



DA Bicol distributes P47.4M worth farm machineries

By Lovella P. Guarin

SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR – Despite the heavy downpour brought by typhoon Paolo on October 19, DA Bicol regional executive director Elena B. delos Santos distributed a total of P47.4 M worth of agri-machineries to farmers, farmers' organizations and local government units from the six provinces of the Bicol region. The mass

distribution of farm machineries and postharvest equipment was held at the DA Bicol grounds.

Director delos Santos said that the marching order of Secretary Piñol and the Duterte administration is to focus on food security. "Makakamtan po natin ang kasapatan sa pagkain sa tulong ninyong mga magsasaka na hindi tumitigil sa pagbubungkal ng

lupa. Sa pamamagitan po ng mga makinarya at kagamitan na ipamimigay ng DA sainyo, ay magiging magaan at maginhawa ang pagtatrabahong nyo sa bukid at mapapataas pa ang inyong ani," said Director delos Santos as she addressed

the more than 100 farmer leaders, members of rural based organizations and extension workers present during the mass distribution.

She also explained the big difference in the guidelines (Please turn to page 5)

"Kapatid Agri Mentor Me" Program to bolster MSMEs in Bicol

By Emily B. Bordado

NAGA CITY - Some 200 farmers, members of cooperatives, micro and small business entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs trooped to the Launching of the "Kapatid Agri Mentor Me" Program held in one of the hotels here over the week. This program is a collaborative undertaking of the Department of Agriculture, the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) and the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship (PCE) - Go Negosyo. This was patterned from the KAPATID Project of the Department of Trade Industry and the PCE which



aims to help the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through a coaching and mentoring approach where big and successful enterprise and corporations teach the MSMEs on different aspects of

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Fast disbursement of funds should go hand-in-hand with effective project implementation

The Department of Agriculture now conducts quarterly financial assessment of all its regional offices, attached agencies and other operating units to determine if targets are accomplished within the timeline set. Financial obligations and disbursements are scrutinized vis-a-vis physical accomplishments.

The regional directors, regional technical directors and program coordinators are always on their toes and under pressure to ensure that obligations and disbursements targeted for the quarter are achieved otherwise they will be ranked among the low performing regions and face some consequences such as reduction in their allotment or transfer of their funds to other unit.

This regular financial assessment and ranking compels program/project implementers to speed up procurement of supplies, goods and materials and fast track implementation of projects and delivery of services to clients. This practice is also one way of helping the government address the problem of under spending by

most government agencies and thus will have a positive impact on the economy.

This requires however, close coordination, teamwork and complementation, synchronization of the key players in the project/program implementation. The program coordinators must work in close coordination with the finance and budget group, and the Bids and Awards Committee. Even if program coordinators are all set to implement their target if the procurement process is taking too long and the processing of payment is also too slow, then snags and delay are bound to happen.

There is also the risk that some program implementers in their desire to disburse their funds as fast and as much as they could might be procuring goods, materials and equipment which the clients may not really need and eventually may end up being just white elephants. Others may also wittingly or unwittingly commit the mistake of juggling funds where public

funds appropriated or earmarked for a specific purpose may be used for another just to facilitate utilization of funds.

A regional office or any operating unit might be very efficient and fast in disbursing its funds but it might not be creating positive impact on its intended users or clients if the goods and services are not what they need. The program coordinators and implementers might be so preoccupied and focused on disbursing and spending their funds and set aside the overseeing the implementation and monitoring of the projects on the ground.

The program implementers should learn to balance both. Effective and efficient project implementation should not be compromised while aiming to fast track financial obligations and disbursements.



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Midterm benefits of PRDP's safeguards compliance now felt in rural communities

Resistance on the ground and within the Project makes Social and Environmental Safeguards (SES) a tough job. According to World Bank Social Development Specialist Marivi Ladia, it takes character to implement compliance within the Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP). However, she noted that because of the SES unit's commitment, Project beneficiaries now enjoy the benefits of compliance to SES.

During the Midterm Review Mission Pre-Wrap Up Meeting held in Naga City on December 7, 2017, Ladia shared that based from dialogues with Project stakeholders, the SES team learned that compliance to SES empowers communities.

"Suddenly, community members are aware that they need to be compensated. Before, they did not know that they were entitled to such," Ladia said.

Ladia underscored that SES improves

the living conditions of the vulnerable sector. "Like when you relocate people and you make sure that they have good relocation sites, it is a catalyst for doing things differently," she added. She mentioned that it was the first time for many LGUs to compensate affected persons in accordance with the Safeguards Framework. She stated that Project partners at the LGU level now know how to conduct valuation and replacement cost because usually it's only the zonal value being taken into consideration.

It is the PRDP SES unit's mandate to identify, prevent and mitigate harm to communities or people and the environment along subproject areas. Among the Unit's good practices are the implementation of a Resettlement Action Plan, Indigenous People's Policy Framework, Environmental and Social Management Framework, Road Right-

of-Way Acquisition and the use of Social Inclusiveness Scoring Sheet.

The Land Acquisition and Resettlement Policy Framework, in particular, aims to ensure that all involuntary losses whether lands, structures, crops or other properties of project affected persons (PAPs) receive just and proper compensation. Meanwhile, those who are displaced whether physically or economically are resettled and provided with assistance to improve or at least maintain their pre-Project living standards and income-earning capacity.

In August 2017, Ladia and the SES team from the PRDP national and project support office conducted a separate review mission at the Manangle-Caima Farm-to-Market Road (FMR) in Sipocot, Camarines Sur. On December 4-5, 2017, the team also conducted dialogues with project affected persons at the Pistola-Tablon Road in Oas, Albay, the Rehabilitation of San Isidro to Pag-orong Nuevo FMR in Libmanan, Camarines Sur, and the Pinagwarasan to Lanot FMR in Basud and Mercedes, Camarines Norte.

During the Midterm Review Exit Meeting, PRDP Project Support Office SES Unit Head Maria Iris Millendez-Bombay highlighted the SES' good practices onsite such as the availability of SES documents in the field office, installation of grievance redress mechanism (GRM) posters and institutionalization of functioning GRM hotlines.

Moreover, Ladia shared how PRDP improved the documentation of donations, which means that PAPs will no longer be taxed for portions they have donated. She also discussed some of the Project's social benefits to the community particularly in terms of reduction in mortality and morbidity.

Keys to efficient and effective SES implementation

"The Social and Environmental Safeguards (SES) has always enjoyed a consistent satisfactory rating," Ladia said.

According to Ladia, this is attributed to the SES unit's close coordination among themselves. She also mentioned that through the years the team's SES capacity greatly improved through trainings that were conducted. Also, the installation of standardized SES procedures and tools guaranteed consistent application

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November 9, 2017

Letters

DR. ELENA B. DE LOS SANTOS
Regional Executive Director
Department of Agriculture
Regional Field Office 5
Pili, Camarines Sur

Dear, Madam Directora de los Santos
Pagbati!!!

Ang Agta Tabangnon Tribal Community. Barangay San Vicente Buhi Camarines Sur bilang pamayo kang tribu. Kusog boot na mag surat po saimong.

Na dawa po surat man lang, bako na sa personal, maka-pagtaong dakulang pasasalamat sa pig-taong tabang asin supporta para sa tribu kang Agta Tabangnon Tribal Community.

Nin huli po sa saimong tabang an mga membros sa IP nag-kaigwa nin mga kagamitan asin pangtanom na hali po sa DA.

Directora, buong pusong nag pasasalamat kaming mga nasa tribu, sa dakulang tabang nindo. Salamat po.

Merry Christmas po!!!

Gumagalang

Vilma O. Coronel
Tribal Chieftain

More post-harvest facilities through PPP needed to ensure quality corn grains

by Emily B. Bordado

SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR – The slump in farm-gate price of yellow corn last year felt by farmers in Bicol pushed the industry stakeholders to innovate and develop strategies to be competitive in the long run. Because of free trade, cheap imported alternates are made available threatening the local industry where much is yet to be achieved in terms of minimizing post-harvest losses particularly during rainy season) and keeping up with the high market demand for quality grains in large volumes.

“Production is not a problem but the quality of corn produced commonly during wet season cropping does not meet the accepted standards” This was the consensus of most of the participants to the consultative meeting with corn industry players and stakeholders called by the Department of Agriculture regional office here over the week.

Re Orcine, president of the Kabikolan Feed Millers Association explained that

there was an over supply of corn in the region last year but most of these corn grains where not Class A and easily deteriorated due to continuous rain and lack of postharvest equipment in the region. This prompted the local feedmillers to buy imported wheat which gave them confidence that the animal feeds they will producing will also be of good quality and safe. He noted that most corn farmers do not dry their corn in cobs but they remove the grains first from the cobs then dry them.

This observation was shared by former mayor John Vasquez Dycoco of Banco Santiago de Libon which has a P20 million credit exposure for corn farmers in the region. He said that indeed most of the corn harvested by the farmers easily deteriorated and were very vulnerable to molds. He bared that as a result of the slump in corn price last year many of their farmer creditors were not able to pay thus, they have past due accounts worth P4Million.

For his part Lorenzo



Alvina, DA-Bicol regional corn program coordinator acknowledged that the current available post-harvest facilities in the region are not enough and most of these are not large scale dryers. He said that what is needed in the corn cluster areas are not the village type dryers but those which can process

bigger volumes like the corn processing complex in the town of Tigaon. It was also proposed that the possible establishment of bigger dryers through Public-Private Partnership (PPP) with investments from feed millers and lending institutions, shall be the key interventions to
(Next page pls.)



“Kapatid Agri Mentor Me” Program ... (from page 1)

business operations.

DA Bicol regional executive director, Dr. Elena B. de los Santos urged farmers to change their mind set of just being content with their role as producers but should aspire to be entrepreneurs. With their diligence, creativity, and innovativeness plus the help of their “big brothers” small farmers can manage and make the most of their resources and abilities and transform them into viable enterprises.

Vivien Carable, OIC , center Director of ATI said that their institute is ready to train farmers to make them smart and innovative entrepreneurs.

Experts from the PCE,

Jose Alvaro Severino Nito and Victor Madlangbayan served as the resource persons. Nito said that agriculture is the game changer and this Agri Mentor Me Program will equip agri -entrepreneurs with proper production techniques , practical knowledge and strategies to help them expand their business. He added that the program will also provide consultation services, develop agri-entrepreneurs as future mentors and ultimately nurture a community of dynamic, competitive and sustainable agri-entrepreneurs.

The program adopts the “kapatid” or “big brother

helping small brother “ approach where a practitioner mentor with extensive knowledge of the agribusiness industry through coaching and mentoring provides customized, non-generic and practical recommendations to new or aspiring SMEs.

Madlangbayan on the other hand talked about Entrepreneurial Mind-setting, Values Formation and Value Chain Analysis and Marketing.

Fe Caranza a person with disability but now a successful and multi-awarded entrepreneur engaged in in soya product processing in Naga City. Bernadette San

Juan, project director of Special Areas for Agricultural Development (SAAD) Program of the DA came all the way from Manila to grace the launching. She announced that the actual mentoring and coaching using the modules designed for the purpose for interested agri-entrepreneurs will start next year. According to her there will be 3 batches with 30 individuals per batch. She explained that unlike the DTI and other agencies, the DA provides assistance to groups not to individuals as DA believes in shared responsibility and community approach.

DA 5 distributes postharvest machineries

SAN AGUSTIN PILI CAMARINES SUR. The Department of Agriculture turn over a total of P38.9 million worth of equipment and postharvest machineries to qualified Farmers Association/ Muliti Purpose Cooperatives on November 27 at the DA-5 compound this municipality. The distribution of said machineries is part of the agency's objective to reduce post-harvest cost and losses.

Rodel Tornilla, Regional Technical Director for Operations encourage the beneficiaries to have a sense of ownership since the machineries are given without any counterpart. The members should be responsible for the maintenance of the equipment.

He said that those who were given are luckier because next time the program will be imposing a loan scheme of 2% annual interest payable within 4 years.

Regional Technical Director for Research and Regulations Edgar Madrid calls for "Pagmakulog, Malasakit, Kooperasyon." Treat the machineries as if it's your own with accountability and responsibility. Never fail to accommodate other non-member farmers with a certain fee for the benefit of the organization he said.

The Rice Program turned over P23.4 million worth of handtractor with trailer, palay tresher, rice combine harvester, and mini 4WD tractor (36 HP). The Corn Program headed by Lorenzo Alvina distributed P13,620,000.00 worth of four wheel drive tractor, mechanical corn sheller, cassava granulator and cassava chipper. The High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP) headed by Rosita Imperial distributed P1,920,500 worth of peanut

sheller, knapsack sprayer and 4WD tractor.

One of the Recipients of the farm equipment Efren Duca Jr., chairman of San Fernando Farmers Federation for Agricultural and Community Development in San Fernando Camarines Sur said that last month his Association was provided with a combine harvester and this time a 4WD tractor. "Maogmang Pasko ini para samo kan DA" he quipped. **(Blesilda A. Nuñez)**



More postharvest facilities ... (from page 4)

be proposed in the 2019 DA budget.

Meanwhile Nora Folloso, assistant provincial director of the National Food Authority in Camarines Sur explained that NFA has no specific procurement fund for corn but they have a directive that if the price goes beyond P12.30 per kilo they have to request for

budget allocation and authority from their main office. Last year NFA Cam. Sur allocated P6.5M budget to buy at least 60,000 bags of corn at P12.30 support price plus 20 centavos incentive for dried corn. However, Folloso clarifies that there was a new directive requiring them to buy only those corn grains classified as Class A. The

parameters for Class A grains are as follows: 14% Moisture Content; 2 days solar dried or 24 hours in mechanical dryer; 97% grains purity; 5% breakage of kernel and only 3% presence of foreign matters.

Municipal Agriculturists Gil Gabriel Bordado and Jerry Mercado of Calabanga and Goa respectively both aired the

need to upgrade and increase the current number of drying facilities in their respective areas. They said that flat bed dryers are not ideal for drying corn grains. They also appealed to the big players in the industry not to import corn during the peak season. They expressed their support to a Private and *(Turn to page 16)*

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

governing the distribution of machineries to farmers. In the past years, there was 15% to 20% equity from the farmer-recipients which was lowered to 10% in 2016. But despite this, many farmers' groups could not provide the equity. This resulted to the accumulation of many equipment in the regional offices. Before these equipment totally deteriorate and become unserviceable, Sec. Piñol ordered the regional offices to distribute them without the monetary counterpart from the recipients. This year however, Secretary Piñol completely removed the farmers' equity.

Thus, she urged the farmers to give prime importance to care and maintenance and implement measures so that all members may enjoy the services of the equipment and machineries. She adds however, that the no equity scheme may only be temporary as it is not sustainable for the government to continuously provide these machineries as dole out.

The Rice Program distributed a total of P31.2M worth of machineries consisted of 8 units combine harvester worth P1,849,500; 15 units 4WD mini tractor; 19 units hand tractor; and 21 units

thresher. The mobile corn dryer was awarded to the United Corn Growers of Pili, Inc. represented by its president Arturo Bismonte.

The High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP) distributed a total of P2.9M consisting of 59 units knapsack sprayer; 7 units power tiller worth P220,000; 6 units power sprayer; 4 units pole pruner; 11 units water pump; 1 unit peanut grinder; 3 units peanut sheller; 10 units wheel barrow; and 50 sets of garden tools.

The Corn Program distributed a total of P13.2M

worth of machineries consisting of Mobile Corn Dryer worth P3.5M, 3 units mini corn mill, 5 units corn mill, 3 units corn sheller, 1 PISOS, 1 unit cassava digger, 1 unit cassava chipper and 1 unit cassava granulator.

Meanwhile, DA Bicol Regional Technical Director for Research and Regulations Edgar R. Madrid said that the DA is now conducting mass distribution of farm equipment and machineries at the DA regional office rather than doing it in the provinces and municipalities as it saves time, effort and resources. **(Lovella P. Guarin)**

Albay is bird flu- free

LEGAZPI CITY---More than 70 livestock inspectors, representatives of private poultry companies and government agencies, media men and veterinarians assured the public that there is no bird flu in the province of Albay as they took part in the ceremonial eating of fried chicken and “balut” during the Avian Influenza Protection Program Stakeholders Forum held recently in this city.

However, this is not a reason to be complacent. According to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Bicol representative Ma. Cristina A. De Los Santos, there are risk areas in the Bicol Region that are being closely monitored by their office because these serve as a resting, feeding and breeding areas of migratory birds which are possible carriers of the Avian Influenza Virus.

In Sorsogon, the risk areas include the municipalities of Bulan, Matnog, Prieto Diaz, Malawlawan Island in Castilla, and Pilar Egret Bowl in

Sacnagan, Pilar; in Camarines Sur, the wetlands in Cabusao, Magarao and Calabanga and the lakes of Baao and Buhii; in Albay, the wetlands in Polangui, Oas and Libon; in Masbate are the Wildlife Sanctuary of Chico and Naro in Cawayan and the Bongsanglay Natural Park in Royroy, Batuan; in Catanduanes are the wetlands in San Andres and Panganiban; and all the wetlands in Camarines Norte.

According to Albay Provincial Veterinarian Dr. Florencio F. Adonay, there is no available vaccine for the virus because of its rapid mutation of a new strain, thus, the recommendation will always be depopulation of the birds.

Adonay cited the case of USA where they were able to contain the spread of the virus in six months. All birds within the one-kilometer zone were depopulated. Movement of birds or poultry products within the seven-kilometer control area were also prohibited.

According to Regional Animal Health Program Coordinator and Avian



Influenza Focal Person Dr. Rona P. Bernales, poultry layers and quails easily contracted the virus due to lack of Newcastle Disease (NCD) vaccine. Since NCD and AI are closely-related, Bernales advised all poultry owners to have their layers and quails be vaccinated against NCD.

Bernales also disclosed that it was Avian Influenza subtype H5N6 that affected the poultry animals in San Luis, Pampanga. This subtype came from migratory birds from China.

At present, the Regional AI Task Force are conducting the following activities--- Biosecurity and Disinfection, Isolation and Quarantine, Reporting and Surveillance, Depopulation and Disposal, and Information and Education. Albay Provincial Health Officer

Dr. Antonio Ludovico said that the Avian Flu can spread rapidly because it is a kind of flu. At present, there is no case of human victim of Bird Flu in Albay. The H1N1 and H1N6 AI strains can be transmitted by infected birds to humans.

Avian Influenza is a highly contagious viral disease caused by an Influenza A Orthomyxovirus and normally being carried by wild aquatic birds (wild ducks, geese, swans, gulls, shorebirds, terns) in their respiratory or intestinal tracts but do not usually get sick. The affected animals include Poultry (chickens, turkeys, quail), water fowls (ducks, geese, swans), pet birds, and migratory birds. The incubation period to an affected bird is a few hours or a few days and up to two weeks in flocks. **(Jayson M. Gonzales)**

Mahalin Pagkaing Atin expo caravan

NABUA CAMARINES SUR.-- Sharing a common objective in creating sustainable livelihood in the locality, the DA Bicol together with the Department of Trade and Industry partnered with the Pilmico Foods Corporation and the Aboitiz Foundation Inc. in launching the Mahalin Pagkaing Atin Food & Agri Livelihood Expo caravan on October 17, 2017 held in this municipality.

The event was attended by more than 300 participants composed of farmers and aspiring agri- entrepreneurs giving them the opportunity to interact with local exhibitors and participate in the free seminars like “Starting and Growing Business”,

Farrowing, Nursery to finisher Management and Baking.

DA undersecretary for Agribusiness and Marketing Berna Romulo-Puyat in her message expressed her support to strengthen partnership with Pilmico consistent with the DA mandate to provide food affordable and accessible to all by implementing community based projects. She encouraged consumers to buy straight from farmers and consume more vegetables.

Also present during the occasion were Adelina Losa, chief of DA 5 Agribusiness and Marketing Division and Edwin Pasahol, Senior Trade and Development Specialist DTI-BSMED. Livelihood kits



consisting of 45 piglets (3 piglet per beneficiary) and 6 bakery starter kits were also turned over by Pilmico to 21 pre-screened beneficiaries from Camarines Sur.

The said company

joined the DA's campaign in promoting sustainable entrepreneurship through promotion of local produce and providing safe nutritious food for every Filipino. **(Blesilda A. Nuñez)**

Gov't agencies and stakeholders take part in "Kilos Sambayanan"

NAGA CITY - Over 200 stakeholders and officials from the different national government agencies under the Human Development and Poverty Reduction cluster or those involved in land, shelter and food (lupa, bahay at pagkain) took part in a forum dubbed as "Kilos Sambayanan" assembly held at the Tent of Avenue Plaza in this city on October 20.

Initiated and launched in July by the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) in partnership with various government agencies this program calls for a unified or convergent effort and commitment of various sectors to lift the poor from poverty. Liza Maza, NAPC secretary said Kilos Sambayanan aims to bring the government closer to the poor and marginalized sectors to create a strong mass movement politically and economically to ensure that the government meets their needs through active participation in governance and national development.

The forum was the third of a series of activities being

conducted nationwide which also include audio visual presentations, performances and information kiosks. The first part of the activity was the press conference. The second part was the simultaneous viewing or live streaming of



the program and presentation of the various agencies' programs and projects for the poor from the Bureau of Soil and Water Management inside the DA compound in Quezon City. The third part was the open forum where the invited stakeholders in the selected provinces were given the chance to ask questions face-to-face with the heads or officials of the various national agencies.

For Bicol, the lead agency was the NIA and its Senior Deputy Administrator Ret. General Abraham Bagasin personally graced the assembly and delivered his message. The DA delegation was led by Regional Executive Director, Dr. Elena B. de los Santos. The other agency heads who graced the event and served as panelists were: Engr. Romeo M.

organic farming, agrarian reform beneficiaries officials of irrigators associations, cooperatives, farmers associations and other rural based organizations. They ventilated their concerns and issues which were readily answered and positively considered by the respective agency heads present.

On the question why the

Lopez, NIA regional manager; Engr. Rodolfo S. Pangilinan, DAR Regional director; Engr. Bernardo M. Asetre, NFA Regional manager; Engr. Albert A. Perfecto, NHA, Regional Manager; Mateo Zipagan, PCA Regional Manager; Engr. Albert A. Perfecto, Regional Manager, National Housing Authority; Roberto A. Salvosa, Assistant Department Manager, Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-Ibig); Engr. Frederick M. de Real, Regional Manager, Social Housing Finance; Engr. Cristina B. Abaño, Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) OIC - Regional Coordinator; Eva B. Balisnomo, OIC, Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB); Melody Relucio, DILG provincial director. Also present were Dr. Edgar A. Madrid, DA, RTD for Research and Regulations and Nora Folloso, Assistant Manager of NFA Cam. Sur and other senior officials of the participating agencies.

The open forum was actively participated in by the invited stakeholders which included farmers engaged in rice, corn, high value commercial crops, livestock,

DA is channeling through the LGUs its intervention and assistance to farmers instead of giving these directly to farmers group, Director de los Santos explained that the LGUs who have direct access to farmers are also DA's stakeholders. The LGUs provide the DA the masterlist of farmers in their locality and deploy its extension workers to implement DA programs in their locality and as a protocol DA interventions and assistance are coursed through them especially after a typhoon or calamity. But individual or farmers group especially those duly accredited by the DSWD and the DA accreditation team and other agri-stakeholders can also go directly to the DA and request for assistance.

On the issue of the rehabilitation and re-orientation of the Pili airport which will affect prime agricultural lands and displace farmers, Engr. Pangilinan of DAR explained that there will be no land conversion but an expropriation order. What DAR is hoping for and willing to support is for the affected farmers to be given reasonable compensation for their agricultural land. **(EMILY B. BORDADO)**

Midterm benefits of PRDP's safeguards...

(from page 3)

of safeguards requirements through all subprojects nationwide. Ladia added that joint technical review and validation activities have also proven to be very effective in ensuring SES compliance.

"Issues are addressed faster. Non-SES staff became aware of SES requirements and have started to care for safeguards. Now you realize you need to work together to ensure the compliance of PRDP subprojects," she furthered.

Moving forward & Highlight

To sustain and improve its performance, Ladia recommended to augment the

number of SES staff, develop a tracking system/matrix for SES compliance in terms of number of PAPs from planning to implementation and integration of SES works in PRDP processes and trainings. She also cautioned the team in terminating subprojects with SES issues and encouraged them to inform the World Bank and seek assistance in complying with its policies. SES plans to conduct a Safeguards Thematic Review in 2018 to capture more impacts of the unit to the communities in PRDP project sites. **(Annielyn L. Baleza)**

5th National Quality Corn Achievers Awards & Cornucopia Awards

National Winners

Corn and cassava top performers honored by DA

Four local government units from Camarines Sur and their respective municipal/city agriculturists and extension workers who have exceptionally performed in the implementation of the Department of Agriculture's Corn Program were among those honored and given awards during the 5TH National Quality Corn Achievers Awards (NQCAA) and 13th National Corn Congress at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City on November 23, 2017.

Agriculture secretary Emmanuel F. Piñol in his keynote speech underscored that the three vital needs of the agriculture sector are technology, financing and market.

If these needs are addressed then farmers will be better off. He gave the assurance: Ang kasalukuyang administration ay Kumakalinga sa mga magsasaka."

He also announced the launching of the "Bigas Kamais rice corn blend program" a collaborative and innovative marketing and promotion project of the DA, Phil. Maize Federation, Inc. and the National Food Authority as a strategy to augment rice as a staple, to address malnutrition and provide additional income to farmers.

Another first during this year's Corn event was the awarding of the Cornucopia Awards which

(Please turn to page 17)

Awarded as among the country's top 16 outstanding municipalities /cities were Iriga City, Calabanga, Tigaon and Naga City. Each winning municipality/ city was awarded a project grant worth P1M and a trophy while the municipal agriculturists were awarded P30 thousand check, a trophy and a medallion.



Iriga City. Outstanding City and Outstanding City Agriculturist Ruben S.de los Santos.



Calabanga, Cam. Sur. Outstanding Municipality and Outstanding Mun. Agriculturist Gil Gabriel H. Bordado III. Mayor Eduardo A. Severo received the award.



Tigaon, Cam. Sur. Mayor Chiqui Fuentebella received the award as Outstanding Municipality. Lea M. Beltran was Outstanding Mun. Agriculturist.



Naga City. Vice Mayor Nelson Legacion received the outstanding city award. Edna B. Bongalonta received the outstanding City Agriculturist award.



Ten agricultural extension workers were also recognized and given P20 cash prize and a trophy. They were: Marly Corporal and Honesto Sirios, Jr and Jonafel Taturan of Iriga; Joshua Ipo and Ryan Calatrava of Calabang; Buster Ibarbia and Noel Manaog of Buhi. Hector Llagas of Bato; Jerry Mercado of Goa and Annie Lumanog of Bula. Both Mercado and Lumanog who have been awardees for the past 3 consecutive years joined the ranks of hall of fame awardees.



The Tuburan United Farmers Association of Cawayan Masbate was awarded for placing 3rd as outstanding cassava cluster in the 1st Cassava Cluster Management Excellence Award. Association president, Robinson Riveral received the check amounting to P1 million and the trophy.

National Organic Agriculture Achievers Awards



National Winners

Organic agri stakeholders converged in 14th NOAC

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY, MISAMIS ORIENTAL - “What incentives can we give to every farmer who embraces organic farming?” This question posed by agriculture secretary Emmanuel F. Piñol in his speech during the 14th National Organic Agriculture Congress (NOAC) at Limketkai Center here, drew thunderous applause from the more than 1,600 organic agriculture advocates from all over the country.

Meanwhile, Engr. Christopher Morales, National Program Coordinator of the National Organic Agriculture Program reported the accomplishments of the program. As of October 2017, there are 39 certified as organic farms in the country and 8 in Bicol; 55 organic trading posts nationwide (2 in Bicol located in Banao Legazpi City and Daet, Camarines Norte); 2,368 farmers have adopted organic farming technologies in addition to existing 116,558 organic practitioners. He also reported that for CY 2017 a total of 51,559 hectares were converted to organic, a significant addition to the existing 350,760 hectares. These resulted to the production of 559,063 metric tons organic agricultural products. Some of these products reached 16 local and even foreign market destinations.

During the congress, Sec. Piñol also administered the oath of office to the new members of the National

Organic Agriculture Board (NOAB) who will serve for FY 2017 to 2020. They are: Jefferson Laruan of La Trinidad Organic Practitioners (LATOP) – small farmer representative for Luzon; Pastor Jerry Dionson of Negros Island Organic Producers Association (NIOPA)- small farmer representative for Visayas; Adelberto Baniqued of SRI-Pilipinas Association based in Molave, Zamboanga Del Sur – small farmer representative for Mindanao; Engr. Balbuena Saret representing Agribusiness; Noel Salazar of Agri Eco Phils – representative for NGOs; and Dr. Norman de Jesus of Pampanga State Agricultural University – representative for academe

The congress was attended by organic farmers/practitioners, traders, and processors; regional, provincial and municipal organic agriculture focal persons; and national finalists and winners in the National Organic Agriculture Achievers Awards (NOAA). The Bicol delegation was composed of organic farmers, entrepreneurs, extension workers, and DA staff headed by DA Bicol regional Executive Director Elena B. delos Santos.

The 14th congress was hosted by the DA RFO X on October 24-26, 2017. With the theme Organic Agriculture: A smart Culture (Science-based, Market-Oriented, Adaptive, Responsive, Transformative.” **(Lovella P. Guarin)**

DA Bicol garnered 3 major awards in 14th NOAC

Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel F. Pinol conferred the National Organic Agriculture Achievers Awards to outstanding individuals, farmer groups, organic agriculture city/mun, provincial focal persons and city/mun and provincial LGUs implementing organic agriculture. The awarding was held at Limketkai Center here on Oct 24, 2017 during the opening ceremonies of the 3-day 14th National Organic Agriculture Congress. Bicol region bagged three of the major awards.



Adelina A. Losa, DA Bicol regional organic agriculture focal person won the Outstanding OA focal person award. She received P60,000 cash and plaque.



Elmer Salazar, president of TAPFPAT in Tigaon, Camarines Sur won as national outstanding Small Farmer Individual. He received P200,000 cash award.



Dexter Mendoza, city organic agriculture program coordinator of Ligao City in Albay won as National Outstanding city focal person. He received P40,000 cash award and plaque.

Gawad Parangal sa Katangi-tanging Kababaihan sa Pagsasaka at Pangangisda sa Kanayunan

National Winner



QUEZON CITY – Rebecca Sanchez-Purisima, a Bicolana chieftain of Agta Tabangnon tribe in Tigaon, Camarines Sur was hailed as 2017 National Outstanding Rural Woman during the awarding ceremony of the Department of Agriculture's Gawad Parangal sa Katangi-tanging Kababaihan sa Pagsasaka at Pangangisda sa Kanayunan held at the Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM) this city on December 7, 2017.

Purisima received a cash prize of P150,000 and plaque. The winning agricultural extension worker will also receive P25,000. She was accompanied on the stage by her husband Bayani; DA Bicol Regional Executive Director Elena B. delos Santos; Mayor Pamela Fuentebella of Tigaon, Camarines Sur; and DA 5 GAD

focal Aloha Gigi I. Banaria.

Out of the 14 nominees from the DA regional field offices, eight finalists were selected to receive cash prizes, plaques and trophies. First runner up Vivian Taniza of Isabela (Region 2) received P100,000 cash prize. Second runner up Lilibeth Galendez of Bukidnon (region 10) received P75,000 cash awards. The other five finalists received P10,000 consolation prizes.

DA Undersecretary Bernadette Romulo Puyat, Usec for Agribusiness, Marketing and Regional Engagement and Chairperson of DA GAD focal system reported that the GAD funds utilization by the



DA regional offices, bureaus and attached agencies in 2016 is 9.64% which is higher than the mandated 5% requirement. To empower women in the rural areas, the DA implements easy access financing, provides insurance to farmers in high risk areas, and promote women's access to climate resilient information technology through the National Color Coded Agriculture Guide Map.

In her speech, Rebecca Purisima stressed that she is very proud to be a woman farmer. One hectare of her farm which is planted to rice and fruit bearing trees is certified Organic by the OCCP, while another one hectare planted with corn, vegetables and herbs and spices is Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certified. **(Lovella P. Guarin)**

DA gives P1.50M worth project grant and P178,000 cash awards during 10th Bicol organic congress

LABO, CAMARINES NORTE - The gathering of close to 700 organic agriculture producers, farmers, LGU organic agriculture program implementers and advocates from the academe in the two-day 10th Bicol Organic Congress on October 12-13 proves that Bicol region is one of the most active regions in advancing organic agriculture in the Philippines.

The highlight of the congress was the awarding of the regional winners in various categories for this year's Search for Outstanding Organic Agriculture Achievers Awards.

- Outstanding Province - Cam. Norte - (P500,000 project grant)
- Outstanding City - Ligao City - P300,000 project grant
- Outstanding OA provincial focal person Felina Angeles (Sorsogon) (P25,000 cash)
- Engr. Dexter Mendoza - outstanding OA city focal person. (P20,000 cash).
- Outstanding OA AEW Luisita Navo of Baao, Cam. Sur (P15,000 cash).
- Most Promising LGU - Iriga City (P150,000 project grant). Jonafel Taturan of Iriga City - most promising OA city focal person (P10,000 cash). Edgar Oliva, Iriga City - most promising OA extension worker (8,000 cash).



- Special Citation was awarded to the Local Government Unit of Albay for successfully implementing the 5-year Albay Family Based Food Production Program advocating organic agriculture in 720 barangays in the province with 72,000 cooperators.

Adelina A. Losa, chief of Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division and Regional Focal Person for Organic Agriculture Program said they have invited a total of 26 organic producers to sell their products during the trade fair and have accumulated a total of P250,742.00 sales. **(Lovella P. Guarin)**

Gawad Saka

Regional Winners



Edgar A. Pesebre of Polangui, Albay - Outstanding Rice Farmer



Joji A. Belodo of Oas, Albay - Outstanding Young Farmer



Tigbao 4H Club of Aroroy, Masbate - Outstanding Young Farmer Organization



Kaburonyugang Kabakaihan of Manito, an LGU-operated Barangay Food Terminal - Outstanding BFT



Rodolfo and Emerlita Briñola family of Castilla, Sorsogon - Outstanding Fisherfolk Family



Valentin L. Lopez of Daraga, Albay - Outstanding High Value Crops Farmer



Gubat St. Anthony Cooperative (GSAC) in Sorsogon - Outstanding Small Farmer Organization



HML Foods Corporation, Daraga, Albay - Outstanding Agri-Entrepreneur



Inararan Rural Improvement Club of Bulan, Sorsogon - Outstanding RIC



MAFC of Canaman, Camarines Sur - Outstanding MAFC



Antonio Hernandez: The Plant Doctor who combines practical and science-based knowledge

By Emily B. Bordado

“The best product of labor is the high-minded workman, with an enthusiasm for his work” so said Horace Greeley.

This aptly describes Antonio Anson - Hernandez, 79-year old farmer, extension worker, researcher, entomologist and scientist rolled into one. At his age he is still full of bright ideas, keen observations and science-based explanations about his experiments in his 3- hectare upland farm in barangay, Cabalinadan in Tigaon, Camarines Sur. Despite his small and stooping body frame, Tio Tony has big ideas and broad knowledge about agriculture especially crops and he discusses them oozing with confidence. While most of his contemporaries have already retired as agriculture extension technologists and

settled contentedly as private citizens, Tio Tony continues with his search for new knowledge and technologies. At the age of 72 he decided to pursue a master's degree major in Entomology at the Central Bicol State University of Agriculture. His thesis was: Disease Transmission from Plant to Plant.

Pursuing a doctor's degree is no longer his goal but he had already earned the moniker “Dr. Tony” from his colleagues. And he proudly addresses himself “DR. Tony”. Indeed he is a more credible authority to discuss things about agriculture because he is a bonafide farmer who practices what he preaches. He reads a lot and knows the scientific names of the plants including weeds and insects in the farm. He is also a keen observer. He has

an explanation for everything. He knows what time of day or night a particular insect will attack and which particular growth stage a plant or crop is most vulnerable to insect attack.

He is currently focused on his field trail of an upland rice in a portion of rice field with zero irrigation. The area used to be a pasture land where grasses and weeds abound. For four years since 2015 he had been trying to plant rice in that particular portion of his 4 hectare farm. For two and half years his experiment was not very encouraging. He only harvested about 10 to 20 cavans. But this did not discourage him despite the disparaging remarks hurled at him by some of the farmers in the neighborhood.

In 2017 he began using Green Super Rice (GSR) lines. And the result was very encouraging. He harvested about 100 cavans or 5 tons. More than that he got encouraging remarks from officials from the DA, ATI and CBSUA and other people whom he invited to his farm. For 2018, he again uses GSR 2 rice variety known to be drought tolerant. To save on labor he used the broadcast method instead of transplanting using 3 sacks of GSR seeds.

He practices simplified crop protection. Prior to land preparation he applies herbicide which he himself remixed. And as a biological control he planted red kultis

(*Amaranthus spinosus* L.) in the middle of the ricefield) as “garage plant” where beneficial insects can gather and prey on harmful insects. Wild grasses *Rotboellia exaltata* grow abundantly around the farm which according to Tio Tony also serve as host plant for pests and diseases. He planted crop traps such as corn and adlai around the field and even inside the rice paddies to repel waya- waya and brown plant hoppers. Along the peripheries he planted “surango” flower bearing shrubs which he said have fungicidal property and serve as the garage for beneficial insects like jumper spider and ground beetle bugs and other insects which take refuge on the said plants and lay and hatch their eggs there. Bull frogs also abound in the farm and help in the control of pests as they eat harmful insects like the leaf holder insects.

He said rat usually attack 35 days after planting so in anticipation for this he planted rice plants along the perimeter of the rice paddies 20 days ahead of the planting of base palay crops to serve as buffer or bait plants. The grains from the older crops will be eaten by the pests by the time they reach the heading or milking stage but these insects will also be trapped in the older rice crops and the base crop will be spared from the attack of the rats and the pests.

Another biological pest control measure practiced by Tio Tony is the suspension

(Next page pls.)



of the growth progression or delaying the maturity of the rice plants for 25 days by spraying chemicals which according to him a remix of the herbicides he is using in his farm.

This cropping he expects to harvest about 70 cavans of GSR rice which is lower than his harvest last year of almost 100 cavans. But he has a sense of satisfaction because he has proven to himself and to others including his detractors that even with zero irrigation and in an adverse condition and marginalized ecosystem productivity can still be enhanced and even optimized using the right technology and best practices.

For the production cost he incurred P27,470 and spent about P5,000 for labor. With the current price of fresh palay at P18.00/kg. he estimates a gross income of about P36,000 and an ROI of P30,000. Not bad according to Tio Tony. For lack of labor in their area he has to use the broadcast (sabog tanim) method in sowing rice. But he explained that higher yield will be derived had he used the transplanting method. Based on his previous experience transplanting at 20 centimeters spacing in a 300-square meter area yielded 4 cavans. Had he practiced transplanting he would have harvested more and earned higher income but only one of his son is helping him in the farm.

His over-brimming enthusiasm to share what he knows is sometimes misconstrued by some as smugness. Others laugh at him and call some his ideas crazy or out of this world. But his ideas are actually the combination of his actual and practical experiences and keen observations in the field affirmed by his extensive knowledge through reading of agriculture and scientific literature and reinforced by his regular attendance to trainings and seminars. He says that

science is simply observing, weighing, measuring and testing.”

He acknowledges that upland rice production is very vulnerable to climate impact. It is thus very important to take into account the Ph level and soil type of the farm before planting. For rice Ph should be 5.8 to 7. For vegetables it should be 6.0 to 7.0 Ph. Wise choice of variety is another important consideration. He says Green Super Rice 2 is tolerant to drought prone areas. Plant height should also be considered depending on the season.



Within the ricefield Tony Hernandez planted red kultis which serve as "garage plant" where beneficial insects gather and eat harmful insects.

Tio Tony has extensive background in agriculture. He took his secondary education at the Camarines Sur State Agricultural College (CSSAC) now CBSUA. He took a Bachelors of Science degree in Agriculture major in Agricultural Extension and later enrolled in the Expanded Tertiary Education Equipment and Accreditation Program (ETEEAP) in the same school. He then worked at the Provincial Agriculturist Office in Naga City assigned in Ocampo and was recognized as Outstanding Technician for the entire province of Camarines Sur. He also worked as a farm consultant to former vice governor Velarde. He then

transferred to the Department of Agriculture from 1961 to 1990 as technician.

Aside from rice farming he has ventured into mango, pili, organic vegetable farming, orchard nursery management and bamboo production, rice and corn seed production and inland fishery management. His earnings from these micro enterprises sustained his family and the school expenses of his nine children most of whom are now professionals.

Several years after his retirement he occupied himself in the farm and took every opportunity to attend

major in Entomology.

He is moved with pity for those families in the upland and marginal areas who have almost nothing to eat some of whom subsist on coconut meat, palm heart (ubod), puso ng saging, raw and unripe or hardly matured cacao seeds or just about anything they could eat to sustain them the whole day. He is also alarmed by the rising incidence of theft and robbery in their area. So he wants to show his neighbors that something good and productive can be derived from their land despite its adverse condition.

He should have been living a contended and comfortable life with his wife and the remaining children living with them in their residence in the town of Pili but he choose to spend more time in his farm in the town of Tigaon which is more than 30 kilometers away.

In his farm which can be reached by walking less than a kilometer from the barangay road he does not have the comfort and convenience he enjoys in his own home. He has to fetch his own water from a nearby creek; cook his own food using firewood, no electric fan and even a comfortable bed to lie on. His constant companion is the transistor radio where he listens to news and updates. From time to time his teenage son also joins him in the farm. But Tio Tony doesn't seem to miss the convenient and comfortable life. He used a portion of his earnings to buy this 4-hectare upland farm and he is thinking of buying some tract of land adjacent to his current farm as he has so many other plans.

He believes that "God has given us time, but no one can catch time. Balance your work with time and you will be there." He also admonishes the young generation to value time and make use of it and stay frugal."

trainings by the DA and other government agencies and private companies including those trainings conducted by the Bicol Livelihood Foundation run by Mrs. Sonia Roco, the wife of former Senator Raul Roco. He also involved himself in civic and private sector organization like the Regional and Agriculture and Fisheries Council, the Bicol Hog Raisers Association where he once served as president and the Harmony with Nature Movement, Inc. (Pro Nature). With his unsatiable thirst to learn new things and to find answers to some of the questions that kept nagging him, at the age of 72 he took his master's degree at CBSUA

Tuburan United Farmers Association: Invigorating the cassava industry in Masbate

by **Lovella P. Guarin**

Cawayan is one of the municipalities in the province of Masbate where corn and cassava are the staple food. Other towns include Uson, Milagros, Palanas, Mandaon, Balud, Aroroy, Cataingan, Placer, Pio V. Corpuz, Esperanza and Masbate City.

One organization in Masbate which has greatly helped the Department of Agriculture in promoting corn and cassava as staple food to fill the gap in the aim for food self-sufficiency is the Tuburan United Farmers Association (TUFA) of Cawayan.

Organized and registered with the Department of Labor and Employment in 2009, the Tuburan United Farmers

digger/harvester in 2013. In the succeeding years, the DA also granted their request for post harvest equipment like cassava granulators and chippers which they used in processing cassava tubers for feeds.

In the same year, the LGU of Cawayan under the then Mayor Edgar S. Condor sent 24 farmer members of the TUFA to Thailand to conduct a study visit in the Thai Tapioca Development Institute (TTDI) in Nakornrachasima, Thailand.

Likewise, the Agricultural Training Institute in partnership with the Office of the Municipal Agriculturist of Cawayan conducted a Season-Long Training on Climate Farmers Field School (CFFS) which has equipped the farmers

been buying their cassava with the support price of P9.00/kg for unpeeled dried granules and P11.00 /kg for dried peeled cassava granules or at the prevailing price in the municipality, whichever is higher.

In 2014 also, the TUFA has won in the DA's public



TUFA Manager Robinson C. Rival.

bidding for the delivery of 100,000 pieces cassava stalks of matured and high yielding cassava variety which amounted to P250,000. The cassava stalks were distributed to farmer-beneficiaries of the Corn and Cassava Program. In the succeeding years, the TUFA was able to tie up with the DA Research Outreach Stations in Albay and Sorsogon for direct procurement of cassava stalks.

In 2016 they harvested a total of 3,107 metric tons from 217 hectares. This was sold to assemblers. In 2017, TUFA harvested a total of 3,530 metric tons from 146 hectares.

Thus, in 2017, during the National Quality Corn Achievers Awards at PICC in Manila, Agriculture Secretary Manny F. Piñol personally awarded the TUFA with P1 million check and trophy for placing 3rd as Outstanding Cassava Cluster in the country during the 1st Cassava Cluster Management Excellence Award. The TUFA cluster manager Robinson C.

Rival received the award. The awarding was held on November 23, 2017 during the 5th National Quality Corn Achievers Awards (NQCAA) and 13th National Corn Congress.

On October 19, 2017, the TUFA was one of the recipients of agri machineries worth P47M which were distributed by RED Elena B. delos Santos to various farmers organizations nationwide. The TUFA received one unit 4-wheel drive tractor worth P2.4 million and cassava chipper worth P150,000 from the Corn Program on that day. Last year, the DA also established a mechanical dryer in their barangay. Manager Rival who received the tractor, said that they are very happy with the immediate action from the DA. "Napakaganda pa ngayon dahil wala ng monetary counterpart except shed," Rival added.

Lorenzo Alvina, DA Bicol Corn Program regional coordinator said that there is a big demand for cassava from San Miguel Food Corporations and other feeds establishment as cassava is the main ingredient in poultry feeds.

Engr. Danilo Aman, regional cassava focal person encouraged farmers to plant cassava as compared to other crops, cassava does not need rigid cultural management and it favors the very hot temperature of summer, especially at harvest and drying time.

The farmer-members of the TUFA produce cassava for feeds using high yielding varieties such as Lakan Yellow, Golden Yellow and Rayong to help farmers increase their income. They also produce cassava varieties for food consumption such as Lakan white varieties and yellow corn to help feed their fellow Masbateños.



24 farmer members of the TUFA went on a study visit in Thailand

Association (TUFA) of Cawayan, Masbate has come a long way starting with only 22 original members all from barangay Tuburan. Now it has expanded to 111 membership with a total covered area of 222 hectares covering the clustered barangays of Tuburan, Madbad, San Vicente, Maihao, Begia, Itombato, Tubog, San Jose, and Palobandera.

Recognizing their contribution to the cassava industry, the Department of Agriculture, provided the association with 2 units 4-wheel drive tractor and cassava

with disaster response skills, knowledge on new technologies and Good Agricultural Practices in corn and cassava farming.

These interventions helped TUFA in the attainment of the volume requirement in their tie up with the San Miguel Corp. Assembler -- KSP VAC Agri Enterprises, a cassava assembler engage in the production, buying and trading of fresh and dried cassava in Cawayan. The former sells dried cassava granules to B-MEG San Miguel Corporation in Consolacion, Cebu. Since 2014, the KSP VAC cassava assembler has

EXPOSITORY TRIP

Local media practitioners visit DA, IRRI, BAR, PhilRice and PhilMEch



At International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) Los Baños, Laguna

Dr. Bruce Tolentino, IRRI Deputy Director for Communications and Partnerships discussed the mandates and milestones of IRRI.



The media were also updated on rice breeding and biofortification and had chance to see the facilities of IRRI (below).



Phil. Carabao Center Nueva Ecija

Close encounter with the different breeds of water buffaloes at the Philippine Carabao Center in Munoz, Nueva Ecija.



Interview with Dr. Rod Estigoy, chief of Applied Communications Division of PhilMech.



Meeting with PAJ Officials at BSWM

Meeting with the PAJ officials headed by Roman Floresca (in brown shirt), President; Noel Reyes (seated center) VP for Internal Affairs, Inez Magbual and Dr. William Dar (4th from left) former ICRISAT Director.



A pose with PhilMech Deputy Director Raul Paz.



At BAR



PhilRice Director Eduardo Jimmy P. Quilang interacted with the media.



At Phil. Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) Munoz, Nueva Ecija



Livestock Personnel of LGUs trained on Quick Response during animal disease events, emergencies

SAN AGUSTIN, Pili, Camarines Sur—The Livestock and Poultry Program of the Department of Agriculture-Bicol conducted a series of Training for Livestock Personnel of Local Government Units (LGUs) on Quick Response during Disease Events and Emergencies concerning Animal Health and Welfare all over the Bicol Region In October to November 2017.

Topics discussed were Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) updates and Protocol; Avian Influenza (AI) Protection Program; AI Preparedness Plan; Regional Quick Response Team Rules and Responsibility; Phil-Animal Health Information System (AHIS); Anti-Microbial Resistance; Disease Investigation and Outbreak Management; Basic Principles

of Epidemiology; Principles of Disease Investigation and Response; Steps in the conduct of Outbreak Investigation; Report Writing; and Risk Communication. Simulation exercises were also conducted after the discussion.

Speakers from the Bureau of Animal Industry included Dr. Oscar D. Cabayanan; Marites Gealone; and Dr. Hyacinth Napiloy; Dr. Stephani Marie U (Food and Agriculture Organization); and from DA-Bicol are Drs. Rona P. Bernales and Josefina U. Bañadera.

The said training has been conducted in Albay and Camarines Norte in October with a total of 60 participants. In Sorsogon, it was held on November 14-16, 2017; November 21-23, 2017 in Masbate; and November 27-29, 2017 in Catanduanes. (**Jayson M. Gonzales**)

DA fire brigade volunteers finish fire safety training

SAN AGUSTIN, Pili, CAMARINES SUR – 16 employees representing the different divisions and research outreach stations of the Department of Agriculture received certificates of competency after they have completed the 5-day Training of DA 5 Volunteers Brigade on Fire Safety.

DA Bicol OIC Regional Technical Director for Operations and Extension Rodel P. Tornilla said that the training which was held at Lanuza Hall on November 13-17, 2017 was pursuant to Section 6.03.1 of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 9514 also known as "Fire Code of the Philippines" of 2008. The said RA 9514 mandates the

conduct of mandatory training of fire brigades, fire safety practitioners and fire volunteers in different organizations and establishments.

Among the topics discussed were introduction to fire safety services; roles and responsibilities of fire volunteers. They also learned the chemistry of fire; fire alarm and communication system; firefighting safety techniques and procedures; apparatus tools and equipment used in fighting fire such as fire hose and nozzles, fire extinguishers and ladder and personal protective equipment.

There were also exercises on fire suppression and control; ventilation; forcible entry and overhaul; salvage and

More postharvest facilities ... (from page 5)

Public sector Partnership to establish the needed big and state-of-the-art Infrastructures and Facilities for the Corn industry just like in Mindanao and Isabela and not just engage the cooperatives or small rural-based associations.

Adelina Losa, DA Chief of the Agribusiness and Marketing Division reiterated that quality is the name of the game. Corn farmers to be competitive must not only produce enough volume but must ensure that they meet the prescribed standards. She deplored the farmers' continuous practice of drying the shelled corn grains instead of drying them in cobs which is the good practice being recommended by the DA in the trainings and for it has been conducting for corn farmers. A mobile application interface for both market and corn producers is also eyed as a possible tool which can further develop the market linkage in partnership with the agribusiness and marketing division.

DA OIC-Regional Technical Director for Operations and Extension, Rodel Tornilla said that unlike rice, corn has no tariff protection. He thus

recommended to the body to adopt the scheme for the Rice Processing Center where cooperatives are provided with a grain complex equipped with dryers, millers and other equipment, plus a capitalization worth for the procurement of palay from members.

Other recommendations that were brought forth by the attendees were: Assess the demand for corn in the region by making an inventory of population of livestock and poultry; determine requirement of feed millers; and identify the other corn users.

The consultation meeting was called by the DA to forestall possible recurrence of a slump in the price of corn which resulted to a big loss to the corn farmers in Bicol last year. A decline in the number of farmers who planted corn this year was noted. The attendees of the meeting composed of corn industry players such as farmers, assemblers and processors, feed millers, buyers, financiers and municipal agriculturists and technicians and DA and NFA officials threshed out the problems of the industry. (**Emily B. Bordado**)



procedures and fire simulation; search and rescue principles, methods and techniques and emergency medical operations such as basic life support.

Every day of the training ended with practical examination to make sure the participants really learn the lessons for the day.

Eight fire fighters from the Bureau of Fire Protection of Pili, Camarines Sur served as resources persons and took

turns in discussing the modules. They were FO3 Rodel C. Dorosan; FO2 Michael Ray E. Rivero; FO1 Augusto A. Bares, Jr.; FO1 Darwyn Daos; FO1 Nestor Francis Baylon; FO1 Bryan Bustarga; FO1 Ramon P. Sambo, Jr.; and FO1 Rolly Penetrante.

Dr. Salvadora Gavino, Senior Agriculturist, said that the participants who completed the training will compose the DA fire brigade volunteers.

Bicol women showcase products in a market week event

NAGA CITY - To showcase the best products of Bicol rural women entrepreneurs and to heighten awareness on various women's livelihood projects and the various interventions and assistance available for women, the Department of Agriculture in partnership with the Camarines Sur Multipurpose Cooperative and the Philippine Commission for Women conducted the 1st Bicol Women Market Week in this city from November 30 to December, 2017.

According to Aloha Gigi Bañaria, Chief of the Planning and Monitoring Division of the Department of Agriculture Bicol and focal person of the Gender and Development (GAD) Program said activity was in line with the DA's GAD program to empower and bring the rural women into the mainstream of development. She explains that

the Philippine Commission for Women through its GREAT Women Project 2 funded by the Canadian Government has engaged the Rural Improvement Clubs of Bicol to participate in its livelihood projects after noting the viability and success of the micro enterprises of these groups.

Thirty two women's groups and individual entrepreneurs participated in this activity which also featured discussions/presentation of various topics by successful and multi-awarded women leaders engaged in micro agri-enterprises.

Luzviminda Villanueva, Project Manager of the GREAT Women Project 2 personally graced the opening ceremonies and delivered a message. She said that the challenge for the project is to make the micro-enterprises of women "lumago at maging sustainable and be

competitive". She happily announced that the Women Economic Empowerment of the Philippines is regarded as a project mode for the world.

She noted that while private sectors and organizations are actively supporting women's group to make them economically empower many government assistance for women are not reaching or unknown to most of the women. She thus, urged women's group to approach the various agencies for assistance. She also admonished the women to also approach successful entrepreneurs as they are great mentors. She also urged them to continue the fire, the energy and enthusiasm to alleviate themselves.

Meanwhile, DA Bicol Regional Executive Director Elena B. delos Santos, represented by Emily B. Bordado, the chief of the information office extended her thanks to the Bicol rural participants for continuously advancing the cause and advocacies of the women. She said that the market event also serves a venue for sharing experiences and good practices among women entrepreneurs as they



themselves were the resource persons during the symposium. Bordado also underscored that the Bicol women are already so empowered and their products are proof of their innovativeness, creativity and dynamism. But they need support in the promotion and marketing of their products.

Also present during the Opening program were; Atty Ma. Lourdes P. Pacao, regional director of the Cooperative Development Authority; and Jeanette de Vera, Mall Manager of SM City, the venue for said event. **(Emily B. Bordado)**



Corn and cassava ... (from page 8)

according to secretary Piñol was his idea. This awards seeks to recognize and provide incentive to farmers organizations implementing value adding on corn and cassava and also aims to promote the development/production of different processed products from corn and cassava. Five organizations were declared winners but the grand prize was bagged by the Cassava growers and Processors Association of Dapitan City, Zamboanga del Sur. The original prize of P1 million for the Cornucopia Award was raised by Sec. Piñol during his keynote speech.

They were evaluated by a panel of evaluators from various national government agencies based on their performance in the promotion and development of the corn sector in their area giving premium to sustained production of safe and quality corn grains and adoption of good agricultural practices by the farmers they serve or support.

This year's corn congress and awarding ceremonies also featured technical sessions, machinery display, product demo and exhibits. Over 2000 delegates from the different regions of the country attended the event. The other luminaries

who graced the occasion were: DA undersecretary Ariel T. Cayanán; Dr. Luz Taposok, ATI Director; Lt. Col. Jason L.Y. Aquino (Ret.) PA, NFA Administrator; Engr. Roger Navarro, PhilMaize, president; DR. Edralina P. Serrano UPLB professor and national chair, NQCAA-TWG; Dir. Antonio G. Gerundio, National Corn Program Director; Roderico R. Bioco, PhilMaize chairman, Emeritus; DA regional executive directors and other regional officials and officers and members of PhilMaize Board **(Emily B. Bordado)**



DA Bicol celebrates 117th Civil Service Anniversary thru gift giving to school-kids

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 DA-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 saindang 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**)



SAAD provincial orientation kicks off

VIRAC, CATANDUANES

– The first leg of the series of provincial orientation for the Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) in Bicol region started here on December 4, 2017. The island province of Catanduanes is one of the most typhoon stricken provinces in the country due to its geographical location in the eastern part of Luzon facing the Pacific Ocean where the typhoons are brewed. Thus Catanduanes is called the “Land of the Howling Winds.” Catanduanes is one of the three Bicol provinces included in the 10 SAAD priority provinces for 2018. The other two provinces are Masbate and Sorsogon.

Speaking before the Municipal Agriculturists and Local Chief Executives of

SAAD sites in Catanduanes, Program Director Bernadette F. 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 10 poorest provinces of the country, looking into the weaknesses of these areas, and their potentials in food production and livelihood programs. Each year from 2017 to 2022, SAAD will focus on 10 marginal provinces. The SAAD program anchors on Social Preparation and Food Production and Livelihood as tools to reduce poverty. To achieve greatest impact, Director San Juan explained that this program will reach the poorest of the poor in

far flung areas who have not received any interventions from the regular programs of the Department of Agriculture.

Engr. Teodoro Eleda, Superintendent of Catanduanes Hilly Upland Development Station who presented the profile of Catanduanes said that the program will be piloted in six municipalities namely: Gigmoto, Baras, Bato, San Miguel, Bagamanoc, and Panganiban. Mary Grace Rodriguez, ACC II presented DA’s interventions under SAAD.

The SAAD program based its selection from 2015 Philippine Statistics Authority data which reported the 43.4% poverty incidence in Catanduanes in that year. While poverty incidence of

the country is 25.2 and 27.5 in the entire Bicol in the same year. Reports also confirmed that approximately 130,000 people in Catanduanes are living below the poverty threshold. These families do not meet the minimum P9,140 monthly income to meet the basic food and non-food needs such as clothing, housing, transportation, health and education expenses.

To alleviate them from poverty the identified beneficiaries will first undergo training on crops and livestock production, value adding activities and enterprise development before they will receive the program interventions which will be in the form of upland rice

(Next page pls.)

Rimas ice cream launched in Siruma

SIRUMA, CAM. SUR - This remote municipality took center stage recently as it was chosen by the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) for the launching of the newly developed “Rimas” ice cream made from breadfruits which grow abundantly in this municipality.

About 200 farmers, rural women, agri- stakeholders, students, members of Siruma Agricultural Cooperatives and personnel of the Municipal government attended the launching which was graced by



no less than the BAR director Dr. Nicomedes Eleazar, Mayor Sandy Ondis, Anthony Obligado, Chief, Technology Commercialization Division, also of BAR, and DA Regional Technical Director for Research and Regulatory Dr. Edgar R. Madrid, and representatives from the DAR, DOST and DILG.



Dr. Eleazar said rimas has a great potential as a food commodity with high nutritional value as well as a source of income especially for small farmers as this tree yields so much fruits and does not require much production inputs and capital. He mentioned that the Bicol Research Division headed by Luz Marcelino submitted a project proposal to develop products from this fruit and in 2013 the project was awarded and cited as the Best Innovative Product. Rimas is rich in potassium and high in carbohydrates and vitamins.

Marcelino who is also the manager of the Bicol Integrated Agricultural Research Center (BIARC) disclosed that to date their product development team led by Arlene I. de Asis, a food technologist has already developed 17 products from rimas including the ice cream. These are: flour, pastillas, spring roll, custard, pork dumplings, rice balls, chips, muffins, pinoy fries, cheesy bar, turon, torones

de rimas, cookies, spicy fries and kimchi. She adds that the rimas ice cream with its creamy taste and high nutritional value will now be commercially marketed by Yulaik Enterprise owned by Lorna Daud an agri-entrepreneur from Naga City. Meanwhile, the Siruma Agricultural Cooperative will be the one to go into commercial production of rimas trees and will be supplying the fruits to Yulaik and future processors. The DA will be assisting them obtain quality planting materials, conduct skills training and capacity building activities and provide technical assistance in collaboration with the LGU.

Marcelino explained that based on their survey the province of Sorsogon has the biggest number of rimas trees followed by Masbate. Camarines Sur ranks third and Siruma is top one among the towns of Camarines Sur thus, it was chosen as the venue for the product launch. This is to make

the people of Siruma aware of the potential and commercial value of this crop. Most of the rimas fruits here are just left to rot by the tree owners as they do not know what to do with them.

Thus, Mayor Ondis expressed his great appreciation to the DA for opening a window of opportunity for an alternative livelihood for his constituents who are mostly farmers and fisherfolk. He added that this will also help in addressing the nutritional imbalance of most children of this generation who are not so inclined to eat vegetables and fruits.

During the ceremonial product launch, the ice cream cone made from adlay which was developed by the Research team of CALABARZON (Region IV-A) was also introduced as a perfect match for the rimas ice cream because of its nutritional value.

Meanwhile, Wilson Delaylungsod, general manager of the agricultural coop bared that there are four varieties of rimas in their municipality. He shared that the rimas flowers could be used as insect repellent and the sap of the tree could be used as adhesive. He expressed optimism that their coop's partnership with the DA will bring positive result to their community and they are open to new technologies and good agricultural practices.

The last part of the launching ceremonies was the demonstrations on rimas grafting (**Emily B. Bordado**)

SAAD provincial orientation... (from page 18)

seeds, fertilizers, garden tools and equipment, and goat, native pig, native chicken and ducks. The Department of Agriculture is optimistic that these interventions will boost the agricultural landscape in Catanduanes which is presently dominated by abaca, coconut, rice, root crops and banana aside from aquaculture.

Provincial Administrator Lemuel Sortida represented Governor Joseph Cua who is

in Naga City to receive the Salud Bicolnon award from the Department of Health. He extended his appreciation to the national SAAD directorate and DA Bicol regional executive director Elena B. delos Santos for the numerous projects poured in Catanduanes. He rallied the municipal agriculturists present to actively take part in the SAAD program.

OIC Provincial Agriculturist Nelia Teves said

the provincial LGU commits to help achieve the thrusts of the national government on food security and poverty alleviation. “The presence of the Municipal Agriculturists of the six municipalities is a great expression of their strong conviction to really develop the local agriculture and fishery sectors being the most vulnerable sectors,” she added.

Also present during the

orientation were Mayor Leo Rodriguez of Bato; Agricultural Program Coordinating Officer (APCO) Edgar Ollet and the hired area coordinators who will officially start on their jobs in January 2018. The SAAD team of Catanduanes will hold office at the Catanduanes Hilly Upland Development Station (CHUDS) in Casocan, Virac, Catanduanes (**Lovella P. Guarin**)

Brown rice feeding caps Rice Awareness Month celebration

PILI, CAMARINES SUR

—Some 200 school children in three barangays of this municipality had an early Christmas treat as they were chosen to partake of nutritious porridge (champorado) made from brown rice with cocoa powder and milk and given some gift items and tokens. This food sharing or feeding activity was part of the advocacy campaign of the Department of Agriculture towards responsible consumption and use of healthy rice grains. The activity also capped the observance of the month of November as National Rice Awareness month.

For this food sharing activity, the DA partnered with the Kiwanis Club of Pili, a civic organization committed to promote and advocate the welfare of Children and the

Multi-Agro Forest Community Development Cooperative, whose members are mostly DA employees and agricultural extension workers which is also supporting the advocacies of the DA.

The feeding activity in Barangay Tagbong and La Purisima was held on November 23 and 24 respectively. In Barangay La Purisima Pili Mayor Tomas Bongalonta, barangay council chairperson Sandy Bicaldo and Francisco Avila, the school principal and the officers of the Kiwanis Club and MAF coop graced said occasion. In Barangay La Purisima the group was joined by Barangay Chairperson Rodolfo Nacario.

For Bgy. Palestina the feeding was held on November 28 at the Barangay covered court and attended also by the

following: Barangay Kagawad Buenaventura Sunguad and Kagawad Raul Alabastro and Kagawad Armando Caceres; Ems Sarte, Kiwanis Pili club president; Engr. Angel Pormalejo, Kiwanis past president; Emilia Bordado DA, Chief information officer and concurrent Chairperson of the MAF Coop; Oscar Orozco, MAF vice chairperson, Lucila Nacario, Coop Manager and Salvadora Gavino and Leonora Crucillo, board of directors. Also present were the parents of the children and the day Care workers Maria Luisa Estifona and Maribeth Villagrancia.

Bordado discussed the significance of the observance and celebration of Rice Awareness Month and the objective of the Be Riceponsible advocacy campaign of the DA as well as the nutritional value of brown or unpolished rice. The DA provided the brown rice made into porridge and used for the feeding. The MAF coop provided some bread and drinks.

The Kiwanis club on the other hand entertained the kids with games and contests and distributed gifts and tokens for the children. **(Emily B. Bordado)**



DA now accredits CSOs as partner in agri-fishery projects

SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAM. SUR—The Department of Agriculture can now officially recognize and authorize a Civil Society Organizations (CSO).

This was based on the Administrative Order No. 8, series of 2017 or the “Guidelines for the Accreditation of CSOs to be engaged by DA as partner in the implementation of agri-fishery projects” and issued by Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel F. Piñol.

Piñol issued the guidelines to encourage people’s

participation in agricultural development based on the principle of good governance; ensure that only DA-accredited CSOs can participate in the implementation of agriculture and fisheries programs and projects; promote transparency and accountability; improve the system of check and balance; safeguard the use and allocation of government resources; ensure efficient, effective and ethical program/project implementation; and guarantee compliance of

existing pertinent laws, rules and regulations.

The DA recognizes the role of CSO in community development and acknowledges its capacities and capabilities in the successful implementation of agriculture and fisheries program and projects. It can also transfer public funds to the CSO that is implementing a government program or project jointly with the DA or a beneficiary of the project.

Civic organizations, cooperative or federation/consortium of cooperatives, academe-based NGOs, private corporations or foundations, people’s organizations, religious organizations, alliances/networks/federations of NGOs/POs, development-oriented NGOs/POs, duly-registered DA-organized/assisted organizations, government-organized NGOs/POs, and multi-purpose cooperatives are eligible for accreditation.

The Regional Technical Committee is headed by DA-Bicol RED Elena B. De Los Santos and with RTD for Research and Regulations Edgar R. Madrid as vice-

chair. Members are RTD for Operations Rodel P. Tornilla, Regional Management Council Heads, Field Operation Division Chief, Agribusiness and Marketing-assistance Division Chief Adelina A. Losa, OIC-Regulatory Division Chief Rosita M. Imperial, Regional Agriculture and Fishery Council Chair Alfredo Rillo, and other members designated by the Secretary. The Secretariat will be chaired by the DA-Bicol Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Division Chief, Aloha Gigi Bañaria.

The accreditation will be valid for three years but can be revoked on grounds of misrepresentation, falsification, bankruptcy or insolvency of the CSO, and violation of laws.

The accredited organization will be subject to spot checking and submission of annual accomplishment report and financial reports.

All CSOs which were previously accredited by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in 2015 and 2016 will remain valid until the date of expiration. **(Jayson M. Gonzales)**



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