

DA Bicol turns over P33M worth farm machineries to farmers



SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR – As the dry cropping season starts, the Department of Agriculture hastened the turn over a total worth of P33,654,432.00 of farm machineries and postharvest equipment to farmers associations regionwide.

DA Bicol Regional Executive Director said she directed the immediate mass distribution of equipment and machineries to aid farmers in their land preparation, harvesting and postharvest works.

The Rice Program headed by OIC RTD Rodel Tornilla turned over 4 units rice transplanter to four farmers organizations and 43 units hand tractor to 43 farmers organizations, totaling P6,564,000.

The Corn program headed by Lorenzo Alvina, regional program coordinator, turned over P24,645,000 worth of

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AEW & LFT from South Luzon get accolade

CALAPAN CITY, ORIENTAL MINDORO – The Department of Agriculture Rice Program honored 61 outstanding Agricultural Extension Workers (AEWs) and 10 outstanding Local Farmer Technicians (LFTs) from the three big regions of Southern Luzon – CALABARZON (Region 4A), MIMAROPA (Region 4B) and Bicol (Region 5), during the Rice Achievers Awarding Ceremony held at Ferrarin Hills Resort here on August 8, 2017. The

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The Bicol Regional Executive Director Elena B. delos Santos (above) led the turn over of over P33M worth farm equipment and machineries to farmers' organizations.

Tramline to bridge distance and convey gov't's commitment to peace process

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Constraints on mechanization should be addressed to keep it running



To realize our country's over-all goal of attaining food sufficiency and increasing farm productivity there is a need to accelerate agricultural mechanization as a frontline technology and strategy to decrease the cost of farming, minimize production losses and increase farmers' income.

The enactment of Agricultural and Fisheries Mechanization (AFMech) Law or Republic Act 10601 is thus a landmark legislation which supports the implementation of the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act. It aims to promote the development and adoption of modern, appropriate, cost-effective and environmentally safe agricultural and fisheries machinery and technologies. Moreover, the implementation of this AFMech Law will create a favorable environment for the local assembly and manufacturing industry, enhance unified agricultural and fisheries Research, Development and Extension (RDE) in mechanization for our country, set standards and regulations for agricultural machines, strengthen support services and institutional development and enhance human resource development.

While agricultural mechanization is slowly gaining a foothold in our country there are still some gray areas which hinder the widespread and intensified adoption of mechanization in our country. According to the study made by Arsenio Resurreccion, Professor Emeritus at the UP Los Baños there are two problems and constraints of the agricultural machinery manufacturing industry. One is the lack of appropriate tools and equipment, thus manufacturers in our country employ cut-and-weld technique resulting to a non-uniform quality of manufacture.

Another problem is the non-availability and or inadequacy of after sales service. There are a lot of reports about machine breakdowns in the field but most machinery dealers have no service centers or available spare parts forcing clients to rely on Manila-based offices of provincial dealers for parts and services which usually take time before these are delivered. Also some of the machines fabricated are not location specific. Some

machinery are either too large or too small, thus not appropriate to the condition and needs of the farmers. Moreover, the result of R&D on agri-machinery are not reaching the intended users – the manufacturers and farmers. Most research institutions just keep the result of their studies and research in the shelves and therefore do not benefit the farmer or create the necessary impact.

Lastly, the machinery manufacturers are disorganized and work independently of each other. There are no resources sharing or common service facilities for expensive equipment. There is also the entry of cheap and surplus agricultural machinery in the country.

These are but some of the problems and constraints that plague our local agricultural machinery industry. Unless these issues are addressed our dream of achieving full and efficient agricultural mechanization will remain grounded and stalled.



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PRDP subproject motivates Sorsogon fisherfolk to clean their oceans, grow more seaweed

CASTILLA, SORSOGON – Everyday, members of the Cogon Fisherfolk Organization visit their 2.5 hectare seaweed area not only to maintain their seaweeds. Since they received 10 non-motorized fiberglass boats from the Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) on July 14, 2017, they took on a new role: “guardians of the ocean,” responsible in maintaining its cleanliness and in promoting environmental conservation and protection.

“Dahil po sa support ng PRDP napapanatili namin ang kalinisan ng karagatan upang mapalago din namin ang aming seaweeds kasi kailangan laging malinis ang karagatan para sa improvement ng buhay ng mga seaweed seedlings (Because of PRDP’s support, we are now able to maintain the cleanliness the ocean so we could grow our seaweeds. In order for our seaweeds to thrive, it is



necessary to keep the ocean clean),” Cogon Fisherfolk Organization Chairperson Nerma Belmonte said.

Also, the organization now helps the local council to combat illegal fishing which might affect their seaweed production. The P1.26 million worth Cogon Seaweed Production and Marketing, one of the 10 microenterprise subprojects funded by PRDP for calamity-stricken areas in Sorsogon, will venture in the production and marketing of raw dried seaweeds.

Castilla was among the most affected



areas by typhoon Nona. Reports from the Municipal Agriculture Office show that the total damage in fisheries was valued at P1.76 million. According to Provincial Enterprise Development (I-REAP) Staff Esteven Garcia, the baranggay was fully devastated when he first came to survey the area in January 2016. The road was unpassable thus, he and his colleagues reached it by sea. The fisherfolk’s properties including their houses, boats and fishing gears were damaged and lost.

Belmonte was three months pregnant when she started participating in PRDP’s business planning activities. Now, with her one-year and two months old baby, she is very happy and grateful as she enthuses: “Talagang ogmahon po ako, бага’ng gusto ko mag-iyak san nakita ko ang bangka na yada na (I felt ecstatic, I almost cried when I saw that the boats are finally here),” said Belmonte.

The 10 pink non-motorized fiberglass boats for her association was the last batch of the 50 non-motorized fiberglass boats procured using community participation mode of procurement for the project beneficiaries engaged in seaweed production and marketing. The non-motorized fiberglass boats will be used in the installation, planting, maintenance and harvesting of seaweeds.

Prior to PRDP intervention, seaweed farmers in Brgy, Cogon usually borrow boats from neighbors or relatives at least once a week. Like most of the baranggay settlers, Jonard Lorilla derives his income from seaweed farming aside from fishing. However, if the boat is unavailable, he has to walk .5 kilometers to the seaweed area during low tide to manage his seaweeds plantation.

“Sang dae pa nag-aabot ang bagyong Nona, damo’ na ang gulaman namon digdi. Kaso san nag-abot ang bagyo halos kadamoan na gulaman nawara, napagal kami magpabalik sang gulaman kaya

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Letters

September 29, 2017

ELENA B. DE LOS SANTOS, Ph.D
Regional Executive Director
Department of Agriculture RFO 5
San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur

Dear Director Delos Santos,

I am happy to inform you that the undersigned received your Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2016.

I appreciate the accomplishments of your Region even at the outset of the new administration taking into consideration the setting of new goals and priority thrusts. With this comprehensive documentation of your outputs as contained in this report, it is hoped that your leadership would spark positive perceptions in your community with the help of highly motivated employees of DA RFO V, all in one goal of increasing food production.

Thank you and more power!

Truly yours,

(Signed) **ROLDAN G. GORGONIO**
Assistant Secretary for Administration

Agri extension workers gathered for profiling

NAGA CITY –Over 1,250 Agricultural Extension Workers (AEWs) from the Bicol region converged in one of the hotels in this city for the Profiling of AEWs among Local Government Units (LGUs) as one of the requirements for the clamored detailment of AEWs to the Department of Agriculture regional offices if the 2018 budget will permit. The one day activity was held on August 30, 2017. The profiling is being conducted nationwide and is targeted to cover all permanent/regular employees (within the office or detailed), casual employees, contractual and job orders, local field technicians, and all personnel holding Technical items (doing technical or non-technical and administrative functions). It covers all extension staff from the Municipal Agriculture Office (MAO), City Agriculture Office (CAO) and Provincial Agriculture Office (PAO/OPAG). Also included were extension staff from different municipal, city and



provincial veterinarian offices.

The profiling was aimed to determine the logistical and technical needs of the extension support system in the country and generate recommendations for an effective and efficient delivery of the extension support to further enhance the National Extension Agenda

and Programs for 2017-2022. The profiling also aims to assess the gaps, issues and experiences of different LGUs as frontliners in the implementation of agricultural programs since the Agricultural Extension Workers (AEWs) play a crucial role in the dissemination of information

and transfer of technologies to farmers and stakeholders. It can be recalled that the AEWs were devolved to the Local Government Units during the implementation of the Local Government Code of 1991. The said code mandated the “devolution to the LGUs of the extension and on-site research services and facilities related to agriculture and fishery activities, ...water and soil resource utilization and conservation projects; and enforcement of fishery laws in municipal waters including the conservation of mangroves.”

Numerous studies and reports showed the problem with the devolution which led to poor delivery of agricultural extension services particularly in municipalities where agriculture is not a priority program.

DA Bicol OIC Regional Technical Director for Operations and Extension Rodel P. Tornilla said that the results of the profiling activities will be consolidated and analyzed by the DA Field Operations Services in Manila and will be used in preparing recommendation and reports to be submitted to the Department of Budget and Management for the allocation of additional budget. OIC

RTD Tornilla added that a Memorandum of Agreement between the DA and League of Provinces, Cities and Municipalities will be signed to prompt the detail of the AEWs to the DA in 2018. **(Lovella P. Guarin)**



PRDP subproject...

(from page 3)

ngonian na igwa naman, may nabakal naman na bagong similya, matatabangan na kaming maray ta may sakayan na (Before typhoon Nona, we have abundant seaweed production. However, they all perished because of the typhoon damage and we had a hard time recovering them. Having these boats will make our seaweed production easier now that we

have new propagules),” Lorilla said.

With the Cogon Seaweed Production and Marketing microenterprise subproject, the Cogon Fisherfolk Organization eyes producing 2,700 kilograms of RDS or 54 bags per cropping which they will sell at P35 per kilo packed at 50 kilograms per sack.

Sorsogon Governor

Robert Lee Rodriguez further encouraged the beneficiaries to practice discipline as well as maintain and protect the ocean’s cleanliness to qualify for the Department of Agriculture’s (DA) National Search for Malinis at Masaganang Karagatan by the BFAR. At stake is P10 million-worth of fisheries livelihood package to winning coastal

communities that meet its four general criteria: (1) absence of illegal fishing and observance of fishing closed season, (2) establishment of protected marine sanctuary, (3) clean coastal waters without domestic and industrial wastes and, (4) effective mangrove protection and rehabilitation program. **(Annielyn L. Baleza)**

DA region 5 lays the groundwork for SAAD

NAGA CITY – All systems go for the pre-implementation of the Special Areas for Agricultural Development (SAAD) in the Bicol Region which kicked off with a two-day action planning workshop on August 9-10, 2017 in one of the hotels here.

Dir. Bernadette San Juan, SAAD Deputy Project Director, personally guided the DA regional office SAAD team during the workshop. The team is composed of the Research Outreach Stations Superintendents, Agricultural Program Coordinating Officers (APCOs), and representatives from all operating units.

Director San Juan said that SAAD is one of the strategies Secretary Manny F. Piñol introduced upon his assumption of DA's top post to alleviate poverty and achieve food security. It started in 2016 in the top 10 poorest provinces of the country, looking into the weaknesses of these areas, and their potentials in food production and livelihood programs. The program is anchored on two major components which are Social Preparation and Food Production and Livelihood. She explains that this program is people focused to address the needs of special clients – those agri stakeholders not qualified

for regular programs.

Director San Juan added that she is very optimistic with the quality of the output in Bicol. She rallied the team to go for high success rate in implementation in 2018 and aim for high impact of the program in 2019.

Emily Bordado, Regional Information Officer, in her

regular programs and he rallied the group to the make sure that all the targets of the program will be delivered within the timeframe.

SAAD is a Visayan dialect which means "promise." With the allocated budget of P91 million for the Bicol region for 2018, SAAD will surely be more than just a promise. The

funds will be used to finance livelihood projects on upland rice, corn, livestock and poultry and vegetables.

For 2018, the three provinces of the Bicol region which were included in the top 20 poorest provinces were identified as pilot areas of SAAD. In the province of Masbate, the municipalities of Monreal, San Pascual, Balud, Mandaon, Uson and Cawayan were initially included. In the province of Catanduanes, the municipalities of Gigmoto, Bagamanoc, Baras, San Miguel, Bato and Panganiban were potentially identified. In the province of Sorsogon, the municipalities of Magallanes, Donsol, Matnog, Juban, Pilar and Sta. Magdalena were also tentatively identified as pilot areas. **(Lovella P. Guarin)**



OIC RTD Tornilla



Dir. Bernadette San Juan



DA Bicol RIO Emily Bordado

welcome message, said that SAAD is a welcome opportunity to the region particularly the far flung areas as the target areas are those which have not received any intervention from DA from the last two years. She challenged the regional SAAD team to ensure that there will be no "sad" stories but success stories after the program implementation.

DA Bicol OIC RTD for Operations and Extension and SAAD Focal Person Rodel P. Tornilla thanked the regional team for wholeheartedly accepting the additional task amidst the present implementation of various



The SAAD team in Bicol.

DA Bicol turns over ... (from page 1)

machineries consisted of 5 units Four Wheel Drive Tractor, 2 units corn combine harvester, 5 units mechanical corn sheller, 2 units mobile corn dryer, and 3 units corn mill to 14 farmers' organizations.

The Organic Agriculture (OA) Program led by its focal person Adelina A. Losa turned over 1 unit power tiller worth P230,000 to the provincial local government unit of Albay. Albay Provincial Agriculturist

Cheryl Rebata personally received the machinery.

Under the High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP) led by regional program coordinator Rosita Imperial, a total of P2,215,432 worth of farm equipment were turned over to farmers' organizations. Equipment distributed were 6 units power sprayer to six cooperatives and vegetable growers associations; 4 units power tiller to 4 farmers

organizations; 14 units water pump to 14 farmers groups; and 2 units cacao grinder to two farmers organizations.

Dr. Edgar R. Madrid, RTD for Research and Regulations urged the recipients to prepare a guideline on the use of the farm machineries and equipment to maximize its use and ensure that all members of the association will avail of its services. He added that the DA is distributing these

machineries to farmers groups only as the limited funds of the agency will not suffice to provide said machineries to individual farmers.

Afterwards, there were demonstrations on the use of the small equipment. The banner programs have already conducted training on the use of combine harvester and 4wheel drive tractor prior to the distribution. **(Lovella P. Guarin)**

Bicol women micro-entrepreneurs visit GREAT Women projects in Nueva Ecija

A 15- women delegation from Bicol composed of outstanding Rural Improvement Club (RIC) leaders, micro-entrepreneurs and members of Regional Project Management Team (RPMT) and secretariat of the Great Women Project 2 visited projects in Nueva Ecija. They had the opportunity to observe and have a hands-on experience in processing of selected commodities using the Multi-Commodity Solar Tunnel Dryer (MCSTD) and also exchange knowledge and good practices as micro entrepreneurs with their fellow women. This was held on August 1-4, at the Central Luzon State University Alumni Hostel.

This activity was undertaken by the Department of Agriculture Bicol in partnership with the Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (Philmech) as implementing agencies of the Gender Responsive Economic Action for Transformation of Women (GREAT Women) project 2. Said project according to Aloha Gigi Bañaria, DA Bicol's chief of the Planning and Monitoring Division and Regional GAD Focal Person aims to improve the productivity and competitiveness and sustainability of women enterprises. The Philippine Commission on Women

provides support and oversees the implementation of this project.

Bañaria led the Bicol delegation which included leaders of women groups engaged in medium enterprises and enrolled in the GREAT Women Project. They were joined by their counterparts from Region 2, and members of the Rural Improvement Club of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija and some staff of the City Agriculturists office.

The group was welcomed by Raul Arpas, PhilMech Deputy Director and Dr. Helen Martinez, ECES project leader who also discussed about the features and uses of the MCSTD and the various experiences of its beneficiaries and adopters.

The group then visited successful women projects such as the fruits and vegetable processing project of the Kababaihang Masigla ng Nueva Ecija (KMNE), headed by its president Vilma Joson who gave lecture and tips about their enterprise; the mushroom noodles and chicharon and other products of the Parista, Barangay Defense System Multi-Purpose Cooperative; and the turmeric tea processing of the Canossian Daughters of Charity.

The participants were also toured around the Science City of Muñoz where many



agricultural institutions are based such as the PhilMech, PhilRice, Philippine Carabao and the Fruits and Vegetables Seeds Center. As an output of the activity the participants prepared their re-entry plans.

The Bicol delegation include: Luzviminda Oropesa, president of Happy Farmers Food Products, Inc. based in Catanduanes; Carena Arellano, president, Nasipit RIC of Irosin, Sorsogon; Bernadette de los Santos, president, Baao RIC and Burda Initiatives Inc; Adel Magsino, president, Napawon RIC Goa, Camarines Sur; Rebecca Purisima, president, Tinawagan RIC, in Tigaon also of Camarines Sur; Narie Asuncion, president, Cabitan RIC in Mandaon, Masbate;

Josephine Artiaga, president, Lupi Organic Farmers and Agribusiness Association and Lorna Daud, owner, Yulaik Foods and Beverages of Naga City.

The DA staff included Emilia Bordado, Chief, Regional Agriculture & Fisheries Information Section and member of the RPMT; Ma. Bella Ilan, representing Luz, Marcelino, chief of the research division who was also an RPMT member; Marilene Dimaculangan, representing Rosita Imperial, HVCDP coordinator and also an RPMT member; Gladys Regondola, Maria Vivian Ayo and Raymond Tapel members of the GWP secretariat/staff. **(Emily B. Bordado)**



ASPIRE launched in Bicol

NAGA CITY – To bridge the gap between the farmers, the producers, processors and consumers and to build a simpler supply chain where everybody is happy, the Department of Agriculture launched its newest project - ASPIRE which stands for Agribusiness Support for Promotion and Investment in Regional Expositions. It was designed by the Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Service (AMAS) with the Agribusiness and Marketing

of Trade and Industry (DTI), and the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) has already been signed signaling the convergence among the key players in agribusiness and industry.

“We want to build a simpler supply chain para madaling makabili ng raw materials ang mga processors/suppliers within an area. We aspire for the farmers, processors and consumers to all be happy in a healthy industry, kung saan hindi na madedehado ang farmers. We will look at Bicol’s priority commodities and strengthen value addition of quality products.”

In an interview with the



said it aims to integrate market development services to farmers, fishers, micro small and medium enterprise (MSME); promote regional commodities to showcase strong backward and forward linkages with farmers and fisherfolks; develop the capacities of local farmers

of the AMAD Bicol said they initially selected gabi, pili, abaca and pineapple as priority commodities for ASPIRE in the region.

DA Bicol Regional Executive Director Elena B. delos Santos thanked the members of the Metro Naga City Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MNCCI) for having the DA and ASPIRE as centerpiece of their monthlong celebration of Bicol Business Month. She committed to take the lead, with the support of the DTI, other agencies and the MNCCI in attaining the aspirations of the ASPIRE project.

Metro Naga City Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MNCCI) President Gilbert N. Albero in his message said that collaboration and synergy is very evident in the project. In this era when collaboration is the new competition, he said farmers need three Ms – maximize potential growth and opportunities; master productivity and efficiency; and measure up. “In the 5th year of the ASEAN and sabi nila hindi pa handa ang Pilipinas.

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Asec. Leandro Gazmin



Carolyn Castro, OIC Director of AMAS.



RED Elena B. delos Santos

Assistance Divisions in the regions as lead orchestrator.

Department of Agriculture (DA) Assistant Secretary for Agribusiness and Marketing Engr. Leandro H. Gazmin personally led the launching of this promising project on July 11, 2017 at the SM Activity Center in this City.

Asec. Gazmin said this is the very first of its kind in the country and it will initially be piloted in five (5) regions. The other regions being CAR, regions 3, 6 and 12. During the launching, he noted the “very vibrant partnership (among the government and private sector) in Naga City. With this, DA Bicol is setting the bar higher for the other regions,” he added.

Asec. Gazmin added that a Memorandum of Agreement for the project between the DA, Department

local ABS CBN channel, Gazmin said that the DA has already come up with the Registry System on Basic Sectors in Agriculture – an electronic compilation of basic information on farmers, farm laborers and fisherfolks in the country to start with the market matching.

Carolyn Castro, OIC Director of AMAS who discussed the project overview

and fisherfolks and MSMEs to optimize market opportunities; and promote/advocate investment opportunities to encourage market investments.

The project ASPIRE has four driving components, namely: production support; enterprise development and industry support; investment promotion; market promotion and development.

Adelina A. Losa, chief



AEW & LFT from South Luzon ...

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awarding was hosted by DA MIMAROPA.

The annual Rice Achievers Awards which started in 2011 aims to recognize the significant contributions of the Local Government Units (LGUs), agricultural extension workers and other stakeholders in the rice industry in achieving food sufficiency in the country.

This year, Bicol region has the biggest number of awardees in the South Luzon cluster with 27 AEWs and five LFTs, while CALABARZON has 10 outstanding AEWs and one LFT, and MIMAROPA has 24 AEWs and 4 LFTs. Each awardee received P20,000 cash prize and plaque.

Dr. Louella Rowena Lorenzana, OIC Regional Executive Director (RED) of DA MIMAROPA, the host region; RED Arnel De Mesa of DA CALABARZON; and DA Bicol OIC Regional Technical Director for Operations and Extension Rodel P. Tornilla who represented DA Bicol RED Elena B. delos Santos, led their respective delegates.

The outstanding AEWs from Bicol were: from Camarines Sur: Tita Bendaña (Minalabac), Jocelyn Comprado (Pamplona), Nercy Alvaro (Libmanan), Allan Salvador (San Fernando), Anicia Mancita (Magarao), Julieta Deris (Nabua), Sylvia Oaferina (Buhi), Elsa Cabrera (Buhi), Janice Orciga (Iriga City), Celedonio Elevado Jr. (Nabua), Hector Llagas (Bato), Rowena Otamias (Sipocot), Gregorio Beldad (Ocampo), Jessie Bare (Ocampo), Dolores Bongalos (Pili), Raul Connigo (Sagñay), Grace Santelices (San Jose), Marinette Briñas (Baao), Aline Bravo (Baao), Rosa Belgica (Canaman), and Cheryll Rebeta, Provincial Agriculturist of Albay.

From Catanduanes: Eva Laurente (San Andres).

From Albay: Prescilla Ferrer (Manito), Mat Peñafiel (Ligao City), and Meden Castor (Ligao City). From Masbate City : Ulysses Cabrera Jr.

Ligao City OIC Agriculturist Dexter Mendoza was also awarded as City Agriculturist of the city of Ligao being adjudged as Outstanding City. Ligao City received P1 million cash award during the national awarding in Manila in May.

All five LFT awardees were from Camarines Sur, namely Genaro Tamon Jr. (Magarao), Erwin Barnuevo (Minalabac), Ramon Gaudiol (Pili), William Bisenio (Baao), Chimmie Aguilar (Sipocot)

Governor Alfonso V. Umali Jr. in his welcome message lauded the current programs of the DA particularly the solar powered irrigation. "Marami nang naibigay na irrigation at postharvest facilities ang DA. I think tama ang direction natin. Pero kailangan sama-sama tayo. Mag-usap tayo. The LGU

is open anytime. Ano ba ang gusto nating maachieve? At lagyan natin ng timeframe. The DA, DAR and DENR should have a convergence. Hangga't hindi dumadami ang farmers, kulang ang ani natin. Hangga't wala silang mapagbentahan, mananatili silang hawak sa leeg ng mga middlemen. So kahit magbigay tayo ng magbigay ng lahat ng kailangan nila kung wala nang magfafarm ay wala rin. Sana dumami ang ating farmers. " He challenged the awardees to encourage more people to engage in farming.

"But the farmers should be entrepreneurs and think like businessmen para hindi napagsasamantalahan ng middle men," Governor Umali added.

In his speech, OIC RTD Tornilla of DA Bicol who earlier attended the awarding ceremony of ASEAN outstanding Rice Farmer and Scientist in Manila, quoted Usec. Serrano who was the guest speaker during the ASEAN awarding, saying "Paano ba

natin mapasalamatan ang AEWs at LFTs na kadalasan ay mahigit sa 1,000 ektarya ang sakop na palayan. Gumigising bago pa tumilaok ang manok upang mapuntahan ang magsasaka at mapataas ang ani. Sila ay mga bayani ng DA dahil kung wala ang mga AEWs hindi maiimplement nang mahusay ang mga programa ng kagawaran." Tornilla also added that he wants to see new faces in the next Rice Achievers Awards as most of the Bicol's AEWs are already hall of famer or have been awardees for three consecutive years.

Also present during the awarding ceremony were Mayor Arnan C. Panaligan of Calapan City; OIC RTD Ronie F. Panoy of DA MIMAROPA; OIC RED Milo delos Reyes and RTD Elmer Ferry of CALABARZON; Dr. Santiago Obien, National Rice Program senior adviser and former Undersecretary Dante Delima and rice program staff of the three regions. **(Lovella P. Guarin)**



The awardees and delegates from Bicol.



(L-R) Cheryll Rebeta, Provincial Agriculturist of Albay; Dexter Mendoza, OIC City Agriculturist of Ligao City received the award from Nat'l Rice Program Senior Adviser Santiago Obien. Also in photo are APCO Nena Adupe and OIC RTD Rodel Tornilla.



Bicol Tourism and Food Expo highlights micro small & medium enterprises

NAGA CITY – The Department of Agriculture took center stage once again in this year's 6th Bicol Tourism and Food Expo (BITFEX) held at SM Activity Center on September 14-17, 2017. The Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division invited 14 exhibitors who displayed and sold their products during the four day expo, while the Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Information Section put up an information booth.

Invited exhibitors include: Sean-Susan Food Products, Maiden Chef, Labo Progressive Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Yulaik Food Products, OM Naturals Trading, Pilaui, Ness Crafts and Fine Foods, Mikeliz Integrated Farm, Noveno's Pilinut Candies, Aycocho's Food Product, TAPFPAT, GAPPA, Joross Farm and A.D Perol Pili & Coco Shell Product. They garnered a total sales of P226,473.25 during the four-day expo.

Glenn Barcelon, PBN TV 5 Executive Vice President and BITFEX Project

Director said that this year's theme "Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME): the way to go", aimed to highlight MSME's big role as backbone of the country's economy.

Naga City Mayor John G. Bongat lauded the efforts of the PBN TV 5 for spearheading the event and the national agencies concerned for supporting the BITFEX through the years.

Department of Agriculture (DA) Regional Executive Director Elena B. delos Santos said the event is an example of public-private partnership which the DA would like to sustain as it helps small farmers increase their income. She added that the DA also participates in local, provincial, national as well as international expositions and conducts consumer awareness seminars. Dir. Delos Santos also said that the DA has established a number of AgriPinoy Trading Centers, Organic Trading Posts, and Municipal and Barangay Food Terminals in the six provinces where farmers can deposit their produce and have direct link to consumers. Furthermore, DA's newest project ASPIRE was launched to help farmers and encourage business opportunities for farmers' products in not only local and regional but also in international market.

Meanwhile, Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Regional Technical Director Rodrigo M. Aguilar in his message underscored the role of the government sector in improving the capacities of the entrepreneurs and that the government sector should focus on production rather than marketing. "Government must not go into business, as government is the worst businessman." He cited the current problems of MSMEs such as lack of source of raw materials which could only be addressed by improving productivity. He added that the DTI if focused now on product development to catch up with the

changing preferences of the consumers. "In the ASEAN free trade, the only way to survive is to improve the quality of our products and decrease cost of production."

Department of Tourism (DOT) Regional Director Benjamin F. Santiago said that MSME's role is very crucial and critical to the tourism industry because tourism is changing. In the past, tourism only entailed hotels and transportation. The DOT now is gearing to empower community-based tourism focusing on eco-tourism and farm tourism. And MSMEs empower Bicolano communities through tourism. Dir. Santiago also said that the DOT will change Bicol tourism tagline from "Gayon Bicol" to "Exciting Bicol" as tourism is not sightseeing anymore but experiential and interactive.

Also present during the opening ceremony were PBN TV 5 Station Manager Ma. Victoria Gumabao; SM Assistant Mall Manager Jeanette De Vera, DA Bicol regional information officer Emilia B. Bordado and Arlene Almeda who represented Adelina A. Losa of AMAD.

In the afternoon, the Department of Agriculture Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division sponsored a seminar entitled "Agripreneurship Development: A Tool to Achieve Sustainable Agriculture" which was attended by some 30 aspiring entrepreneurs and farmers. Ernest Asence III, Agricultural Technologist of Naga City and Lydia Lomibao, owner and general manager of the J. Emmanuel Pastries – The House of Pili shared their insights and success stories on entrepreneurship.

(Lovella P. Guarin)



DA Bicol RED Elena B. delos Santos.



Tramline to bridge distance and convey gov't's commitment to peace process

IROSIN, SORSOGON--- “We cannot win the war unless we address the root cause.” This is the message of Secretary Jesus G. Dureza of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) as he led the inauguration and turn over of the 1.7 kilometer PAMANA (Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan) funded tramline in Cawayan this municipality. The P3.3 million tramline is the longest among the five tramlines established by the Department of Agriculture in the Bicol region.

Starting from the mountainous area of barangay Cawayan, the tramline ends at the beautiful Irosin Eco Zoo Park in barangay Patag.

Secretary Dureza emphasized the importance of peace and order in every community. “We must learn from the lessons of what is happening in other areas like in Marawi. “What’s the use of this beautiful eco park if the people are apprehensive because of the armed men? Any kind of development will be useless if there is a problem with security, Sec. Dureza pointed out.”

Secretary Dureza also said that “in every peace negotiations, the government also offers some interventions to improve the livelihood of the people. This is the role of PAMANA. Without PAMANA, the people will be left out in the peace negotiation.” Dureza added



Presidential Adviser on Peace Process Jesus G. Dureza

that the tramline is just a little proof of President Duterte’s concern for the smallest of the Filipinos.

PAMANA which stands for Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan, is being implemented by the OPAPP in cooperation with national government agencies such as the DA and the Local Government Units. PAMANA is on the fifth year of implementation in Bicol region. It seeks to address issues affecting the peace process through security, justice and development interventions in conflict-affected and vulnerable areas.

Irosin Mayor Alfredo J. Cielo Jr. said that in Irosin were armed conflict is a real and present danger, the projects of the Department of Agriculture serve to divert the attention of the people from rebellion and encourage them to cooperate with the government.

Municipal Agriculturist Nimfa Ferolino said that Cawayan was chosen as PAMANA project site because it is the farthest upland barangay of Irosin and the only barangay with no access road in the uplands. It is also bounded by mountains which makes it very vulnerable to insurgency. The area has an elevation of 300 meters.

Ferolino also added that the tramline will be very beneficial to the upland farmers cultivating various crops in Cawayan. A total of 475.11



Sorsogon Governor Robert Lee Rodriguez.

hectares in the barangay is planted to abaca, 176 hectares is devoted to coconut, over 3 hectares are planted with vegetables, 5 hectares pili plantation, 3 hectares banana plantation, and 1.5 hectares are full of fruit trees.

Before the construction of the tramline, farmers in barangay Cawayan endured three hours of hiking in the 4.6

Balderama, Jr, president of Cawayan Farmers Association which will mainly benefit from the tramline, with the presence of the 1.7 kilometer tramline, the travel time from Cawayan to barangay Patag was reduced to only 25 minutes. All the 52 members, 39 of whom are women farmers and 13 men are very happy with the completion of tramline. “Matagal na po naming ipinagdarasal na magkaroon ng sagot sa matagal na naming problema sa transportasyon. Ngayon po ay mas marami na ang magtatanim dahil hindi na mahirap ang pagdadala ng aming mga produkto sa bayan,” said the farmers.

Engr. Nilda Albano, chief of DA Regional Agricultural Engineering Division (RAED) said that they have revised the design of the tramline to accommodate even the farmers bringing their products.

Florentino Ubalde, Jr., DA 5 PAMANA focal person said that the tramline is just one



Governor Rodriguez and Sec. Dureza ride the tramline.

kilometer narrow trail leading down to the national road in barangay Patag. Frequent rains make the road muddy and slippery. Hauling of agricultural products such as coconut, abaca, pili and banana was very difficult for the farmers and the products also deteriorate fast from the long trek. Hauling cost ranged from P2.00 to P3.00 per kilo or sometimes 20% to 30% of the crops’ market value discouraging farmers to expand their farms. Most of their products used to incur damages before they reach the market.

According to Romeo

among the numerous projects of PAMANA in the region implemented from 2013 to 2016.

Also present during the inauguration were Gubat Mayor Sharon Rose Escoto; Vice Mayor Christian D. Lim; Paul Escobar, Head of the Southern Luzon PAMANA; Christopher Azucena; Barangay Captain Jesus B. Oblino of Cawayan; Bgy. Captain Leonel Gabito of Patag; barangay captains of Irosin; farmers and LGU staff. **(Lovella P. Guarin)**



RAED Chief Engr. Nilda Albaño

P31 million checks coursed through coops as lending conduits

The Department of Agriculture Bicol in partnership with the Agricultural Credit Policy Council (ACPC), held a simple turn over ceremony to six Coops as lending conduits for its Survival and Recovery Assistance (SURE) Program

through loan and grant assistance. Eligible farmer/ fisherfolk borrowers are those whose livelihood were affected by typhoon Nina.

The lending conduits and the amount of checks were: Camarines Sur



Rodel P. Tornilla, OIC RTD for Operations & Extension.



Adelina A. Losa, AMAD Chief.

at the Villa Caceres Hotel in Naga City on August 10, 2013. The Agribusiness and Marketing Division headed by Adelina Loza DA-5 AMAD Chief facilitated the activity. Said program aims to help agricultural households in calamity-affected areas regain their capacity to earn a living and provide immediate relief to small farmers and fisherfolk

Multi Purpose Cooperative chaired by Annielyn Panerio P1,376,630.00; Magarao Multi-Purpose Cooperative; Elmer Basbas, chairman P1,310,000.00; Sampaloc Multi-Purpose Cooperative (Gainza, Cam. Sur) Amelia Valencia, President P810,000.00; San Antonio Farmers Multi-Purpose Cooperative of Buhí,

Simeon Molina, Chairman P2,000,000.00; Pinoy Lingap-Damayán Multi Purpose Cooperative of Catanduanes headed by Anita Tassarra, 20,595,000.00; Maymatan Farmers Multi Purpose Cooperative of Goa, Cam. Sur Felina Sanoy, President, P5,000,000.00.

Adelina Losa, DA-5 AMAD Chief clarified to the members that the check is a SURE loan but sure to be paid in a given point in time. Those who can avail are carefully evaluated and validated. Ding Pereyra, Project Development Officer IV, ACPC presented an Overview of the SURE Assistance Loan. He said that The Recovery Assistance Loan has 0% interest and must be paid within 3 years with only 3% service charge. Loan amount under the Survival

Assistance (Grant) is P10,000 per borrower and 25,000 per borrower under the Recovery Assistance (loan) he added.

On the other hand, Cristina Lopez, ACPC Director said that the SURE program was conceptualized by DA Secretary Piñol as a strategy to ease difficulty of farmers in acquiring loans from banks or other financial institutions. She added that P1 billion loan grant was allocated by the ACPC for every region.

Meanwhile, Rodel P. Tornilla, OIC-RTD for Operations & Extension said in his message that SURE is only one among the numerous credit assistance extended by the government to help farmers recover from calamities. He thanked the cooperatives that readily responded as conduits and assured the farmers of continued assistance from DA. **(Blesilda A. Nuñez)**



Recipients of the checks under SURE Program.

ASPIRE launched ... (from page 7)

But “Ang laki ng itinaas ng ekonomiya ng Pilipinas for the last 10 years with sustained growth of 6% to 7%.”

Mayor John G. Bongat on the other hand said that Naga City puts a lot of premium on the role of agriculture in the overall growth of the city and has allocated a big chunk of the city's annual budget to agriculture. But this move will have no bandwagon effect to the communities without the inspirations being stirred by the Bicol Business Month which is on its 30th year now. He added that the best message of the monthlong celebration is value

adding in agriculture.

As a tangible proof of their support, members of the national and local chambers of commerce were also present: PCCI regional governor Clarine P. Tobias; PCCI Vice President for South Luzon Jeremy Lo; Camarines Sur Chambers Executive Director Rolly Salazar and President Raymond Concepcion; and Ferdinand D. Sia of MNWD, Chairman of the Bicol Business Month 2017.

Also present were AMAD chiefs from DA regions CAR, 3 and 12; DTI Camarines Sur provincial director Edna

Tejada; National Irrigation Administration (NIA) Manager Engr. Vicente Vicmudo; Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) Bicol OIC Director Vivien Carable; RAFC Bicol chair Alfredo R. Rillo; Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) Director Atty. Ma. Lourdes Pacao; Rev. Fr. Ian Trillanes of Lupi, Camarines Sur; Municipal/City Agriculturists of Camarines Sur; and DA Bicol OIC RTD for Operations and Extension Rodel P. Tornilla.

Different agribusiness commodities and products such as pili confectioneries, organic products and supplements, pineapple fiber products such as pinya cloths,

handicrafts, processed marine and agricultural products, and low priced organically grown agricultural commodities and planting materials, were sold during the trade fair.

One farmer exhibitor who brought her agricultural produce said that for a simple farmer like her to be part of the beginning of ASPIRE she considers it a big break as she was able to promote her products to a greater number of people. While some customers were happy to know some new and exciting products Bicol entrepreneurs have developed using new technologies and good agricultural practices introduced by the DA. **(Lovella P. Guarin)**



A diversified nature farm integrates aquaponics and modern technology

By Emily B. Bordado

While most young people of this generation are shunning away from agriculture as a profession there are a few who dare to take this least trodden path. One of them is Randy Dagooc of Naga City. He has tucked a degree in Information Technology but after being exposed to his parents' new agribusiness enterprise he took a detour and began to develop an interest in farming. This interest was further heightened when he became fascinated by recent technical developments in agriculture during his trips to Australia and other countries. He learned about aquaponics, both soil-free methods of cultivating crops.

Which he now adopts in their family farm along the slopes of Mt. Isarog in barangay Carolina.

The Farm which they call North Carolina Natural Farm is about 1.1 hectare used to be a commercial poultry farm but because it became a breeding ground for flies and the foul smell was spreading across neighboring farms and households the family decided to stop the poultry operations and instead develop it into a diversified nature farm.

They now have 50 ducks, 100 native chickens, 17 native pigs, 5,000 ducks which they rear through the natural way. They use organic matters such as fermented plant juices, molasses and farm wastes as

feeds to their animals. They are also engaged in beekeeping and they now have about 20 bee colonies. They also culture african night crawlers for vermiculture. Various fruit trees such as papayas, breadfruits, guavas, star apples, dragon fruits bananas are planted around the farm.

Vegetables like string beans, gabi or taro, okra and eggplants are also scattered around the farm. Inside the green house are lettuce, sili, tomatoes, onions, garlic and some herbs and spices like mint, basil and rosemary. There are also some agro-forest plants such as mahogany, gemelina teakwood, anahaw, coconut and bamboo. Philippine trees and medicinal



plants that are now rare like batwan, langkawas, baligang, can be found in their farm. Ornamental plants also abound in the farm.

The latest addition to the farm is the aquaponics, a pet project of Randy which is a work in progress because he is still fine-tuning the technology and putting-up the necessary structures. He is being assisted by Engr. Elsa Delatado, an Agricultural Engineer.

On our visit to their farm Randy showed and explained to us the advantages of aquaponics. According to him, in aquaponics system plants are placed in a nutrient-enriched water. The plants placed in the water easily absorb its nutrients. Once the nutrients are used up, they are

(Next page pls.)



recycled or additional nutrients are added to it. Randy pointed out to us the lettuce and sili plants in the aquaponics which are healthy, robust and tall unlike those planted in soil.

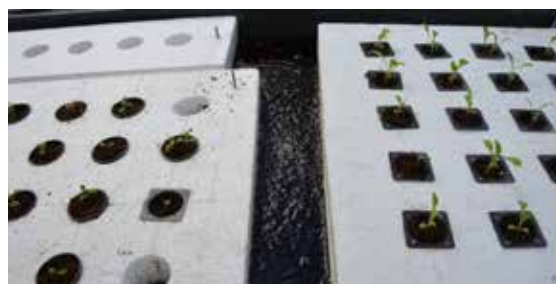
In aquaponics both hydroponics and aquaculture are combined in a controlled environment, to create a balanced ecosystem that benefits crops as well as the fish. One of the components in this system is a media bed where crops are grown using nutrient enriched solution.

Another component is a tank or aquarium where fish are grown.

These two systems co-exist and are dependent on each other. As the tilapia fishes grow, the tank becomes filled with excreta and other waste matter which is a precious natural resource and invaluable plant nutrient. So instead of disposing the dirty water it is treated with natural bacteria that convert the fish waste to nutrients that are usable by plants. After being converted by nitrifying bacteria, this water is passed on to the hydroponic section where it replaces the water that is depleted of nutrients.

The nutrient-free water from hydroponics section is not usable by the plants, but it is safe for the fish because it is free of waste matter (ammonia) that is toxic to the fish. This water is then sent back to the fish tank, where it stays until it becomes filled with fish waste again. The same process or cycle is then repeated where fish waste is converted to plant nutrients and supplied to the plants and the tank water is replaced by clean water from the hydroponic area. Aquaponics relies on the action of microbes, bacteria, fungi, protozoa to produce plant nutrients.

While the Dagooc farm is spacious enough and soil and water are not limiting factors, aquaponics is proving to be a practical approach to farming



The disposal of unwanted nutrient-rich water is eliminated. Aquaponics produce is totally organic. Any harmful chemicals, pesticides, or

love which is farming is giving them a new sense of purpose and fulfillment.

Everyday they always look forward going to the farm which is about 15 kilometers from Naga City. They have preserved and enhanced the old, quaint but elegant and comfy house in the farm and made it a repository of their collections of antique and souvenir items from their ancestors and those they bought from other places during their travels. It is also here where the creative and artistic skills and talents of the family members are showcased as each contribute to the adornment and enhancement of the ancestral house. It is where they usually bring their visitors and entertain their guests.

The Dagooc Farm or the North Carolina Nature Farm up there in Barangay Carolina is truly a place where one can commune with nature and experience calm and serenity far from the hustle and bustle of city life. It is also here where plants, fish and farm animals are nurtured and grown simultaneously and harmoniously through the natural and modern way.

as it provides a harvest of crops as well as fish and there is not much expense for fertilizers or soil nutrients. Randy explained that it requires not much space and there is no need for soil hence, you can set up a small system at home. Although aquaponics require the establishment of a protective shelter or greenhouse and would entail additional expense it also provides protection from pests and disease and serves as shield from extreme weather condition.

With aquaponics there is zero or minimum waste because of the continuous recycling that goes on. Moreover, less water is required. Additional water is only required when some amounts of moistures are lost to evaporation and transpiration by the vegetables. Aquaponics takes the best from both hydroponics and aquaculture.

fertilizers added to the system will definitely kill the fish. This revolutionary technology assures everyone of food purity and a healthy solution to food security concerns as well.

Meanwhile, Marlyn Dagooc, Randy's mother envisions their farm in the near future to become an agri-tourism destination and a learning site. She has been coordinating closely with the Department of Agriculture to avail of its various programs and interventions to further develop their farm. She and her husband have also been attending trainings to enhance their skills and broaden their knowledge on integrated and organic farming.

Although their 25 years old wax and candle-making business is already very successful, well-established and stable, their new-found

MAFC CANAMAN, CAMARINES SUR: Fostering a culture of resilience among farmers and agri stakeholders to sustain food security

by **Lovella P. Guarin**

Canaman is a fourth class municipality of the province of Camarines Sur. The municipality is located in the estuarine flood plain of the Bicol River Basin area, being relatively flat with localized depressions along the coastal regions. It has a long history of typhoons and floods which have had devastating impact on the livelihood of the constituents.



In 2013, the total rice production area of Canaman is 2,715 hectares or 63% of the total land area of Canaman. Out of the total rice production area, 46% is irrigated while 54% is rainfed. These rice areas are adversely affected by unfavorable conditions for production such as drought prone (65%), prone to saline intrusion (32%) and the 3% is submergence or flash flood prone. From 2009 to 2012, farmers of the municipality experienced a dip in average production and average yield which were also attributed to the occurrence of calamities in the area.

With the different interventions and strong support of the Municipal Agricultural and Fishery Council (MAFC) of Canaman, Camarines Sur, agricultural statistics in Canaman has

soared high. In 2016, while other municipalities lost some agricultural lands to conversion, the total rice production area in Canaman increased from 51% to 63% recording an increase of 675 hectares. The irrigated area likewise increased from 46% to 63% while the rainfed area dropped from 54% to 37%.

The MAFC Canaman led by its Chairperson Hubert B. Baynas greatly helped achieve this feat through the passing of a number of resolutions, the most significant being the request for renovation of the Punta Diamante irrigation canals and check gates to improve water distribution. The rehabilitation of said 1.5 kilometer Punta Diamante irrigation canal doubled the service area from 50 hectares to 100 hectares in the five barangays of Canaman, a portion of Magarao and Naga City and enabled 95 farmers to resume rice production. The average yield in the service area also increased from 60

cavans to 96 cavans per hectare. The MAFC monitored the status of some National Irrigation Administration (NIA) projects at Liñaga, San Francisco, Fundado, and San

Nicolas Irrigators Associations, Punta Diamante Irrigators Association and Canaman-Magarao Irrigators Association.

As 11 coastal barangays of Canaman suffer from saline intrusion, DA RFO 5 has chosen the municipality to be one of the pilot sites of DA's Green Super Rice (GSR) techno demo. The farmers readily adopted the GSR technology which was proven to tolerate salinity. Thus, in January

2015, the MAFC submitted a resolution requesting for zinc sulfate from the DA-RFO5 which provided 1,000 kilos zinc sulfate. This has been applied to 200 hectares of rice farms benefiting 200 farmers. The application of zinc sulfate dramatically increased the usual 33 cavans per hectare yield in saline areas, to 70 cavans. In 2016, another resolution was passed to which the DA RFO 5 responded positively with another 2,000 kilos of zinc sulfate which were distributed to 400 farmers covering 400 hectares.

To fully support rice production, the MAFC also requested from Secretary Manny Piñol 50 bags hybrid seeds, 1000 bags inbred



seeds, and 500 bags each of organic fertilizers, complete fertilizer and urea which were immediately granted. The council also requested from the DA RFO 5 postharvest facilities, thresher and combine harvester.

In 2016, the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Canaman won the Climate-Adaptive and Disaster-Resilient (CLAD) Awards along with nine other LGUs in the country. This is a project of the Climate Change Commission, United Nations Office of Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) and Senator Loren Legarda to give recognition to municipality/city with exemplary program to mitigate the impact of climate change. MAFC Canaman received P500,000 cash award. The MAFC of Canaman was one of the driving forces in the LGU's attainment of the CLAD award with the former's strong support in agricultural and fishery programs and projects of the LGU particularly in climate change adaptation and disaster risk management.

Two important factors made the LGU Canaman a CLAD Awardee - their project on crop insurance and conduct of Farmers Field School (FFS) on Climate Change. As disasters become more frequent, crop insurance proved to be a very important assistance to help farmers restore their livelihood. Crop insurance aided in achieving food security in all the 24 barangays as it increases the capacity of the farmers to recover after calamities. To qualify for insurance, the farmer should be listed in the Registry System on Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA). The MAFC also submitted a resolution to include all farmers of Canaman in the RSBSA to be entitled to crop insurance. In 2015, 1,785 farmers were able to avail of the subsidized insurance program while in 2016, some 1,567 farmers availed of the program.

Meanwhile, the FFS on climate change provided the farmers and fisherfolk with



In 2016 the LGU Canaman won the Climate-Adaptive and Disaster-Resilient (CLAD) Awards from Climate Change Commission, United Nations Office of Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) and Senator Loren Legarda.

practical skills and knowledge on how to adjust their practices to climate change and become resilient. Both FFS on rice and high value crops have been conducted in all the 24 barangays. Four MAFC members who are also designated as Local Farmer Technician (LFT) helped in the conduct of these FFS and served as resource speakers or subject matter specialist. The FFS tackled topics on extreme heat, excessive rainfall, saline intrusion, storm surge, pest occurrence and drought and advocated the use of multi-tolerant rice varieties. Incentives were given to farmers who planted resilient varieties such as "submarine rice".

Librado Banastao, Jr. former MAFC Chairperson and currently Vice Chairperson is one of the designated Local Farmer Technicians and he is also the current LFT national President.

To effectively implement various projects and activities, the MAFC strengthened its linkages with other government and non-government organizations in the local and even international level. The council has been an active partner of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) represented by its volunteer, Nozomi Akai, in providing technical assistance for capacity and

institutional development of the women sector. The MAFC together with Akai, assisted the Rural Improvement of Sta. Cruz, which was composed of 33 rural women engaged in anahaw fan making, by linking them to the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) which helped enhance the quality of their handicrafts. This has increased the RIC production and raised their retail price from P10.00-P15.00 to P20.00-P30.00 per piece. The RIC has also ventured in bag making and will be receiving three units heavy duty sewing machine from the DTI. Their products are now also displayed in J. Emmanuel pili pastries branches in Canamam,

Camarines Sur and Naga City. "Abanico" or fans made of anahaw is the OTOP or One Town One Product or priority commodity of Canaman.

Another linkage established by the council was with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). In 2013, the LGU of Canaman in collaboration with the European Union and UNICEF embarked on a 5-year project to reduce stunting and anemia in women and children of the municipality. Dubbed as "Early Warning System for Food and Nutrition Security (EWS), the project collected data on nutrition and food security that was used by the LGU as guide in the allocation of resources to the nutritionally deprived areas. The EWS data showed that the malnourished children lacked protein in their diets and egg consumption was also pretty low among women. To boost egg consumption which is a very cheap source of protein, the project started the duck raising scheme among 35 households in 2014. The MAFC identified and endorsed the qualified households who are living below the poverty threshold, have young children under two years of age, have a child who is underweight and

(Please turn to page 16)



have enough garden space for the ducks to be reared. The project allocate P1 million for the training of the beneficiaries on duck raising. Afterwards, the housewives were provided each with 20 heads ducks as well as materials to build simple sheds and initial duck feeds. In 2015, another 10 women were given the same intervention and in 2016, seven women received the same aid.

More than 30,000 eggs have been produced which were eaten mostly by the families but others have been sold or hatched.

The MAFC helped in monitoring the food production and growth data of the children. Malnutrition rate dropped from as high as 21% in 2013 to only 16% in 2015 and 2016.

Another area which is being advocated by the MAFC is food security. To sustain food security, it strongly supported the LGU in identifying the qualified 180 beneficiary families of the Bottom Up Budgeting (BUB) Project "Integrated Community Food Production". Under the project the DA and LGU provided vegetable planting



materials and 10 ducks in every household. They were also given planting materials of 10-15 kinds of indigenous vegetables and carbohydrate-rich crops that can serve as substitute to or compliment rice such as saba, cassava, gabi and sweet potato. This was supported with training on vegetable production, duck raising, vermi composting, and bookkeeping were some MAFC members served as resource persons. They were also given vermi worms and vermi bed.

The MAFC Canaman also "practice what they preach". Organized in 1988, the MAFC Canaman is composed of 27 private sectors and 5 government sector representatives, and all 24



barangays have an active Barangay AFCs. While the MAFC has a 250 square meter communal vegetable garden inside the municipal nursery, the 24 BAFCs also maintain their respective vegetable gardens and are all strong contender in the annual Vegetable Garden Contest which will culminate in the town fiesta on August 15. The contest's theme revolves around solid waste management, the 4 R, cleanliness and food security.

The LGU recognizes the capability and integrity of

the MAFC that they tapped the MAFC to monitor different projects such as AKBAY program, PALAYAMANAN, KALAHI- CIDDS and various livelihood projects. For 2015-2016 the MAFC Canaman has endorsed and monitored a total of 22 projects with a total aggregate fund of P12,706,710.00. These projects have benefitted 45 farmers organizations and 1,903 individual farmers in the municipality.

The MAFC also crafted the Municipal Agricultural and Fishery Plan of Canaman which was immediately approved and funded by the LGU. In 2015, the LGU allocated P167,000 for the MAFC and P187,000 in 2016. The council is also an active member of the Local Poverty Reduction Action Team (LPRAT) and the Municipal Local Development Council (MLDC).

These feats have been possible because of the very good rapport between the MAFC and the office of the Municipal Agriculturist and at the same time Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office (MAENRO) headed by MAENRO Lilia O. Quintana.

Local mushroom farmers join nat'l summit

TAGAYTAY CITY --- What comes to mind when we hear about mushroom? Normally, we think about those stuff that just pop out from organic materials usually from wood sources or from different kinds of substrate. Since the Philippines is a tropical country and endowed with microbiological resources, a study showed that mushroom contains excellent health benefits and growing them properly has great potential and demand in the global market. For the past three

years the DA Bicol has been conducting massive trainings on Community Based Mushroom Production in different barangays and undertakes Techno fora, and other events even to PNP/ Army members.

The Bureau of Plant Industry in partnership with the Department of Agriculture held the Mushroom Summit at the Tagaytay International Convention Center, Tagaytay City on June 27-28, 2017. With the theme "Kabutehan para sa Maunlad at Malusog



na Pamayanan", close to 300 Mushroom farmers, Researchers and Agricultural Extension Workers from different regions attended the said event. The 52 Bicol delegates headed by Pedro Oliver, Science Research Specialist II and Mushroom

focal Person has the most number of attendees.

The first day was booth viewing/product exhibits and plenary sessions. Best seller was the Merci mushroom soap produced by Merci Villareal

(Please turn to page 18)

Civil servants show “Malasakit” thru gift-giving

SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR---Sisters Ellen and Ena Alferez were feeling happy and excited this September 26, 2017. Both knew that their old school supplies will be replaced with new ones, plus a Jollibee meal and dairy milk for snacks.

However, they were also sad for their sister Edilyn who was absent on that day to take care of her younger siblings.

But according to the representatives of the Department of Agriculture-Bicol, absentees will still receive their new school

supplies.

Thus, putting back the smiles in them.

The Alferez sisters belonged to a family of 12. Their parents have no regular jobs and could hardly make both ends meet.

Thus, the gift-giving activity of DA-Bicol in celebration of the 117th Civil Service Anniversary with the theme “Tugon sa Hamon ng Pagbabago:Malasakit ng Lingkod-Bayan” on September 26, 2017 is like an early Christmas party for them.

The Alferez sisters are part

of the 327 student-beneficiaries of San Agustin Elementary School in this place.

Division Chief of Administration and Finance Rosario C. Sales cited the importance of education in her message in behalf of the Regional Executive Director Dr. Elena B. De los Santos. “Mag-adal nin marhay, magkatrabaho, magkaigwa nin kwarta, asin magtao sa kapwa, kaya yaon an Department of Agriculture sa saindong eskwelahan ngunyan (study hard, find job, have money and share to your fellowmen, that’s why the Department of Agriculture is here in your school today).”

School Principal Marilyn C. Brazil thanked DA-Bicol for all the assistance that the office have been extending to their school like provision of garden tools, vegetable seeds and fruit-bearing seedlings for their Gulayan Sa Paaralan, Tree-Planting, and Gulayan Sa Bawat Tahanan activities.

Ellen’s teacher Jesareh Pineda said that the plight of the Alferez sisters are common

in their school. Majority of her students lack school supplies. Her eight co-teachers would sometimes provide their students with school supplies especially during their art classes. One student would ask her “Ma’m, pwede ballpen na sana an ipandrawing ko (Ma’m, can I use my ballpen to draw)?” due to lack of pencil for drawing.

Pineda was also happy with the outreach activity because it is so timely and useful for the students.

Grade Five teacher Helen Morada said that because of poverty and lack of regular income of the parents, 10% of their students were considered severely wasted and 17% as wasted due to poor nutrition and capability of the parents to feed properly their children.

Morada explained that the support of the DA-Bicol in their Gulayan sa Bawat Tahanan will be a big help in alleviating the nutritional needs of the children.

The outreach activity in the said school is a first from the office. **(Jayson M. Gonzales)**



Earthquake and fire drill



3rd quarter Earthquake and Fire Drill at DA grounds on September 27 with the help of Pili MDRRMO, BFP and PNP.



Sili and gabi farmers participate in investment forum

NAGA CITY - The Department of Agriculture Bicol through the Agribusiness and Marketing Division, hosted an Investment Forum on July 5, 2017 at the Aljosh Café this city. Aimed to increase awareness about investment opportunities, both local and foreign and

Sipocot, Pamplona, Goa, Tigaon and Nabua Camarines Sur attended the one day event. The investment forum served as an avenue for possible market linkages and information on the latest market demands. The main topics discussed include: Status of Sili (labuyo) which was discussed by Ronald Coprada, Report Officer, High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP) and Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) on Gabi Plant Production shared by Marilyn Castillo, AEW of

are already soaring requiring intensive production of gabi and sili. The emergence of farmers group such as the Federation of Gabi and Sili Farmers Association in Albay and Nabua Gabi Farmers Association in Camarines Sur greatly contributed to the local and even global market.

Zaldy Castillo, President of Nabua Gabi Farmers Association stated that he is overwhelmed by the DA support to their endeavour since gabi is included in the top 3 priority commodities. He said that like rice farming,

with proper management and passion, gabi growing has also money. He added that they are already delivering more than 1,000 kilos of gabi leaves weekly to Laguna and Metro Manila particularly in Divisoria.

“Bicol Express can’t be erased from the history of Bicol” Harry Llaguno of HML Foods Corporation based in Daraga Albay said during the forum. He requested interested suppliers to submit 1 kilo sample of gabi leaves, and if it passes their quality standards, his company will pay on cash basis.

Before the activity ends, the participants were able to organize themselves as Cam. Sur Sili Growers Association. **(Blesilda A. Nunez)**



strengthen a multi sectoral network system for investment, some 55 small and budding entrepreneurs mostly engaged in gabi and sili farming from Iriga, Naga City, Ocampo,

Nabua Cam. Sur.

Since Bicol Region is known for Bicol express and Laing which are always associated with “sili”, the demand for these products



Local mushroom farmers... (from page 16)

of Balatan Camarines Sur. A techno Demo on Mushroom Vanilla Ice cream by Arlene De Asis, Science Research Specialist II, DA Region V was well attended and appreciated. Other regions showcased their mushroom chicharon, pastries and other products.

Guests present were; Evelyn Lavinia, DA Undersecretary for High Value Crops and Rural Credit; Dr. Vivencio Mamaril, OIC –Director Bureau of Plant Industry; Dr. Sofronio Kalaw, Central Luzon State University; Ma. Victoria Magkalas, Department of Trade and Industry; Mary Ann B. Guerrero, BPI and John Reggie Anthony Jaminal, Perfect Mushroom. Guests speakers shared some insights on the current status of mushroom in the Philippines, approved Philippine standards for mushroom and attributes

of Philippine native and exotic species of mushroom

Plenary Topics were: Managing Mushroom Farm with emphasis in Good Cultivation Practices for Mushroom; Agriculture Value Chain financing Programs and Packaging and Labelling Design Development. Resource persons were: Atty. Ruby Gonzales, 3G Country Farms; Ed Guzman, Land Bank of the Philippines and Daisy Tanafranca, Department of Science and Technology.

“Buhay na buhay ngayon and Industriya ng Kabute” (The Mushroom Industry is now vibrant) said Mamaril in his keynote speech. He said that very soon, the agency will be issuing the “Juan Magsasaka” Identification Card for all bonafide farmers. The said ID system will ease the rice, corn, crop/vegetable and mushroom growers



particularly in their request for program and services assistance. He added that the summit is very timely to start collecting data on how many Filipinos grow mushroom, what kind of specie and how many kilos are produced in a year.

Meanwhile, Usec. Lavinia said in her message that the “DA is not an “Agri” without us farmers” she stressed that it is important that farmers organize themselves and be

accredited so that they can avail of their needed assistance. “Huwag magdamot at huwag magsikreto” (Share whatever you learned).

A video showing on Mushroom Technology which was featured in a local television here was presented by DA Bicol. Said presentation served as an inspiration and example to mushroom enthusiasts and most applauded by the participants. **(Blesilda A. Nuñez)**

Research & Dev't in-house review yields 42 completed studies

SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR – A total of 42 completed studies vied for the Best Paper awards under four categories Technology Adaptation, Technology Verification, Technology Commercialization and Technology Generation during the 29th Agency Research and Development In-house Review of the DA held September 6-7, 2017 at the DA Grounds.

Adjudged as Best Paper (1st prize) under the Technology Generation category, was the study entitled *Adaptation Mechanism Using Rainwater Catchment Production System* in San Pedro, Goa, Camarines Sur authored by Luz R. Marcelino, Research Division chief, Henrilyn R. Yamson and Maria Antonette R. Orbase. In the second place was the study entitled *Traditional Corn Germplasm Collection, Conservation and Management* by Leo Beltran, Luz R. Marcelino, and Ailyn R. Adante. Adjudged third place was the study *Optimizing Planting Density for Queen Pineapple in Intercropped*

System in Regions 5 and 8 by Eula Dipasupil and Ma. Christina Zaballa.

Under the Technology Adaptation category the Best Paper award was garnered by the study *Local Performance of Domain Specific Rice Varieties Using Participatory Variety Selection (PVS)* by Corazon Orbon, et al. The second place was garnered by the study *Production Efficiency of Oyster Mushroom on Selected Lignocelulosic Substrates in Bicol Region* by Pedro Oliver et.al. In the third place was the study entitled *Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Implementation and Certification Program for High Value Commercial Crops in Bicol Region* authored by Arlene San Buenaventura, Leo Enrico Beltran and Sybil No-O.

Under the Technology Verification category, the Best Paper Award went to the study *Community-based Mushroom Production Project in Bicol Region* by Pedro F. Oliver, Dr. Elena B. delos Santos, Dr. Edgar R. Madrid, Rodel P. Tornilla, Luz R. Marcelino, Corazon A. Orbon, Arlene De Asis, Angelina Peñaserada and Elizabeth Hilotin. Adjudged second placer was the study entitled *Site Specific Nutrient Management for Cassava Production in the Philippines* by Ailyn R. Adante, Luz R. Marcelino, Gina Bustamante,

Jeanet N. Saldivar, and G. Camaing. Third placer was the study *Cassava R & D Project* authored by Jeanet N. Saldivar, Luz R. Marcelino and Ailyn R. Adante.

The Best Paper (1st prize) award under the Technology Commercialization was garnered by the study entitled *Rice Crop Manager: Promotion and Commercialization*

of appreciation and cash awards. For 1st prize - P10,000.00; 2nd prize – P7,500.00; 3rd prize – 5,000.00.

Meanwhile, 13 posters competed for the Best Poster award. The Best Poster award was garnered by the study *Batuan Biodiversity Research, Conservation and Propagation in Region 5* by Luz R. Marcelino, Wilfredo Nelmda,



Marcelino



Orbon



Oliver

authored and presented by Corazon A. Orbon, Superintendent of Bicol Experiment Station (BES) in San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur. Other researchers who helped in the research were Tara Cristina Machica, M. Aldecoa, Limberly Bermillo, M. Bibay, M. Noceda, Dr. Edgar R. Madrid, Rodel P. Tornilla, and Dr. Elena B. delos Santos. The second place was garnered by the study *Organic Soybean Production Technology Promotion* by Dolores Ricafranca, Sorsogon Dairy Farm Superintendent, and Eleanor Escurel. Tied for the third place were the study entitled *Utilization, Development and Promotion of Cow Manure and other Biodegradable Farm Wastes as Organic Fertilizer in Sorsogon* also by Dolores Ricafranca and Agnes Espinola; and *Conservation, Evaluation and Commercialization of Batuan (Garcinia binucao)* by Henrilyn Yamson, Luz R. Marcelino, Jeanet Saldivar, and Arlene De Asis.

The winners under the four categories received certificate

Nellie Pasion, Henrilyn Yamson, and Jeanet Saldivar. They received P5,000.00. The second place was garnered by the study *Transforming Bicol Rice Production with Rice Crop Manager in the Rainfed and Irrigated Lowlands* by Corazon A. Orbon, Tara B. Machica, Lakambini S. Aldecoa, Limberly Bermillo, Maridel Bibay, and Marion S. Noceda. They received P4,000.00. In the third place was *Community –Based Mushroom Production Project and Enterprise Development in Bicol Region* by Pedro F. Oliver, Angelina Peñaserada, Arlene I. De Asis, Luz R. Marcelino, Edgar R. Madrid, and Elena B. delos Santos. They received P3,000.00

The panel of evaluators included Dr. Marissa N. Estrella, BCAARRD consortium director; Dr. Plutomeo Nieves, Dr. Gerardo Ocfemia, Ms. Glenrose Belen all of Bicol University (BU); Dr. Carmelita Cervantes and Dr. Fe B. Perlas of Central Bicol State University of Agriculture (CBSUA). (Lovella P. Guarin)



RTD Edgar Madrid.





(L-R) Iloilo Governor Arthur Defensor; Senator Cynthia Villar; Secretary Manny Piñol; and Congressman Leo Rafael Cueva of 2nd district Negros Occidental.

MAKINA EXPO 2017 promotes farm mechanization

Close to 50 Bicol delegates composed of selected farmers, RAFC representatives, officers and members of Irrigators Associations, local manufacturers, local product exhibitors & DA officials and staff actively took part in the Makina Saka Expo 2017 held at the Iloilo Convention Center,

Iloilo City on Sept. 7-9, 2017.

“With the theme “Aangat ang Pagsasaka sa Paggamit ng Tamang Makinarya” DA Secretary Manny Piñol appealed to Filipino farmers to change their mind-set. “Mababa masyado ang ating mechanization” with only 2% rate resulting to post-

harvest losses. Mechanization is the key not only for survival in the Agri sector but an indication in liberating farmers thru introduction of farm machineries and technologies he said. “Kailangan ang magsasaka, makinado”. It’s now time to boost our Mechanization Program giving the best equipment to our farmers. He also promoted the use of Hybrid Rice. “Don’t be afraid of Hybrid and Golden Rice”, its production technology is simple and one way of improving rice production he added.

Meanwhile, in her message, Senator Cynthia Villar enjoined everyone to cooperate in order to curb the poor situation of farmers and Fishermen in the country. The reasons why our farmers are the poorest because of lack of technology, mechanization, finances/business and access to cheap credit. “kaya tayo nandito, magaaraal tayo ng pag mecanismo para tayo maging competitive” she said.

The Bicol delegation was headed by Dr. Elena B. de los

Santos, Regional Executive Director and Rodel Tornilla, OIC Regional Technical Director for Operations.

Attended by more than 2,500 participants from different regions, the event was also joined by Arthur Defensor, Sr, Governor, Iloilo province, Jed Patrick Mabilog, City Mayor, Leo Rafael Cueva, Congressman, House of Representatives, and Harald Fries, Ambassador, Embassy of Sweden in the Philippines.

Succeeding days were spent on Techno Fora and actual demonstration of various farm machineries from land preparation to post harvest technology. Partnering with the Philippine Center for Post Harvest Development (PhilMech) the authorized fabricator of agricultural machineries, some participating exhibitors were: Yanmar, Kubota, Century Ventures, Aims Agriventure, Massey Ferguson, Korea Agricultural Machineries, embassy of Sweden, Netherlands and Japan (JICA). **(Blesilda A. Nuñez)**

DA intensifies rice hybridization program

The Department of Agriculture gathered all the Small Water Irrigation Systems Association (SWISA) and Irrigators Association (IA) presidents from all over the region to update them on the new guidelines of hybridization program coming from Agriculture Secretary Manny F. Piñol.

OIC Regional Technical Director for Operations and Extension Rodel Tornilla said the DA Bicol targets to plant hybrid rice in a total of 14,473 hectare area this dry season starting on September 16, 2017 to March 15, 2018. Target beneficiaries are farmers’ associations, cooperatives, irrigators’ association and SWISA with SEC or DOLE registration.

OIC RTD Tornilla added that the hybridization program will give chance to farmers’ organizations that did not

qualify in the techno demo and model farms.

The DA will strictly monitor the implementation of the program. OIC RTD Tornilla said the rice farmers who will participate in the hybridization program will be given priority by DA in the grant of irrigation projects, farm machineries and other interventions under Rice Program.

The DA Rice Program is intensifying its hybridization program as hybrid rice has the potential to double farmers’ harvest, providing nearly two seasons’ worth of yield in single planting with the right amount of seeds, fertilizer, water and farm mechanization. The highest recorded yield in hybrid rice in the last season cropping in Bicol was 234 cavans or 11.7 metric tons per hectare harvested by Genaro Tamon in Magarao, Camarines Sur. **(Lovella P. Guarin)**



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**RE-ENTERED
AS SECOND CLASS
MAIL MATTER**
at Pili, Post Office,
Pili, Cam. Sur
under Permit No. 2017-18
on March 17, 2017