Jr.**

**Illustrators: Hermito Antonio T. Privaldos**  
**Ramon C. Adversario**

**Circulation: Blesilda A. Nuñez**  
**Lita V. Estrella,**  
**Bernard Enrique**  
**Emil Pasumbal,**  
**Salvacion Gonowon**  
**Records Unit**



## LGU and fisherfolk associations in San Fernando, Masbate cooperate to maintain their marine protected areas

Before the sun rises up, you can hear the grating sounds of the rake and soft chatting of the residents of Brgy. Resurreccion while cleaning the shoreline of San Fernando. They gather the trashes and wastes carried away by the water current and segregate these properly in a compost pit. Sharp stones are collected and arranged at the corner of the coast.

"The coast should always be clean in order to ensure abundance of fishes and healthy growth of seaweeds, said Mr. Noel Bergantin, Fisheries Coordinator.

Aside from the Deputized Fish Wardens (Bantay Dagat) whose role is to maintain the cleanliness of the coastline within the area covered by the sanctuary, the LGU had also organized a team of concierge to maintain the sanitation and the orderliness of the shoreline in four barangays of San Fernando namely Resurreccion, Baybay Dagat, Silangan and Buyo. Every morning from 4 am to 6



am, they start gathering and cleaning the seashores before they do their household chores. The members of the concierge also receive monthly incentives from the LGU.

*"Maayo po ini na nalilinis an namon an baybayon, bukod sa damo an pwede na magkadi na mga turista, nakakasiguro man kami na dili maaatian an sanktwaryo"* (It's a good thing that we are able to clean the coast, aside from inviting tourists,



we are also assured that our sanctuary is clean), said Dagay Divina, member of the concierge residing near the coast of Brgy. Resurreccion.

Fisherfolk are always included in all activities to maintain and protect the Marine Protected Area (MPA). This is a way for them to have a sense of membership and appreciate the benefits of these projects.

As the only Global Environment Facility (GEF) in Masbate, residents of San Fernando are enliven to protect the coastal ecosystem and conserve the biodiversity of the municipal waters in order to help increase the fish catch particularly among the marginal fisherfolk of the area as well as improve the quality and volume of their seaweeds.

The GEF project, being implemented by the LGU through the Municipal Agriculture Office (MAO) as the implementing unit and the fisherfolk association, with the assistance of the Municipal Fish Sanctuary and Marine Reserve Council (MFSMRC) aims to: (a) increase their fish catch by 5-10% within 3 to 5 years of the MPA existence, (b) conserve and increase production of aquatic plants and animals that are depleted due to exploitation and over harvesting, (c) instil awareness on the residents of the MPA and (d) provide alternative livelihood projects to the marginal fisherfolk and their families.

The proposed 125-hectare Municipal Fish Sanctuary and Marine Reserve is located at Brgy. Resurreccion, San Fernando, Masbate with an estimated cost of roughly P3 million GEF grant. Continuous consultation and technical review with the Proponent Group is still on-going to know the proper intervention the PRDP-GEF can offer.

GEF-funded projects aim to incorporate natural biodiversity conservation mechanisms and coastal fisheries resources management to local governments' commodity investment plan. (Michelle Angela G. Alfigura, DA-PRDP RPCO V InfoACE Unit)

Labo Progressive Multi-purpose Cooperative  
Bgy. Malasugui, Labo, Camarines Norte

Letters

August 3, 2016

**DR. ELENA B. DELOS SANTOS**  
Regional Executive Director  
Department of Agriculture RFO 5  
San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur

Thru: **MRS. EMILIA B. BORDADO**  
Chief, Regional Agriculture & Fisheries Information Section

Dear Madam,

Greetings!

May we respectfully request from your good office sets of reading materials for pineapple fruit and fiber production guide that will be used for our information caravan and trainings of our farmer members. This is to intensify our project in support to government programs and initiatives. Our cooperative plays an important role in the community to enhance and sustain the pineapple industry that promotes food security program of the government. In relation to this, it will be a great help and support for our advocacy campaign to fully develop the pineapple industry in our province.

We do hope you will grant our request. Thank you very much for your support.

Very truly yours,

REY ULYSSES L. DIMAANO  
Agribusiness Supervisor

Noted:

**MRS. FE DE MESA**  
BOD Vice Chairman

## Cam.Sur farmers get P25.3 million worth agri machineries, inputs & loan assistance

**PILI, CAMARINES SUR** – The Department of Agriculture (DA) Bicol distributed a total of P25.3 million worth of farm equipment and machineries, palay seeds and heifers to 95 individual farmers, 27 farmers associations and five (5) LGUs in Camarines Sur during the farmers and Fisherfolk's Congress held September 22-23, 2016 at the Provincial Capitol Convention Center here.

Among the equipment turned over were 1 unit combine harvester, 6 units 4 wheel drive tractor, five units walk behind rice transplanter, 13 units handtractor with trailer; 2 units floating tiller; 3 units power tiller; 5 units power tiller; 5 units mechanical corn sheller; 2-row corn planter; 4 units cassava chipper; 1 unit cassava grater and 2 units shredder. The DA also turned over 50 heads heifer (ready to breed female cow) and 50 sacks of 40 kilos Green Super Rice seeds.

Likewise, the DA Bicol awarded a total of P5 million funding support in a form of loan from the Agricultural Credit Policy Council (ACPC) to nine

(9) farmers' organizations that have previously received Rice Processing Centers from the DA. Except for Malangtong Farmers Assn. in Iriga City which received P1M, each farmers' organization received P500,000 interest-free loan to be used as additional working capital in their rice processing business. The loan is payable in three years with one year grace period.

DA Bicol OIC Regional Executive Director Elena B. delos Santos turned over the equipment and machineries to the farmers assisted by Governor Miguel Luis R. Villafuerte.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) region 5 also distributed motorized bancas to 58 individual beneficiaries.

Agriculture Secretary Manny Piñol was represented by Dr. Lilibeth L. Signey, Regional Director of BFAR Cordillera Administrative Region.

The congress was initiated by the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist of Camarines Sur which is now headed by the



newly appointed provincial agriculturist, Dr. Cely Binoya. Some 1,500 farmers and fisherfolks attended the two-day affair which featured exhibits and plenary sessions.

On same occasion, Governor Miguel Luis R. Villafuerte sworn in the newly elected offices of the Camarines Sur Provincial Agriculture and Fisheries Council.

DA program coordinators and project focal persons discussed the various agricultural services of the department during the plenary sessions. **(Lovella P. Guarin)**



## DA, BSWM turn over composting facilities

Ten farmers associations from the provinces of Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, and Sorsogon received small scale composting facilities from the Department of Agriculture Bicol and the Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM) on August 26, 2016 at the DA Bicol compound.

DA Bicol OIC Regional Executive Director Elena B. delos Santos; Adelina A. Losa, regional focal person of the Organic Agriculture (OA) Program and chief of the Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD); and Ariel Almeda who represented BSWM OIC Director Sonia

M. Salguero turned over the said interventions to the chairpersons/heads of nine (9) associations and a school.

Among the recipients were: San Antonio Community Developers Association of Labo, Cam. Norte; Tagbak Organic Farming Workers, Association, Inc. of Tabaco City; Cagmanaba Barayong Macoto Farmers Association, Inc. of Oas, Albay; Community Based Agricultural Development Organization of Gura, Donsol, Sorsogon; Buhi Integrated Organic Association, Inc. of Buhi, Camarines Sur; Ubalw San Ramon Farmers Association of Oas, Albay;

*(Please turn to page 17)*





# Cacao fertilization program benefits farmers

**PILI, CAMARINES SUR** – To further boost cacao production in Bicol, the DA High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP) embarked on a fertilization program. This is in response to feedbacks from farmers that some old cacao trees are already unproductive.

Initially, 88 farmers from Camarines Sur, Albay and Sorsogon were given combined fertilizer to fertilize a total of 9,709 trees at 6 kg/tree. In Camarines Sur, the distribution of fertilizer was held at the DA regional nursery this municipality on September 7. For the farmers of Albay and Sorsogon, the distribution was held on September 8, at the Albay Experiment Station in Buang, Tabaco City.

The fertilizers were given free to farmers who participated in the techno demo. They will monitor the date of flowering, number of fruits produced and other agronomic data.

Rosita Imperial, DA regional HVCDP coordinator said she has observed good



performance of fertilizer application on cacao in other regions where the fertilized cacao plants show early flowering and increased yield. The fertilizer company has also conducted some studies on the efficacy of the fertilizer on flowering and yield of cacao.

A combination of 17-8-9+2MgO (high in Nitrogen) and 10-7-22+3MgO (high in Potassium) at 6 kilos each were given to farmers. At the rate of 300 grams per tree administered once a year, the initial free

fertilizer from DA can fertilize at least 20 trees per farmer beneficiary.

A lecture and demonstration on the

proper administration of the fertilizer was conducted during the distribution. The application of fertilizer is not laborious as it is applied only once a year. The granules contain Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Potassium and Magnesium. It does not dissolve easily in water and lasts up to 16-18 months in the

field because it has a coat which controls the gradual release of NPK.

Aside from the farmers, also present during the briefing and turn over were provincial and municipal HVCDP coordinators, municipal agriculturists and agricultural technicians. **(Lovella P. Guarin)**



## Rice, HVCC farmer groups granted production equipment

**PILI, CAMARINES SUR** – Department of Agriculture Bicol OIC Regional Executive Director Elena B. delos Santos turned over a total of P 4.7M worth of agri machineries and equipment to various farmers' organization as part of DA's intervention for the rice and high value crops farmers. The turn over was held at the DA grounds on August 19.

The Regional Agricultural Engineering Division reported that twenty-one farmers organizations and irrigators associations received one unit hand tractor with trailer each under the Rice Program. For the province of Camarines Sur, the recipients were the Sacasan Farmers Irrigators Association of Bato; Nagkakaisang Magsasaka ng Sagrada Familia also of Bato; San Isidro Labrador Coop in San

Fernando; Pulang Daga Palay Corn Farmers Association of Balatan; San Jose Baybayon Irrigators Association of Buhi; Check Farmers Producers Coop of Libmanan; Niño Jesus, Masoli, San Miguel, Agos FIA in Bato; Mangayawan Sua Farmers Irrigators Association of Canaman (2 units); Balagbag Farmers SWISA of Milaor; Buenas Farmers Association of San Fernando; Siembre IA of Bombon; Samahang Magsasaka ng Tigaon, Inc.; Mambulo Viejo Binobong Farmers of Libmanan; Timbang Integrated Farmers Association of Minalabac; Flordeliz Farmers Small Water IA of Milaor; Salvacion Baybay Palayamanan Farmers Association of Calabanga; Patson Del Pilar Farmers

*(Please turn to page 15)*





## Ph can be rice self-sufficient... (from page 1)



The DA turned over a total of P\_\_\_\_\_ worth of farm equipment and machineries to farmers and LGUs of Albay and Sorsogon during the forum. Photo shows Sorsogon provincial agriculturist Ma. Teresa Destura receiving the certificates of award.

of SL Agritech and Rice Board member.

The 20-hectare techno-demo farm in Polangui is different from the previous ones, as the rice seedlings were planted during the wet season, and Barangay Balangibang is a flood-prone, said Dr. Obien, who also serves as DA national rice program senior technical adviser.

"In fact, the 20-hectare area was flooded during the booting stage, on August 20-23, 2016, and the inbred and hybrid rice varieties recovered quickly," Obien said.

"Also, the farmers themselves planted and took care of the rice plants, following the prescribed technologies for each variety, with the guidance of respective private seed company and DA experts. In spite of the harsh weather condition, the crop stand is good to excellent, an indication of the resilience of the planted

inbred and hybrid varieties," he noted.

The first rice techno-forum was held in Digos City and Hagonoy, Davao del Sur on March 18 to 20, 2015, while the second was held in Barangay Dapitan, Pototan, Iloilo, on March 16 to 18, 2016, said Obien.

For her part, DA Bicol region OIC-Director Elena de los Santos said "while the Bicol has achieved rice self-sufficiency at 115.75 per cent over the past four years, we cannot afford to be complacent because we are faced with more challenges like climate change and rapidly increasing population."

"The driving force of this private-public partnership is our shared vision to increase rice production in our region through traditional as well as modern or science and technology-based approaches with the active participation

of our farmers," De los Santos added.

She said the 20-hectare techno demo farm in Balangibang, Polangui, is the most effective way to show farmers how to translate modern rice seeds and package of technology into tangible benefits.

For his part, Rice Board president Ondap said "we must work together to help empower our farmers to become more

competitive. In June 2017, the biggest challenge for us would be the lifting of the quantitative restrictions on rice, when imports from Thailand, Vietnam and other countries would have zero tariff."

"Let us prepare and soften the impact of this eventuality by increasing rice production through hybrid rice technology," he urged farmers. (Reprinted from MB.COM. PH / Manila Bulletin)

## DA reiterates ban on hazardous vet drugs

### PILI, CAMARINES SUR

– The DA reiterates the prohibition on the selling and use as additives in animal feeds of five (5) veterinary drugs because of the build-up of residues in the meat, milk and eggs derived from such animals which is detrimental to human health.

The DA and DOH have identified Chloramphenicol, Carbadox, Olaquinox, Nitrofurans and Beta-Agonist Drugs as hazardous to animals raised for food.

The manufacture of these drugs have been banned since 1990 and the registration of these drugs were likewise disapproved since then.

Dr. Renato Almonte, chief of the Regulatory Division of the Department of Agriculture said their office is strictly monitoring all veterinary drugs and even feed establishments to ensure adherence to the ban. Banned drugs found in these establishments are confiscated. Three violations is tantamount to revocation of license and registration of the veterinary drugs and feed establishment, added Dr. Almonte.

Chloramphenicol is an antibiotic for life threatening infections. High levels of residues in meat, milk and eggs can cause aplastic anemia in humans.

Olaquinox and Carbadox are used to reduce salmonella shedding in animals. Both drugs have long withdrawal period of about 70 days. The experiment on male mice which showed increase in

incidence of adrenal cortex adenomas prompted the Food and Agriculture Organization of the World Health Organization not to establish an acceptable daily intake for these drugs. Studies also indicated that exposure of workers handling the product may pose a risk of irritation, allergy, and severe allergic reaction.

Nitrofurans were banned in USA and Germany since 1991 because they have been demonstrated to be carcinogenic when used at 0.15% w/w concentration in feed for one year, including mammary tumors. Its manufacture was phased out in August 2000.

Beta-agonist drugs such as clenbuterol, salbutamol, terbutalin and pirbuterol are used in humans as bronchodilators and inhibitors of muscle contractions. These drugs are used in animal feeds as growth enhancer and body fat reducer leaving high residue levels on edible tissues of food animals which are still detected even after considerable withdrawal periods due to slow degradation rate of these drugs. Beta-agonist drugs affect lungs and heart functions and even causes death in animals.

Livestock and poultry raisers, especially owners of cockfighting roosters should be vigilant and familiar with these drugs to avoid it. (Lovella Guarin)



The jampacked crowd at Bicol University campus in Polangui, Albay.



## Sec. Piñol vows... *(from page 1)*

central office.

Present during the dialogue were all the governors of the six provinces of Bicol, namely: Governors Miguel Luiz Villafuerte of Camarines Sur, Al Francis Bichara of Albay, Edgardo Tallado of Camarines Norte, Robert Lee Rodriguez of Sorsogon, Antonio Kho of Masbate, and Governor Joseph Cua of Catanduanes.

Members of the House of Representatives also showed their full support to the Department's directions. Also present were representatives Edcel Lagman of Albay (1st district), Joey Salceda of Albay (2nd district), Luis Raymund Villafuerte, Jr of Camarines Sur (2nd district), Gabriel H. Bordado, Jr. of Cam. Sur (3rd district), Deogracias Ramos of Sorsogon (2nd district), Renato Unico of Camarines Norte (1st district) and Marisol Panotes, of Cam. Norte (2nd district). Partylist representatives Anthony Bravo for National Confederation of Cooperatives (Coop NATCCO), and Ako Bicol partylist representatives Rodel Batocabe, Christopher Co, and Alfredo Garbin also attended the event.

Secretary Piñol also turned over checks for Bottom Up Budgeting and Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan (PAMANA), small ruminants and various farm machineries worth P37,258,596.00 to various organizations and local government units.

In his presentation, Secretary Piñol presented his vision to make food available and affordable for every Filipino by focusing on two areas: Staple Food Commodities to Ensure Food Security; and High Value Crops to Generate Jobs and Foreign Earnings.

To achieve food sufficiency and maximum productivity in the country, the DA under President Rody Duterte will implement 10 concrete steps. One of the highlights of his strategies is a national color-coded agriculture and fisheries. The DA will focus its interventions and assistance to the regions according to what they could produce best by considering the specific agronomic characteristics of each region such as geography, soil type and water availability.

"Irrigation will be free for all farmers starting 2017, but corporate farms will have to pay. For the remaining months of 2016, farmers will still have to pay." He seeks the help of the legislators present in amending the NIA charter.

The DA will also implement Cash for Work program for farmers and fishermen affected by El Nino. Work includes manual repair and desilting of irrigation facilities for farmers; and cleaning of coastal waters and planting of mangrove trees for fishers.

The DA will give P1Billion per region to fund easy access financing schemes for the small farmers and fisherfolks to encourage maximum utilization of every inch of land in the country.

Other pronouncements made by the secretary included the revival of the abaca and coconut industry in the Bicol region. Another priority of the secretary is the Queen pineapple because it has great demand in the foreign market. "We will support you from production, processing and marketing. The DA can even provide canning facilities if needed. For farmers interested in cattle fattening, the DA will provide slaughterhouses if necessary....meat products na ang ilalabas ng Bicol."

To achieve rice sufficiency in the country, the DA, starting next year, for one season, will provide hybrid seeds and fertilizers at P15,000 per hectare cost to all farmers. But in return, the DA will ask farmers to deposit P15,000 to their own accounts after harvest so that in the next cropping they will be able to buy their own seeds. Sec. Piñol also announces a No Cash Out policy upon release of farm machineries and equipment to farmers. The equity (15% of the total amount) will be paid in installment basis within four years.

He has also prior instructions to the Phil. Crops Insurance Corporation (PCIC) to insure all farmers. He added that it is President Duterte's dream to ensure that all farmers and fishers have an Identification Card indicating the sector he is in, so that the farmers/fishers could also receive pension before the Duterte administration ends.

He also briefly interacted with some 30 members of the media in Camarines Sur in a press conference facilitated by Emily Bordado, DA Bicol chief information officer. **(Lovella Guarin / Annielyn Baleza).**



*First time in Bicol. Political issues were set aside as high ranking government officials converged at the RIARS training center of DA for Secretary Piñol's visit.*



*Livelihood from weed. Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel F. Piñol awards to the members of the San Fernando Ragiwdiw Farmers' Association a livelihood assistance package, consisting of 2 units of sewing machine and raw materials during his visit in the Bicol region on July 12, 2016. The assistance was funded under the Bureau of Agricultural Research - Community-based Participatory Action Research in Flood Prone Areas Project. Ragiwdiw or seagrass, which was considered to be a pestering weed in the past, is now raw materials to footwear, placemats, bags and other handicrafts produced by the women association.*



# Products of rural women in Bicol assessed for market link

**NAGA CITY** – A powerhouse of product development experts from food and non-food industries, microfinance institutions, and producers of Great Women branded products from Metro Manila arrived on this city for the two-day Product Assessment of GREAT Women 2 Project in Bicol. The event was held on Sept. 5 at the Haciendas De Naga in Carolina.

The Gender Responsive Economic Action for the Transformation of Women or simply GREAT Women, according to Dr. Elena B. de los Santos, DA Bicol Regional Executive Director, is being implemented by the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), with the Canadian government as funding organization. She added that Bicol is very fortunate to be among the four pilot regions along with regions 2 (Cagayan Valley), 6 (Western Visayas) and 12 (Soccsksargen).

Initially, the project has chosen six Rural Improvement Clubs (RIC) and cooperative in Bicol to be recipients of capacity building support and to be linked to investors. These are the Baao RIC, headed by Bernadette delos Santos, the Napawon RIC in Goa headed by Adelia Magsino, both in Camarines Sur; the Nasipit RIC in Castilla, Sorsogon headed by Carina Arellano; the Calatagan Tibang RIC of Virac headed by Agnes Almogel and Happy Farmers Food Products, Inc of Baras, Catanduanes headed by Luzviminda Oropesa and the Labo Progressive Multipurpose Coop in Labo, Camarines Norte.

The objective of the product assessment was to scout for potential products of these RICs to be included in the GREAT WOMEN label and to link the women micro entrepreneurs to local investors and even global markets by helping them keep up the supply and value chain. Standards to meet include capacity to produce in volume, consistent supply,

facility, Good Manufacturing Practices, linkage with DA, DOST and Food and Drugs Administrations, transparency of ingredients and process, and combination of convenience and health benefits.

The product development experts critiqued the food and non-food indigenous products displayed on exhibit by these six enterprising Rural Improvement Clubs (RICs) such as piña cloth, herbal soap, hand woven bags and wallets, coco and pili shell crafts and jelly preserves.

Myrna Jarillas, Senior Programme Officer of Global Affairs Canada commended the DA Bicol Gender and Development (GAD) led by its focal person Aloha Gigi I. Bañaria for gathering the product development experts who will guide the women micro entrepreneurs by modelling.

Director Emmeline L. Verzosa Executive Director of the Phil. Commission of Women (PCW) said the project is a convergence of different government and non-government organizations aiming to improve the lives of the economic status of the rural women. They have brought Manila-based private sector partners such as Echosi Foundation represented by Reena Francisco, Estudio Juan and Green Leaf Eco Bags represented by Zarah Juan, Sustainable Agri represented by Sef Carandang, and ASA Philippines represented by Mary Ann Concepcion.

Bicol-based private sectors partners present were Biggs Inc. led by Sieglinda Bulaong, Admin. Manager and Lydia Lomibao, owner of J. Emmanuel House of Pili. Also present were Enrico Navarro, President of Responsive Initiative for Social Empowerment (RISE); Lorelle Baracol of DOST ICTI Manila; Grace Layosa, GAD focal person of Cooperative Development Authority 5 and some members of the DA GAD focal system.



*Dr. Elena B. de los Santos, DA Bicol Regional Executive Director.*

Zarah Juan, owner of Green Leaf Eco Bags, shared her life story resigning from her job as flight attendant to become a small entrepreneur. She started her business with an order of only 10 eco bags from a friend. The next order increased to 100, 4,000 and so on. Now, she has a line of fashion accessories, shoes, bags and other indigenous products with the GREAT Women brand. She has tapped the skills and indigenous resources of several communities in the country in the development of her product lines.

The GREAT Women project has its own store and café in Makati City where products promoting the Filipino culture and tradition and women-related advocacies are being sold. The GREAT Women brand supports local artisan, promote indigenous

skills and value traceability to source.

According to Aloha Gigi I. Bañaria, Chief PMED and regional Gender and Development Focal Person of DA RFO 5, the project is the best model of public-private partnership. She disclosed that a Japanese investor is interested in the hand embroidered bags of Baao RIC. She is optimistic that more trainings, and exposures to successful women's enterprises will be sponsored by the PCW in the future, and most importantly, Bicol products will be included in the Great Women showroom.

The project will be formalized by a MOA signing between the RIC beneficiaries, the DA Bicol and the PCW Manila in October with Vice President Leni Robredo as guest of honor. **(Lovella P. Guarin)**

*(L-R) Bernadette delos Santos, President of Baao RIC proudly shows their hand embroidered bags. Also in photo are Aloha Gigi I. Bañaria (2nd from left), DA GAD focal person; PCW Executive Director Emmeline L. Verzosa (2nd from right) and Sef Carandang (extreme right) of Sustainable Agri.*





# Agri-fishery low performance in 2015 tackled in inter-agency meeting

Under reporting or inaccurate reporting of the volume of fish catch in the sea waters of Bicol could be one of the underlying reasons for the 9.4 percent contraction in the fishing sub-industry performance last year (2015) which pulled down the three other sub-industries namely; Agriculture, Hunting, and Forestry sector to a 2.3 slump in its performance.

This is what surfaced as the probable reason during the round-table discussion called by the Department of Agriculture thru OIC-Regional Executive Director, Elena B. De los Santos who immediately convened the Regional Management Council (RMC) composed of heads of attached and partner agencies of the DA to trace the reasons for the low performance of the sector as reported by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

Per report by the PSA, Bicol's economy in 2015 accelerated from 4.3 to 8.4 and continues to be the fastest growing region among the 17 regions of the country. The service sector remained the largest contributor to the region's economy at 56.1 percent followed by the industry sector at 22.5 percent.

However, the same report reveals that the combined sub-sectors of Agriculture, Hunting, Fishery and Forestry (AHFF), showed a declining trend from a high of 8.7 percent in 2012, slowed down to 4.3 percent in 2013, then declined to 1.1 percent in 2014 and sank deeper contracting to -2.3 percent in 2015. This 2.3 percent slump

in the performance of the AHFF according to NEDA was due to 9.4 percent contraction in the Fishing sub-industry. Agriculture and Forestry managed to stay afloat growing by 0.4 percent, a slow down from its 1.9 percent expansion in 2014.

Presiding over the meeting, Dir. De los Santos underscored



the need for all the agencies directly or indirectly supporting the agriculture, fishery and forestry sectors to get together and find out the root cause of the problem, identify the gaps and deterrents and come up with new approaches, strategies and action plans for the sector to bounce back and improve its performance. Also invited during the meeting were the PSA represented by Danilo Luceña who presented the 2015 Performance of the Bicol Economy and the NEDA represented by Maria Teresa T. Chong, who discussed the analysis and interpretation of the data presented by the PSA. DA's Planning Officer Aloha Gigi I. Bañaria also presented the 15 point agenda in agriculture under the new administration. The DENR was also invited to the meeting

but no representative came.

After the presentations, the BFAR regional planning officer, Joel Benavidez asked the PSA where and how they get their data as to the volume of fish catch in the region. Luceña answered that their enumerators get their data from the fish landings in Bicol. Benavidez then pointed out that not all the fish catch in the Bicol waters are unloaded or brought to the designated fish landings in the region but some of these are brought outside the region such as Lucena, Batangas, Mindoro and Visayas provinces and these fish catch

Hagosojos announced that the PFDA regional fish landing complex in Camaligan will be transferred to Bulan, Sorsogon as soon as the on going construction of the new complex will be completed. But the Camaligan fish landing will be retained as a satellite office. Hagosojos added that Bulan is a more strategic location for the regional Fish landing as it is a rich fishing ground and more accessible to fishing vessels unlike Camaligan fish landing which is along the Bicol river not accessible big fishing vessels.

Dr. de los Santos thus, requested BFAR and the PSA to have a special meeting and work closely in finding a better method or approach in gathering and reporting data on fisheries. De los Santos also expressed a parallel view that agricultural crops and even livestock and other agricultural commodities produced

are now recorded in those regions. This observation was also seconded by DA regional Technical Director for research and regulations, Dr. Edgar R. Madrid. He said Bicol has a long coastline but the fish catch data is small as the actual fish catch of the region are not properly recorded or documented.

Philippine Fisheries Development Authority regional manager of the Fish landing in Camaligan in Camarines Sur, Carlos E. Hagosojos also made his rejoinder saying that Bicol is a fish exporting region, supplying big volume of fish to different provinces outside the region. He bared that Bicol supplies daily big volume of semi processed crabs to Cebu where they are processed then brought to Metro Manila, Bacolod and other major cities. He added that other marine species such as squid and octopus abound in Bulan, Sorsogon, and Ticao in Masbate but these are brought to Iolilo and Roxas City. Other marine products from Aroroy and Milagros and Balatan and other Camarines Sur waters are also brought to Lucena, the NCR and other parts of Luzon.

As an additional information,

in the region but are being transported outside the region are not being properly attributed to Bicol. Moreso, once these agri commodities are processed they are considered outputs of the industry or manufacturing sector.

The round-table discussion held in Legazpi City sometime last August was also participated in by National Irrigation Administration, (NIA) regional manager, Vicente R. Vicmudo; National Meat Inspection Service, acting regional Technical Director, Dr. Fernando N. Lontoc; Philippine Crop Insurance regional, manager, Corazon Sm. Realubit; Philippine Fibers Development Authority, OIC regional director, Mary Ann R. Molina; Agricultural Training Institute, training division, chief, Cirlo Nuyles; CDA Officer in-charge, Grace P. Layosa; Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Council, chairperson, Jimmy Cordero; Eng. Wilfredo Papaya of NIA; Theresa B. Añonuevo of NMIS, Benjie Santiago and division chiefs, program coordinators and staff of the DA regional office. **(Emily B. Bordado)**





## BUB turns over farm equipment

**SAN JOSE, CAMARINES SUR** – The Department of Agriculture turned over 18 hand tractors and water pumps worth P2.5 million to LGU San Jose. The equipment was funded under the Bottom Up Budgeting Project.

Oscar Odiamar, Chairman of Rangas Farmers Association, together with his wife and other members of the association were excited to receive the handtractor with trailer and water pump. According to Odiamar these equipment will be of great help to their association which is composed 32 members tilling more than 50 hectares of land. They alternately plant rice and vegetables. The Rangas Farmers Association is only one of the 18 associations who

received handtractors and water pumps on that day.

The DA turned over the said equipment and machineries to the Local Government Unit of San Jose through Mayor Antonio B. Chavez who identified the qualified beneficiaries.

Other farmers association present during the turn over were: Salogon Agricultural Planters Association; Calawit Farmers Association; Catalutuan Farmers Association; Bagacay Farmers Association; Tominawog Farmers Association; Camagong Farmers Association; Calalahan Farmers Association; Tagas-Salogon Irrigators Association; Telegrafo Farmers Association; Matoon-Lateral-E Farmers IA;



Mayor Antonio B. Chavez (4th from left) turns over the certificate of award for handtractor with trailer to its recipients. Also in photo are MA Adolfo Bruzo and Teodoro Eleda, DA BUB Monitoring team head.

Herobias Farmers Association; Rangas Farmers Association; Bahay Farmers Association; M a n z a n a - T a m b a n g a n Farmers IA; Boclod Farmers Association; and Mampirao Farmers Association. The said associations were represented by their chairpersons and other officers.

Municipal Agriculturist Adolfo Bruzo saw the

change in the attitude of the farmers. "They are now more enthusiastic and eager to get what they need," he added.

He is referring to the new directive of Secretary Manny Piñol eliminating the 15% equity for the agri machineries and equipment which was shouldered by the

(Next page please)

## Completed P10.7 million FMR under DA-PAMANA project eases life of over 4,000 residents

Barangay Captain Alvino Nuñez of San Roque Heights, Bula, Camarines Sur was very thankful as he received the certificate of turn over for the P10.7 Million two lanes Farm-to-Market Road from DA - Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan (PAMANA) and Local Government Unit of Bula, Camarines Sur.

Mayor Amelita Ibasco and Florentino Ubalde, DA PAMANA focal person together with Christopher Asucena, PAMANA area coordinator of Bicol led the simple turn over ceremony to the constituents of Barangay San Roque Heights, Inoyonan and Itangon on July 27, 2016. Also present were Vice Mayor Moises Soreta;

Municipal Agriculturist Mency Madrid; Mary Ruth Parro, Bula Municipal Planning and Development Officer; other sangguinang bayan and barangay officials. Barangay Captain Roberto T. Reginales of Inoyonan on the other hand, receive the certificate of award for his barangay.

"Kaidto grabe an laboy idi. Mahalnas na maray. An pamasaha mi hanggang banwa P100.00...Igwang duwang nagadan na diyan nin huli ta dae na nakaabot sa center sa kadificilan kan tinampo. An mga estudyante sa high school naabot man maati na...Bgy. Captain Nuñez revealed.

"Ngunyan, magayun na an tinampo, P50.00 na sana an

pamasaha hanggang banwa. Sa 129 na households, lampas 100 na an nakabakal motor asin may naglalaog na sakayan kan samuyang mga produkto arog kan kopra," he added.

Municipal Agriculturist Mency Madrid said the 1.058 kilometer FMR is directly benefitting 4,145 residents of barangays Inoyonan, Itangon and San Roque Heights. While the indirect beneficiaries are other barangays within Bula and Balatan.

The three upland barangays are considered as the remotest and most bypassed barangays of Bula with poverty incidence recorded at 66%. As these barangays are located in the mountains, armed conflicts

often ensue.

To address these problems, the LGU Bula proposed for the concreting of the said FMR which was luckily funded by the DA RFO 5 under the PAMANA 2015 funds.

Florentino Ubalde, PAMANA focal person of DA Bicol said PAMANA aims to empower conflict afflicted communities by involving them in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the projects; reduce poverty through the establishment of access roads linking production areas to market centers; and ultimately uplift the socio-economic conditions of the rural dwellers. PAMANA is now on its 4th year of implementation and is being spearheaded by the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) in cooperation with line agencies and LGUs. (Lovella P. Guarin)







farmer-beneficiaries before. The DA Bicol has abide by this directive. Although for this particular project, the 15% equity has been shouldered by the LGU San Jose as it was funded last year.

This time, the farmers do not need to raise any amount

to acquire equipment from the government.

Mayor Chavez announced that they have drafted their own Memorandum of Agreement in the Bicol dialect to regulate the use of the equipment and to create a sense of responsibility on the part of the beneficiaries.

In his message during the short turn over ceremony, Chavez explained that it was only in 2014 when the municipality of San Jose, which is a 4th class municipality, has qualified to the Bottom Up Budgeting because the municipality was not able to acquire a seal of good

housekeeping until 2014.

Chavez lauded the BuB project for providing services according to the needs of the farmers. But he stressed that he makes sure the projects go to legitimate associations only. He thus, created a team which provides technical assistance and training to budding farmers organizations to create more organizations of farmers which are sustainable and will endure the test of times.

The farmers went home with smiles in their faces contemplating the benefits of their new acquisition. This is just one of the many tales of the BuB project employing the bottom up approach, effectively helping farmers by involving them in the planning and making of decisions which will directly affect them. **(Lovella P. Guarin)**

## DA Bicol sustains support to BITFEX



**NAGA CITY** --“An agrikultura, puso kan kabuhayan kan bikolano; an turismo, nagdadara nin kwarta sa Bicol; asin an industriya naguuswag hale sa agrikultura asin turismo (Agriculture is the heart of livelihood of Bicolanos; Tourism brings money to Bicol; and Industry progresses from agriculture and tourism).”

This is part of the message of AKO-Bicol Partylist representative Rodel Batocabe delivered during the opening ceremony of the 5th Bicol Tourism and Food Expo (BITFEX) 2016 held at SM City Naga, Naga City on September 15, 2016 with the theme “Tabang sa turismo, tabang sa pagnenegosyo (Assistance in tourism, assistance in business).”

Batocabe added that all LGUs should support the agriculture, tourism, trade and industry sectors.

According to Brenda Locsin, president of the

Philippine Broadcasting Network (PBN) Foundation and the organizer of the BITFEX, this four-day event will promote not only local tourism in Bicol but also on agriculture and local products. This year, exhibitors from Baguio, Manila, Palawan, Laguna and Cavite participated in BITFEX 2016.

Department of Agriculture-Bicol Regional Executive Director Dr. Elena B. de los Santos presented the Agricultural Programs in Bicol. She said that the present administration of President Rody R. Duterte and Secretary Manny Pinol have two challenges---provide affordable and available food, and increase income and decrease poverty in rural communities.

As a major sponsor and partner, the DA-AMAD invited 14 local farmer organizations and small entrepreneurs to showcase their products and services. These include HML

Food Corporations, YULAIK Food Products, Mayon Perfection Confectionery, Villa Suerte Dried Fish Processor, NESS Crafts, YML Health Food Products, Pecuaría Development Cooperative, Inc., Naga City Organic Farmers Association, Goa Agri-Producers and Processors Association, Agri-Planters and

Food Processors Association of Tigaon, Labo Progressive Multi-purpose Cooperative, Bicol Cacao Planters Association, PILAUI Food Enterprises (PFE), and Bicol Entrepreneurs Association for Mushroom. The DA also had an information booth on #BROWN4good #Region5.

Adelina Losa, Chief of the AMAD said the 14 exhibitors obtained a total sales of P300,000 during the 4-day trade fair.

Other exhibitors from private and government institutions

participated in the expo.

Aside from inviting exhibitors, the DA also conducted an Investment Forum on Cacao Production. Aside from DA, the Departments of Trade and Industry (DTI), and Tourism (DTI) also participated in the event. **(Jayson M. Gonzales)**



*Emily B. Bordado, DA Bicol Regional Information Officer and chief of the Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Information Section (RAFIS) received the certificate of appreciation from Glenn J. Barcelon, PBN Executive Vice President and BITFEX Project Director.*





## A former overseas worker now deeply-rooted in farming

by Emily B. Bordado

**R**eynaldo Bertulfo a former overseas worker in the middle East is back in his home town in Calabanga, Camarines Sur and is now a successful and progressive farmer. Only in his mid- thirties, Rey is now deeply rooted in his farmland in Barangay Binaliw and dedicated to his profession as a farmer. He now owns several hectares of agricultural lands and has ventured into corn, rice, coconut and ginger production.

Despite the high pay he was receiving as an overseas worker he realized that it was not the kind of life he wants for himself and his family. While working abroad he always had that sense of uncertainty and longing to settle to a more stable and laid back life in the company of his family which include his wife and 3 young children.

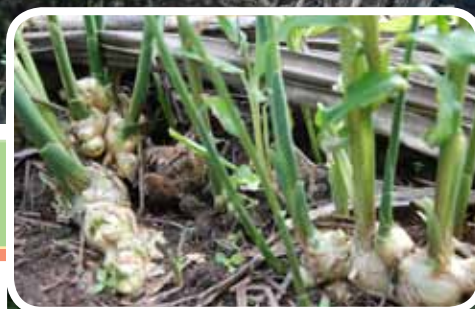
He thus, decided to venture into farming in their barangay. He tried corn production in his half hectare farm because corn was the most common and most in demand crop in the municipality. Moreover, the hilly terrain of their area was most suitable to corn

production. Realizing the viability of corn production he then purchase another lot and expanded his corn production area.

To date, he has about 15 hectares planted to yellow corn. He gets an average harvest of four tons per hectare from his corn fields and the income he derives from corn he used to construct his all- concrete house and mini warehouse; purchase a jeep; and establish a sari-sari store. He has also several laborers and farm hands in his employ.

There is one area near his house which he plants alternately with rice. During wet season he plants palay as he knows this crop requires more water and corn during dry season as this crop requires not much water. A very practical man, Rey is always conscious of the return on his investments and seizes opportunities when he sees them.

His latest undertaking is ginger production in a 3,000-square meter area under dwarf coconuts just beside his newly constructed house. Two years ago he bought 3





sacks (at 60kg/sack) of seed pieces of Hawaiian white variety at P10,00 per sack and planted them at a distance of 1 x6 under some 30 dwarf coconut trees (planted at 12 x 10 distance).

*“Naisip ko lang na bako magastos saka bako gayong maselan ang pagtanom luya. Pakatanom mo bayaan mo lang. After about 10 months pwede na ipabakal. Garu man sana may pigtalbong ka sa daga na ginto.”* (I just thought that ginger production is not an expensive and delicate undertaking. After planting you just forget about it. It's like you just buried a gold in your yard). Rey reasons out why he thought of going into ginger production. *“Saka dai masyado kaipuhan fertilizer saka pesticide ta dai man sya susceptible sa mga insekto asin helang.”* (Also this crop does not require much fertilizer and pesticides as these are not susceptible to pest and diseases), he added.

His initial harvest yielded 30 sacks or 1,800 kilograms. At that time he harvested his ginger the farm gate price was P45/kg. as it was a peak season for this crop. This gave him a gross income of P81,000 and a net income of about P40,000. Encouraged by the good profit margin he derived on his first attempt in ginger production he decided to do a second planting. This time he adjusted his planting. He planted in May so he will harvest around March because about this time the price of ginger spikes up to P200 per kilo.

One good agricultural practice that Rey does in his farm is using corn stubbles as cover or mulch for the young ginger bulbs instead of burning them as is the common practice of farmers in the area. As these stubbles decompose they also become organic fertilizer. In addition, he uses chicken manure as fertilizer.

He observed that those



ginger planted under shades are healthier and produce bigger rhizomes than those planted in open areas. He also noted that another advantage planting of ginger is that it is not very vulnerable to typhoon and strong winds. *“Kahit bumagyo hindi naman masyado na damage yung luya sa ilalim at madali naman mag recover yung dahon niya”* Rey explained. *“At saka hindi na problema yung planting material for the next cropping kasi yung mga rejects o hindi na ibebenta sa inani mo pwede nang planting materials for your next cropping.”*

Rey is also good in sourcing out assistance and services from government agencies and other institutions. As president of Barangay Binaliw Farmers Association he was able to obtain from the Department of Agriculture a flatbed dryer which he and his farmer members use for drying their corn.

Recently their group through his initiative was able to avail of a multi-purpose drying pavement (MPDP). He donated 300 square meters of a portion of his lot in front of his house where the MPDP was constructed for common use by the farmer members of their association. A very observant person and a man with depth of perception and keenness on technical matters that he is, he noted down some deviations



*Fatbed dryer being monitored by evaluation team.*

made by the contractor who constructed their MPDP. This, he brought to the attention of the Office of their Municipal Agriculturist who in turn brought the matter to the division concerned at the DA Regional office. Corrective measures were then made by said contractor on the MPDP which has now been turned over to and accepted by the association.

Rey expresses his appreciation and gratitude to the assistance and extension support he has been getting from the Local Government Unit of Calabanga through the Office of the Mayor and the Municipal Agriculturist especially the technicians who had been providing technical assistance and providing or facilitating his attendance to various trainings. Likewise he expressed his thanks to the DA regional office for

assistance extended especially in providing the needed infrastructure and postharvest facilities.

But he urged his fellow farmers to be innovative, open and receptive to new ideas. *“Dapat bukas kita sa mga makabagong ideya. Arog sako pirmi ako nag attend mga trainings saka pirmi ako pigkukua bilang farmer cooperador para sa mga techno demo bako lang kan DA kudi pati mga private companies.”* (Farmers should be opened to new ideas. Just like me, I always attend trainings and I am always invited to be a farmer cooperador for techno demonstrations not only by the DA but also of private companies).

He is currently being assisted by the DA regional office to obtain Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certification.



## Mun. Agri Fishery Council of Ocampo: *LGU's vital arm in agricultural development*

by Lovella P. Guarin

To the people of Ocampo who consider themselves poor\* and are solely dependent on agriculture for their life support, the presence of a very dedicated and concerned organization like the Municipal Agriculture and Fishery Council (MAFC) of Ocampo, is a blessing. For nine years, the rural folks have felt and experienced the impact of the projects and advocacies of the MAFC, composed of 28 members from the private sector and 10 from the government sector, in partnership with the Local Government Unit, the Department of Agriculture and other stakeholders.

(\*SOURCE: State of Local Development Electronic Report, DILG, 2009)

Ocampo is a 3rd class rural municipality in the province of Camarines Sur. With almost 75% of its total land area of 11,331 hectares devoted to agriculture, most of the inhabitants are farmers cultivating 5,022 hectares of rice area, 32 hectares vegetable area, 110 hectares mango plantation, 650 hectares coconut area, 788 hectares sugarcane plantation, 634 hectares corn area, and 12 hectares cassava. Some 31 hectares are planted to bamboo which are made into furnitures and handicrafts, and 12 hectares were devoted to fish culture.

Ocampo is considered as one of top contributors in rice production in the province and the rice granary of Partido area since 44% of its agricultural area is devoted to rice production. One of the challenges faced by the farmers is poor irrigation which is aggravated by prolonged dry spell. The Bicol region is also frequented by typhoons in the past years causing losses in properties, crops and livestock.

To address these problems, the MAFC crafted a Municipal

Agriculture and Fishery Development Plan in 2015 which contain the prioritization of the construction and rehabilitation of existing irrigation facilities.

The development plan was immediately approved and adopted by the Sangguniang Bayan in July 2015 and was allocated with P2.3M for its implementation.

In the implementation of the municipal development plan, the MAFC's expertise in planning was tapped. The council also recommended and endorsed the irrigation projects worth millions for the different organizations and cooperatives. Among the completed projects were: May-ogob Agrarian Reform irrigation facility worth P12M, extension of San Antonio canal at Hacienda Espiritu worth P10M, Cabariwan small dam worth P12M (on-going), CAANDUYOG Inc. irrigation at Cagmanaba worth P22M, all funded by the National Irrigation Administration through the assistance of then Congresswoman Leni Robredo. From the DA Bicol, the Cagdaga Farmers Association (CAFA) got P5M for the

construction of Small Farm Reservoir and another five (5) irrigators associations received P1M from the Bottom Up Budgeting for the construction of drainage facilities. All irrigation projects funded for 2014 to 2015 totalled to P62M. For 2017, the MAFC helped the La Purisima Nuevo IA acquire a total of P22M worth irrigation projects.

To involve the grassroots in policy formulation and decision making, they organized 22 Barangay Agriculture and Fishery Councils (BAFC) out of the 25 barangays of Ocampo. The three barangays without an AFC are located at the business center of Ocampo, but it is already included in the plans of the AFC to enjoin the three barangays.

By strengthening the BAFCs more families of farmers were empowered as they earned access to agricultural projects, inputs, equipments and farm machineries and learned new technologies in farming through attendance to various trainings conducted by the MAFC. They are now producing various agricultural crops which do not only help their communities become food sufficient but they are also producing surplus which are supplied to neighboring towns, making Ocampo the food basket in Partido Area.

The MAFC further organized the farmers into four associations namely Mun. Cassava and Corn Farmers Association (MACCOFA), Ocampo Vegetable Association for Sustainable Solutions (OVASS), Cagdaga Farmers Association (CAFA), and Association of Rice Producers of Cagmanaba (ARPC) and helped them in the drafting of project proposals. For the years 2014 and 2015, the MAFC has reviewed, endorsed and helped in sourcing out a total of P21, 280,577.50 for funds for various farm machineries and equipment such as two units 4 Wheel Drive tractor, six units multipurpose drying pavement, three units palay shed, 10 irrigation canals, three irrigation system, three flood

(Next page pls.)

### **MAFC Ocampo is 2016 Gawad Saka national outstanding MAFC**







control dikes and two Farm-to-Market roads from the DA, DAR and LGU Ocampo.

A total of 29 projects proposals of the different farmers associations were reviewed and endorsed by the council, while nineteen (19) projects were coordinated and implemented by the council. All these projects were also monitored by the members of the council.

To ensure that agricultural inputs and planting materials will reach the intended beneficiaries, they also monitored the distribution of palay and vegetable seeds, biologics and fertilizers. The MAFC members also assisted and monitored the conduct of 9 Farmers Field School (FFS) for vegetables, 5 FFS for corn, 5 for organic and 5 FFS for vegetable production. The Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) also tapped the MAFC to monitor its salt fertilizer and coconut seedling distribution in 23 barangays.

All sectors of the community are also well represented in the MAFC by the sectoral representatives for food crops, livestock and feeds, fisheries and aquaculture, commercial crops, agri and fishery mechanization, indigenous people, and women sector. A group of indigenous people called Agta Tabangnon live in the remote areas of the town.

The council conducted a total of 26 consultations and meetings and 15 sectoral committee meetings in 2015. They also conducted 5 trainings together with ATI and PDIC. Some 16 training were attended by MAFC officers and members upon invitation.

*Ground breaking of NIA project worth P32M graced by Vice President Leni Robredo. P22M for the CAANDUYOG and P10M for Cabariwan.*

Upon the MAFC's request and coordination, trainings and capability-building activities were conducted among farmers in the municipality, encouraging most of them to undertake their own entrepreneurial activities. The Ocampo MAFC advocates organic farming through vermicomposting and the concoction of liquid fertilizers and pesticides as their chairman is an organic farmer himself.

The council also created a business arm which was registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission in September 2014 as Leaders Association of Municipal and Barangays, Inc. or LAMB. An initial activity was rental of table and chairs for all occasions.

The MAFC also forged linkages with local and national government and non-government agencies in the advocacy, development, and promotion of technologies in rice production and post-harvest. The council also organized the rice seed growers of Ocampo and expanded the membership of the MAFC.

This year the council produced an Outstanding MAFC Chair in the person of Carlito Aquino, the MAFC Ocampo Chairperson, during the 1st first-ever search for the outstanding Agricultural and Fishery Council (AFC) chairpersons and coordinators. Indeed, MAFC Ocampo has been a very vital instrument in the upliftment of the lives of the



*All the BAFCS display their produce during the annual Farmers Day, one of the activities during the monthlong celebration of Ocampo town fiesta in August. In photo is Mayor Corazon Olos (right) with the national Gawad Saka evaluators.*

farmers and a very innovative and supportive partner of the LGU in the implementation

and monitoring of agricultural projects in Ocampo.

## Rice, HVCC farmer groups... (from page 5)

Association Inc. of San Fernando; Pagatpat Mayor Dam Farmers Association of Calabanga; and Lupi Sakayan IFA. From the province of Albay, the sole recipient was FFS Palayamanan FA of Polangui.

The Sacasan Farmers Irrigators Association and Nagkakaisang Magsasaka ng Sagrada Familia all of Bato received a hand tractor as early planting incentive, while the rest are grant.

Meanwhile the Paloyon Farmers Association of Nabua, Cam. Sur received one unit rice transplanter and the Farmers Irrigators Association of Guibasan in Labo, Camarines Norte received one unit floating tiller and shredder.

Under the High Value Crops eight (8) farmers associations received various equipment. One unit each of power tiller was received by the Guinacutan Vegetable Growers Association and Baklad Rice and Vegetable Growers Association of Labo, Camarines Norte. Other recipients of power tiller from Camarines Sur were Lupi HVC Growers Association; Beberon, Lupi, Grijalvo Vegetable Planters Association and Pamukid High Value Crops Farmers of San Fernando. The recipients of water pump were Salogon Agricultural Planters Association and Rangas Farmers Association in San Jose while the Libmanan Vegetable Growers Association Inc. received peanut sheller and peanut grinder. (L.Guarin)



## Biggest techno-demo farm shows hybrid rice thrives even on rainy season

by Jayson M. Gonzales

**BALANGI BANG, POLANGUI, ALBAY---** Unmindful of the drizzle and the distance to walk the 20-hectare technology-farm here, 74-year old Alberto Rivera of Labo, Camarines Norte said "kailangan namin ito kasi malaking tulong na makita namin ang mga hybrid rice varieties na maganda ang tubo kasi an lugar namin ay apektado ng El Niño (we need this because this is a big help to us to see the different hybrid rice varieties with good traits because our rice fields were affected by El Niño)."

Rivera is one of the more than 1500 rice farmers, agricultural technicians and municipal/city agricultural officers all over the Bicol Region who visited the compact farm in said barangay which was cited by the National Rice Board (NRB) as the biggest techno-demo farm in the Philippines during the 3rd National Rice Technology Forum on September 27-29, 2016 with the theme "Increase Production through Hybrid Rice Technology".

"This is the first hybrid rice demo-farm for wet season and the first in the Bicol Region," says Dr. Frisco Malabanan, spokesperson of the NRB.

Local Farm Technician Edgar Pesebre welcomed farmers, agricultural extension workers, municipal/city agriculturists/agricultural officers, researchers and guests from different provinces, agricultural companies and government offices in his "Palayamanon ni Tiyo Edgar" learning center which was also the orientation site before the field tour.

The sowing of the seeds started on June 13, 2016. According to Pesebre, there were 14 hybrid rice and 11 inbred (300 series) varieties in the techno-demo-farm. The

hybrid rice varieties include TH 82 of US Agri-Seeds; Bigante Plus of Bayer- Philippines; SL 12 and SL 18 of SL Agritek; PhD 77 and 79 of Pioneer-Dupont; S6003 and NK5017 of Syngenta; Mestiso 19 of PhilRice; and Chinese Hybrid Rice Lomping of PhilScat. Other rice varieties include submergence varieties being developed by Bayer-Philippines and Inbred Variety-300 series for saline and submergence ecosystem.

Twenty-five farmers participated in the techno-demo.

Bayer and Pioneer companies also provided farm machineries.

Although the documented farms were affected by flood and attacked by rats, Pesebre assured the farmers that all the rice varieties were not significantly damaged because of the proper cultural management and technology introduced by assisting technicians of LGU-Polangui and the private companies.

Junnel V. Llagas, one of the assisting agricultural technicians of Polangui attributed the success of the program to the close coordination of the DA, farmer-cooperators, and technicians from LGU-Polangui and private agricultural companies.

Product Agronomist of Pioneer Herson Arcilla shared how they managed their assigned ricefield which was affected by flood, rats and brownhopper. Because of proper planning and strategy and the willingness of the farmer-cooperator Elmer Pesebre to adopt the specific technology, the rice plants did not lodge and performed well. His estimated harvest is 11-13 metric tons in one hectare.

Outstanding Young Farmer Ulysses Salvino who attended the forum was impressed with



Municipal Agriculturist Alfredo Mariscotez of Polangui, Albay.

the growth and performance of Syngenta's NK5017 and SL varieties. He said that he will be using SL hybrid rice varieties in his farm in Magarao, Camarines Sur.

NRB President Recher Ondap encouraged the participants to practice and adopt the learnings they have gained during the field tour.

"Now that you have seen the technology, use it so that we can be competitive in the world market," said Ondap.

Dubbed as the father of Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice), Dr. Santiago Obien lauded the Department of Agriculture Bicol for the enormous support which contributed to the success of this event.

OIC-Regional Executive Director Dr. Elena B. De Los Santos cited the steps to achieve high farm productivity--- "Magandang binhi, magandang irigasyon, at suportado ang binhi ng mga inputs plus

sipag at tiyaga (good seeds, sufficient irrigation, and seeds are supported by inputs plus industriousness and patience)."

The techno-demo farm also showed the farmers that hybrid rice can also be planted during the rainy or wet season.

Aside from the field tour, discussions on The Rice Program by Rodel Tornilla; Hybrid Rice Production Technology by PhilRice Science Research Specialist Leo C. Javier; and Policy Options on the Expiration of the Waiver Relating to Special Treatment on Rice by DA-Central Office Policy Research Service staff Pia De La Rosa were held.

The overwhelming participation during the three-day activity showed that "ang mga Bikolano ay nagkakaiba sa mga ganitong okasyon (the Bikolanos are united in this occasion)," De Los Santos said as she closed the event.





## Albay teachers learn more about rabies

LEGAZPI CITY---“Ignorance kills especially when we talk about Rabies!”

This is the warning made by Albay Provincial Veterinarian Dr. Florencio Adonay during the Rabies Awareness Symposium for Teachers in Albay conducted last September 16, 2016 at Ysabelle's Restaurant, Legazpi City with the theme “Educate, Vaccinate, Eliminate”.

Participated in by more than 50 teachers from the elementary schools of Bacacay, Camalig, Daraga, Guinobatan, Libon, Malinao, Oas, Polangui, Legazpi City, Sto.Domingo, Tiwi, Ligao City and Tabaco City, the one-day event focused on Animal and Human Rabies Situations; Information on Rabies, Virus, Clinical Signs and Symptoms; How to avoid dog bites and proper wound bite management; Education in Schools, Five Freedoms of Animals/Responsible Pet Ownership; and Frequently Asked Questions on Rabies.

The represented municipalities in Albay were those with confirmed cases of animal and human rabies since 2010.

Adonay added that in Albay, more than 86,000 dogs were vaccinated with anti-rabies vaccines in over 700 barangays. But in 2015, five rabies cases were recorded and

two cases this year.

Rabies is 100% preventable if only dog owners are aware and the rabies prevention programs of the government are strictly implemented.

Dr. Rona Bernales, chief of the Regional Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (RADDL) of the Department of Agriculture in Bicol (DA Bicol), said that although rabies education was integrated in the school curriculum in Bicol which is also a first in the whole country, there are still rabies cases with a number of victims among children.

Dr. Maria Glofiezita Lagayan, Veterinarian of the DA-Bureau of Animal Industry, said that this activity is crucial in spreading awareness since the teachers have a strong influence on their students and thus, use these students in educating their parents.

Teacher Marlou Guiriba of Camalig North Central School who teaches Science and Health said that this is her first time to attend such training. She admitted that it was only through the internet that she learned some information of rabies. She said that in their school, there are more cats who roam around the campus rather than dogs. One of her students in Grade 4 was bitten by a cat last August and was rushed to the animal bite center of the



Bicol Regional Training and Teaching Hospital.

Lagayan said that rabies can be transmitted through saliva, tears and sweat.

In 2015, there were 26 animal rabies cases and 24 human cases in Bicol. This year, 12 animal rabies cases were recorded as of September.

She added that “every ten minutes, there are human deaths

caused by rabies especially children in developing countries worldwide.”

According to the Community Education Officer Eunice B. Mendoza of the Global Alliance for Rabies Control (GARC), the Philippines is one of the countries that conducts a lot of activities on Rabies Awareness. **(Jayson M. Gonzales)**



**Rabies whiz 2016.** Over 80 elementary students in Bicol participated in the poster making and quiz bee with the theme *Educate, Vaccinate and Eliminate*, “as one of the activities of STANDZ Rabies in celebration of World Rabies Day conducted by the DA-BAI, DOH and DepEd. Photo shows contestants from Iriga Central School in Iriga City with their posters.

## DA, BSWM ... (from page 4)

Pamukid High Value Crops Farmers Associations of San Fernando, Cam. Sur; Salvacion Condangay Organic Farmers Association of Tigaon, Cam. Sur; Seed of JAD Foundation in Libon, Albay; and Balogo East Elementary School in Oas, Albay.

The compost facility consisted of shredder, vermi tea brewer and African Night Crawlers. These facilities will serve as ready source of organic fertilizers or vemi cast for their organization.

Prior to the turn over, the recipients entered into a

Memorandum of Agreement with the BSWM and the DA Bicol.

Under the Organic Agriculture Program, the BSWM is establishing compost facilities in the country in support to RA 10068 or the Organic Agriculture Act of 2010. It also provided the guidelines in the establishment of the small scale compost facility as well as technical support and assistance in its establishment.

The DA Bicol identifies the eligible recipients of the facility and ensures sustainable

implementation of the project. The recipients' counterpart is housing and vermin beds constructed in accordance with the requirement of the BSWM. They are also expected to submit a quarterly production data to the DA and BSWM.

One of the recipients, Domingo Villar, principal of Balogo East Elem. School in Oas, Albay said the compost facility will be very beneficial to their Gulayan sa Paaralan. He added that they will engage in vermi cast production to be a pilot school integrating organic agriculture in their curriculum.

Rita Lomerio, chairperson of the Community-based Agricultural Development in Donsol Sorsogon was very happy as she receives the facility as all of their members who are rice and vegetable farmers, are into organic agriculture already.

The Organic Agriculture Program aims to convert at least 5% of the total agricultural areas of the country into organic agriculture as the program is based on the principle of healthy soil for a healthy life. **(Lovella P. Guarin)**



## Bicol media updated on DA new priority agenda

**Legazpi City**---Members of the mainstream media in the Bicol Region attended the media briefing on the priority agenda of the Department of Agriculture (DA) under the administration of the new Secretary Emmanuel Manny F. Piñol on August 18, 2016, Alicia Hotel, Legazpi City.

DA Bicol Information Officer Emilia B. Bordado presented the 15-point agenda to achieve DA's mission of providing "available and affordable food". The priority agenda include cash for work program affected by El Niño; national mapping; national food consumption quantification survey; nationwide inspection of irrigation services, dredging of silted dams and provision of shallow tube wells; support for seeds, fertilizers, farm inputs for two planting seasons in the form of calamity assistance; organization of project management teams to coordinate with the 10 poorest provinces; "Pagkain para sa masa" special project in Manila; Bantay-Dagat; launching of community-based milk feeding program; the National Food Authority (NFA) to pre-position sufficient rice and food supplies in areas to be affected by La Niña; direct the Philippine Crop Insurance to include in their program La Niña High-Risk areas; and

Inter-agency connectivity between the DA and the Bureau of Customs.

Bordado said that according to Piñol, the Philippine Coconut Authority, Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority, and the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) will be again under the DA supervision.

Bordado also presented updates on La Niña based on forecast of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA). Three provinces in the Bicol Region are considered high and very high risk to be affected by La Niña which is expected to hit the country this November or December. Albay and Camarines Norte are high risk and Camarines Sur is very high risk. The DA, NFA and PCIC will be coordinating with each other to mitigate the effects of this phenomenon to agriculture and fisheries.

Another priority concern of the DA under Secretary Piñol is the soil fertility mapping. All LGUs are required to submit their soil maps. The DA has a mobile soil laboratory facility to cater to island and remote areas. These are just one of the ways where the government reach out to people.

*DA Bicol Information Officer Emilia B. Bordado briefs the media on DA's new priorities.*



Aside from the identified priority agenda, the DA will also intensify technology updating and sharing, modernization and mechanization program; easy accessibility of farmers to financing programs and post-harvest facilities; a government-initiated marketing campaign for high value crops in foreign markets, and preservation of water resources; re-introduction of basic agriculture in the schools; development and rehabilitation of coconut, abaca, dairy animals like cattle, carabao and goat; the standardization of farm-to-market roads fund allocation; and provision of identification cards and database of farmers so that they can avail of pension and life insurance.

Bordado also said that for the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources in Bicol, there is an on-going consultation regarding the possibility of declaring a three-month closed season during the spawning period of Abo, a fish

specie found in San Miguel Bay, Camarines Sur.

After the media briefing, Johnny Escandor of PDI and the president of the Philippine Agricultural Journalist, Inc. (PAJ)-Bicol Chapter presided its first meeting to discuss the organization and structure, and its proposed plans and activities.

The DA in Bicol is hoping for a strong partnership and joint undertaking with the local PAJ chapter to assist them in their information and advocacy campaigns.

Escandor presented his proposal to adopt the name of the organization as the Bicol Agricultural Journalist, Inc. (BAJI) with plans on advocacy and networking programs; and information-dissemination services.

The PAJ-Bicol Chapter was organized during the Seminar-Workshop on Climate Change conducted by the Philippine Agricultural Journalist, Inc. in 2015. **(Jayson M. Gonzales)**

## Extension workers updated on FFS protocols

**NABUA CAMARINES SUR.** In every activity to be undertaken, there is a need to observe relevant rules or protocols to achieve a common goal and based on a common standard. Just recently, the Department of Agriculture Region V thru the Corn Program, conducted a one day training entitled "Seminar on Protocols on the Establishment of Climate Smart Farmers Field School on

Integrated Pest Management cum Good Agricultural Practices and Corn Quality Standards" on August 11, 2016 at the Macagang Business Center, this municipality.

The Training aimed to provide guidance for the key players and enable them to become good farmer field school facilitators. A Total of 42 Agriculture Extension Workers (AEW) and previously trained farmers attended the

said seminar.

Dr. Salvadora Gavino, Senior Agriculturist presented the Climate Outlook from August 2016 to September 2017 and the Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation for Agriculture Sector in Bicol Region. Aileen Babilonia, Corn Program staff discussed the "Consolidating Climate Smart Farmers Field School Integrating GAP topics".

Meanwhile, Manuel Dimalaluan, Head Secretariat,

National Corn Quality Achievers Award discussed the "Principles and Concept of Good Agricultural Practices" (GAP) and the "Updates on PhilGAP Certification." He also discussed the relevance of good agricultural practice on the Asean Economic Community (AEC). He added that the core elements of the ASEAN single market and production are: free flow of goods, services, investment, capital and skilled labor **(Blesilda A. Nunez)**



## 28th Research & Dev't. In-house review held

**CALABANGA, CAM. SUR** – 25 completed and on-going researches competed for the Best Paper Awards during the 28th Research and Development In-House Review of the Department of Agriculture Bicol held at the San Bernardino Village this town on August 3-4, 2016.

Dr. Edgar R. Madrid, Regional Technical Director for Research and Regulations emphasized the important role of the researchers in the department's goal of improving productivity and achieving food sufficiency.

Winners of the three categories received P5,000 for the first prize; P4,000 for second prize and P3,000 for third prize. All winners received 1 packet native chicken consisted of 1 male and 4 female.

Under the Technology Adaptation/Verification category, the Best Paper Award went to Luz Marcelino, Research Division chief, for her study Enhancement of Seed System of Promising Grain Vegetables and Field Legume

Varieties in the Bicol Region; 2nd place was garnered by Pedro Oliver for his research project Community-based Mushroom Production Project in Bicol; 3rd placer was the study on Rimas Bio-diversity Research, Propagation and Utilization in the Bicol Region by Luz Marcelino. Researches under Adaptation are adopting the participatory approach where farmers are considered as recipients and beneficiaries of the project, while newly developed technologies under Verification category are fine tuned and verified to determine their feasibility at the farmers' level.

Under the Technology Generation category, the Best Paper was Hybrid Rice Cultivation with Rice Crop Manager by Corazon Orbon, Asst. BIARC Manager; 2nd placer was the study on National Cooperative Testing for Corn presented by Jeanette Saldivar; 3rd placer was Germplasm Collection and Evaluation of Promising Pili by

Ma. Gina Buenaflor. These are on-station researches aimed to address pressing needs, but are not yet ready for dissemination.

Under the Technology Commercialization, the Best Paper award was garnered by Corazon Orbon, Asst. BIARC Manager, in her study Commercialization of Domain Specific NSIC Rice Varieties; 2nd place was garnered by Leo Beltran and Arlene San Buenaventura on their study Collection, Propagation Technique of Herbs, Spices and Medicinal Plants and Establishment of Demo Nursery; the 3rd place went to Luz Marcelino's CPAR FarmCare Model: Innovative Strategy to promote Integrated Management of Rice in Bicol Region. Researches under this category are for ready

for utilization, adoption and marketing because these are matured technologies which were already tested with potential to generate income.

There was also a poster contest which was won by Engr. Doris Yap and Luz Marcelino for their study "Addressing the Postharvest Challenges in the Rice Supply Chain: A Verification Trial of Hermetic Storage Technology."

The evaluators were Dr. Edith Lomerio, former director of the Fiber Industry and Development Authority (FIDA); Dr. Marissa Estrella, Dean of Bicol University College of Agriculture and Fisheries (BUCAF); and Dr. Carmelita Cervantes of Central Bicol State University of Agriculture. **(Lovella P. Guarin)**



*The winners pose with Dr. Edgar Madrid and the evaluators.*

## Castilla's convergence ... (from page 20)

Regional Technical Director for Research and Regulations Dr. Edgar R. Madrid said that the bulk of assistance and support from government agencies involved in NCI will be in the municipality of Castilla. Moreover, the residents covered by the Pili River area will benefit from this NCI project since technical and financial assistance will be integrated.

Castilla Mayor Joan Elizabeth L. Aquende said that the potential of the town for development is hampered by poor water system. Since she is in her first-term as mayor, a large amount of budget will be allocated to address this issue. She assured the regional agencies that the local government of Castilla will support and cooperate to all their activities.

Presently, they are identifying vacant and idle lands owned by the local

government, private and national governments to be utilized for agriculture, ecology and tourism.

The training-workshop also covered topics on The IEM-based GIS-generated base and overlay zones by LGU in the Convergence site (maps and estimated area); current conditions and challenges on governance, demography, economy, infrastructure, and social services in the Convergence site; and Basic CADP Framework Plan.

Aside from Guieb, speakers were Forester Randy A. Nunez, Clare R. Fevidal, and Engr. Pearl Caroline B. Valeros all from NCI-SRD. Parawan recognized the RCI-Bicol as the most active in the Philippines. Other participants include DA, DAR and DENR representatives from Region 13 and Region 7. **(Jayson M. Gonzales)**

## DA, PhilRice launch ... (from page 20)

additional nutrients.

PhilRice Bicol Science Research Specialist II Melanie Aileen C. de Peralta discussed brown rice as healthy food which is nutritionally superior to white rice in terms of fiber, protein, good fats, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.

According to Jun Cabal, an insulin-dependent diabetic, when he started eating brown rice, his blood sugar stabilized and he no longer uses insulin. His bad cholesterol levels also decreased. At present, he is an advocate of brown rice as healthy food. He said that his family is following suit after witnessing the changes in his health condition.

Pecuaría Dev't. Coop Inc. General Manager Miller Bicaldo narrated the difficulty of marketing organic brown rice in the past years. However, with the launching of this event and testimonies shared on the

benefits of brown rice, the sales will boost their product.

The launching program was attended by 3rd District of Camarines Sur Board Member Nelson B. Julia; heads and representatives of provincial and regional offices of the National Irrigation Authority; Philippine Statistics Authority; Philippine Information Agency; Agricultural Training Institute; Department of Health; Philippine Rice Research Institute; Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority; Sugar Regulatory Authority; Cooperative Development Authority; farmers' organization Kaanduyog and Rural Improvement Club; Camp Weenie Martillana; Central Bicol State University of Agriculture; media persons and employees of DA-Bicol.

The event was culminated with a raffle draw and the serving of brown rice. **(Jayson M. Gonzales)**



## Castilla's convergence plan to develop agri-eco-tourism



**CASTILLA, SORSOGON---** More than eighty stakeholders from Castilla, Sorsogon and representatives from the Bicol regional offices of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA),

Departments of Agriculture (DA), Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Interior and Local Government (DILG), and Agrarian Reform (DAR) participated in the Convergence Area Development Plan

(CADP) Training Workshop for Pili Watershed in Castilla, Sorsogon. Held on September 5-9, 2016, the activity aimed to craft a comprehensive CADP and adopt the Integrated Ecosystem Management (IEM) approach.

According to Dr. Oscar O. Parawan, Senior Technical Adviser of the National Convergence Initiative for Sustainable Rural Development (NCI-SRD), the CADP will be finalized this year and will be implemented next year until 2022.

Dr. Rodolfo Guieb, who discussed "The IEM approach for the CADP site: concepts, principles, application and strategies," said that this "ridge to reef" approach will bring sectors and stakeholders together to jointly plan, design

and manage their landscapes and institutional resources to improve agricultural production, biodiversity and ecosystem conservation and sustainable livelihoods.

During the discussion, it surfaced that the barangays covered by the Pili River namely Milagros, Poblacion, La Union, San Isidro, Canjela, San Rafael, Mayon, Miluya, Maracabac, Amomonting, Oras, Monte Carmelo and San Vicente are beset with problems on illegal settlement, illegal cutting, illegal fishing, poor solid waste management, and poor water system. The barangays are also prone to landslide, flood, typhoons, earthquake, and drought.

The Regional Focal Person of NCI-SRD and DA Bicol

*(Please turn to page 19)*



## DA, PhilRice Bicol launch #BROWN4good challenge

**SAN AGUSTIN, Pili, Camarines Sur---**As part of its advocacy campaign to be "Riceponsible", the Department of Agriculture in Bicol and the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) launched the #BROWN4good challenge on September 5, 2016 at the RIARS Training Center, San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur to promote the consumption of brown or unpolished rice which is more nutritious and has higher milling recovery than white or polished rice.

This challenge is a nationwide social media blitz

to promote the four goodness of brown rice which include good for the consumers, good for farmers, good for the country and good for Filipinos. This campaign will run until October 31, 2016.

DA Chief Information Officer Emily B. Bordado said that to participate in such challenge, one can take pictures or selfies while you eat or buy brown rice and post in any of the social networks like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts with these hashtags---#BROWN4good and #Region5,

Bordado added that every region in the Philippines is challenged to garner 50,000 hashtags and secure 5,000 kgs of brown rice. The brown rice will be donated to different charities adopted by DA.

BROWN stands for Be Riceponsible On Your Own Way Now.

DA OIC-Regional

Executive Director Dr. Elena B. De Los Santos said that with brown rice, we add value to rice to boost farmer's income. Brown rice is not well polished, thus, it has 10% more milling recovery, and retains its vitamins and nutrients. It can help ease malnutrition problems because of its

*(Please turn to page 19)*



**Department of Agriculture**  
Regional Field Unit No. 5  
Reg'l Agriculture and Fisheries  
Information Section

e-mail: [darafid5@yahoo.com](mailto:darafid5@yahoo.com)

visit our website:  
[bicol.da.gov.ph](http://bicol.da.gov.ph)

**RE-ENTERED  
AS SECOND CLASS  
MAIL MATTER**  
at Pili, Post Office,  
Pili, Cam. Sur  
under Permit No. 2014-13  
on Jan. 26, 2016

