



ISSN-0119-2752
2002 PAJ Binhi Awardee

July - September 2019 Vol. 28 No. 3

UMA Senso

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE RFO-5
San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur | darafid5@yahoo.com | <http://bicol.da.gov.ph>

Bicol is free from African Swine Fever (ASF)

Bicol pork is safe to eat



DA Bicol OIC Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla led the swine industry stakeholders to a “boodle fight” of lechon and other pork dishes to assure the public that it is safe to eat pork as the Bicol Region is free from African Swine Fever (ASF). Heads of DA attached agencies such as the National Meat Inspection Service
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DA Bicol engages LGUs to buy palay from local farmers

by **Lovella P. Guarin**

NAGA CITY – To engage the support and involvement of the Local Government Units (LGUs) in addressing the dip in prices of palay, DA Bicol OIC Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla invited the governors and the provincial agriculturists for a meeting on last September.

DA 5 OIC Director Tornilla echoed DA Secretary William Dar's call for Provincial LGUs (PLGUs) to allocate funds to bankroll palay-buying, drying, milling and rice marketing. Tornilla also bared Secretary Dar's arrangement with the Land Bank of the Philippines to open a loan window for palay procurement particularly to the PLGUs.

Albay Governor Al



Francis Bichara expressed his support and shared his vision to put up rice milling and drying facilities to be operated by the PLGU in Albay. He however raised the issue on the conflict with the provisions of RA 9184 or the government procurement reform act if the PLGUs will engage in palay trading as the latter is only allowed by law to engage in business enterprise if there is a declaration of a state of calamity. The other

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RCEF to benefit rice farmers in 59 LGUs in Bicol

by **Annielyn L. Baleza**

Rice farmers in 59 municipal and city local government units (LGUs) in Bicol will benefit from the P3 billion-worth Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) Seed Program to be implemented by the Department of Agriculture Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) beginning this dry season 2020.

At the Social Mobilization cum Consultation Among LGUs on RCEF-Seed Program Implementation for Camarines Sur Province held in DA Regional Field Office on August 23, 2019, PhilRICE-Bicol Project Development Officer II

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Tornilla is new OIC RED of DA 5

by **Lovella P. Guarin**

Rodel P. Tornilla is the 15th OIC Regional Executive Director (RED) of the Department of Agriculture RFO 5. His appointment (S.O 411) was signed by Secretary Emmanuel F. Piñol last May 2, 2019 but he assumed the position on July 1, 2019 after the optional retirement of former RED Elena B. delos

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Rodel P. Tornilla

Rice Tarrification Law a bitter pill to resuscitate the rice industry

The Rice Tarrification Law is a bitter pill that we Filipinos have to swallow to resuscitate our ailing rice industry. The law was intended to make more rice available in the market as our country is not rice self-sufficient. We import an average of 5 to 10 percent of our national requirements. It also aims to address all obstacles to a competitive market, and is expected to result in a decline of rice prices. Thus, alongside with the implementation of the Law, our economic managers pushed for the creation of the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) and immediate completion of the national rice roadmap to guide how government funds should be programmed to fully support the plan. Through the RCEF, more than P10 billion from the tariff proceeds will be allocated to finance the promotion, acquisition, distribution of certified seeds, farm machineries, postharvest facilities and other infrastructures, extension and training support and credit assistance to farmers listed in the Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture and accredited cooperatives and associations. These interventions are expected to improve rice farmer's efficiency and productivity and enhance their competitiveness.

The enactment and implementation of the Rice Tarrification Law is expected to be met with opposition by some sectors and is not without its birth pangs as it opened our gates to cheap imported rice. But it is a necessary gambit which

was even long overdue as the Philippine has to abide by its international trade agreement obligation in order to spare it from being economically-sanctioned by its trading partners under the World Trade Organization. The implementation of the law became even more urgent last year to arrest the fast rising prices where inflation hit 5.7 in July and 6.7 in September and to prevent food crisis.

Thus, with the removal of the quantitative restrictions on rice followed the entry of cheap rice from Asian countries, subsequently, the inflation rate started going down. But our country's rice industry has to pay a big cost. Unscrupulous rice traders including prominent and well-placed business oligarchs began importing huge quantities of rice. With rice traders shifting from buying local palay to buying cheap imported rice outright, demand for local rice abruptly went down. And with the imported rice in great abundance, Filipino rice farmers have to suffer the consequences as prices for our local farmers' harvest began plummeting.

While the implementation of the Rice Tarrification Law might have triggered this scenario, there are other factors that contributed to the current status and downtrend of our country's rice industry. The main factors which are structural, deeply-rooted and long-standing that have put the rice industry in the doldrums are: high production cost; low farm gate price; lack of access to credit, poor irrigation

system, lack of appropriate post-harvest facilities and infrastructures; conversion of agricultural lands and steady decline in the agriculture labor force. This is further exacerbated by the fact that the agriculture sector has not been getting the attention and budgetary support it rightfully deserves.

One good result that the uproar about the implementation of the Rice Tarrification Law and the resounding lament of our local farmers for the plummeting low price of their palay is that it has brought to the fore the deeply rooted, structurally-flawed and economic inefficiencies of our rice industry. We cannot afford to ignore them now. Our rice industry must be given all the assistance it can get. Our local rice farmers need help now more than ever. What they need are long term or permanent solutions not just palliatives. The Department of Agriculture under the watch of Sec. William Dar has laid down a "New Thinking" and 8 Paradigms to transform and level up Agriculture. The secretary also rallies everyone to "Bring Hope and Touch the Hearts" of our Farmers who have been driven to Despair. With this is also the appeal to the patriotic sense of our traders and businessmen not to exploit but alleviate our farmers so that they will not be forced to abandon farming but continue to provide food for all Filipinos while they too are earning an increased income and living a prosperous life.

Published quarterly by the
Regional Agriculture and Fisheries
Information Section of the Department
of Agriculture, Regional Field Office No. 5
San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur
Tel No. (054) 477-5113 Fax 477-0381
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Re-entered as a Second
Class Mail Matter at
the Pili Post Office, Pili,
Camarines Sur under
Permit No. 2019-17
on March 25, 2019

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PRDP-funded enterprise subprojects in the works for Bicol's cassava, coconut and swine

PILI, CAMARINES SUR – Enterprise development subprojects on cassava, coconut and swine being proposed for funding under the Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) in Bicol are now being crafted. PRDP-Bicol is currently assisting four municipal local government units and proponent groups in preparing business plans for the proposed Investments in Rural Enterprises and Agriculture and Fisheries Productivity (I-REAP) subprojects in Bula, Goa and Lupi, in Camarines Sur and Jose Panganiban, Camarines Norte.

At the Business Planning Workshop for the Proposed I-REAP Subprojects in Camarines Sur and Camarines Norte held on July 30-31, 2019 at the Department of Agriculture regional office this municipality, PRDP-Bicol Business Development Officer Patrocinio Collao I discussed the PRDP I-REAP process, economic and financial analysis, and business plan outline which includes a description of the business enterprise, market analysis, operation plan, financial plan, economic impact and sustainability mechanism of the subproject. The Project's Social and Environmental Safeguards (SES) Project Development Associate Cherry Soribello also oriented the participants on the Social Safeguards aspects of the business plan including the subproject beneficiaries, Grievance Redress Mechanism Framework, and social and environmental impacts of the subproject.

Members of the Municipal Project Management and Implementation Units (MPMIUs) of the aforementioned municipalities attended the activity along with the officers of their respective proponent groups (PG) that qualified during the PG selection namely the Bula Farmers Cooperative (BUFACO), the Maymatan Farmers Multipurpose Cooperative, Lupi Organic Farmers Agribusiness Association (LOFAA) and the San Rafael Small Coconut Farmers' Association.

Collao and Soribello together with Business Development Officer Engr. Marianne Ariño, Budget Analyst Francis Llesis and I-REAP Project Development Associate Angelica Peñano assisted the participants in preparing their workshop outputs which consisted of the objectives

of the enterprise, business overview, input, process, output (IPO) matrix, production assumption, marketing plan, investment needed and initial cost sharing computation.

DA-Bicol Regional Technical Director for Operations and PRDP-Bicol Deputy Project Director Adelina Losa sought the MPMIUs and PGs' cooperation in complying with the requirements of the Project.

"Hindi namin yan magagawa na ma-approve by September kung walang cooperation from you (Without your cooperation, we won't be able to have these business plans approved by September),"

she underscored.

I-REAP is one of the four components of PRDP that provides technical, financial and infrastructure support to eligible groups in targeted project areas within the priority value chains identified under the Provincial Commodity Investment Plans (PCIPs). Through I-REAP, the PRDP aims to strengthen and develop viable agriculture- and fishery-based enterprises to achieve its project development objectives of increasing annual real household annual income of farmer and fisherfolk beneficiaries by at least 5 percent per year and raising the incomes for targeted beneficiaries involved in enterprise development by at least 30 percent. PRDP-funded I-REAP subprojects are also projected to increase the value of annual marketed output by 7 percent. (**Annielyn L. Baleza**)

Letters

Samahan ng mga Magsasaka ng Calalahan
Zone 5, Calalahan, San Jose, Camarines Sur

RODEL P. TORNILLA

OIC, Regional Executive Director
Department of Agriculture RFO 5
San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur

Sir:

Warmest greetings!

SAMACA is a DOLE Registered farmers' association with Registration Number RO500-CS-1103-050-16 effective November 3, 2016 with domicile at Zone 5, Calalahan, San Jose. Presently, SAMACA has 50 active members with 70.25 hectares farming area at the aforementioned locality. Each farmer-member intends to improve palay production and postharvest operations.

Hence, in behalf of the association, SAMACA is expressing its deepest gratitude for the one (1) unit of palay thresher and one (1) unit handtractor with trailer you have granted to the association. It is of great help to the association, to its farmer members and the locality as a whole.

That's why we thank you for the whole hearted support you have given to the association. We thank you so much!

More power and God bless.

Very truly yours,

MELCHOR C. LLAGAS

(Signed) SAMACA President

2nd Agri Summit brings gov't and private sector together

The Department of Agriculture in partnership with the Camarines Sur Chamber of Commerce (CSCCI) staged the 2nd Bicol Agri Summit which featured trade fairs, exhibit of innovative products and technologies and techno seminars to help farmers improve farm productivity. Over 2,000 farmers trooped to the Camarines Sur Capitol Convention Center on August 29 to 31, 2019 to take part in the summit which is one of the events in the Camarines Sur Business Expo being conducted annually by the

CSCCI in partnership with the provincial government of Cam. Sur.

Visitors to the event had the chance to attend techno seminars on the following topics: Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Program and Rice Model Farm; Fall Army Worm; Organic Agriculture; Agricultural Credit Policy Program; Financial Literacy; Native Chicken and Duck Raising; African Swine Fever Policies and Management; Swine Genomics and Breeding Technology; Aquaponics; Crops Insurance; and Cacao

(Please turn to page 8)



Farmers Assn. received P55.2M worth farm machineries

SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR – The Department of Agriculture distributed various farm machineries and equipment totaling P55.2 Million to 130 farmers' associations from Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, and Sorsogon. The mass distribution was held at the Farmers' Hall, DA RFO 5 compound here on July 29, 2019.

Among the equipment distributed which were funded under the Rice Program include: 2 units 4WD tractor; 4 units combine harvester DC 35; 5 units combine harvester DC 70; 46 units handtractor;

87 units thresher; 12 units walk behind transplanter; 2 units riding type transplanter; 4 units floating tiller; 9 units seed spreader; 8 units reaper 23 units PISOS; and 32 units shallow tube well.

Meanwhile, under the Corn Program, 12 farmers associations and cooperatives received 4 multi crop drying pavements; 1 unit mobile recirculating batch type dryer; 3 units mechanical corn sheller; 2 units combine harvesters; and 1 unit PISOS.

Dr. Mary Grace DP. Rodriguez, OIC Chief of Field Operations Division said that with the DA's limited budget,



strict screening is being done based on the guidelines to select the most qualified associations from the numerous organized groups that submitted their intent to avail of the machineries.

Dr. Rodriguez also urged the associations to employ strategies in order to maximize the use of the equipment given by the DA.

Lorenzo L. Alvina, DA Bicol Rice and Corn Program Coordinator said that the

machineries are DA's support to the farmers to ease farm labor from planting up to harvesting. On the current problem of low buying price of palay, Alvina urged the farmers' association to strengthen their business model and networking.

The chairperson/presidents of the associations, together with their municipal/city agriculturists, personally received the equipment and machineries. *(Lovella P. Guarin)*

Taskforce on rice pool resources to help Bicol farmers

PILI, CAMARINES SUR – To address the plummeting farmgate price of palay, the Task Force on Rice crafted action plans to help Bicolano rice farmers. In a meeting presided by Department of Agriculture-Bicol Rice and Corn Program Coordinator Lorenzo L. Alvina on September 11, 2019 at the DA-Bicol Compound, this municipality, the Task Force on Rice agreed to pool concerned agencies' resources in providing immediate interventions.

Among the Task Force's top priorities are providing logistics support during the peak of harvesting season by the DA National Food Authority; intensifying joint venture as well as private and public partnership. With the DA Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division as lead agency, in collaboration with the Rice Processing Centers (RPCs), Chambers of Commerce and the Palaya Agri Ventures, a company dedicated to reduce poverty, increase the income of farmers and farm workers through improved productivity and

competitiveness of the livestock industry in the Philippines. Other immediate action plans will be the establishment and identification of pick up points for faster and easier collection of palay by NFA and private corporations. This will be facilitated by the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), RPCs, FCAs, local government units and partner buyers. The Department of Trade and Industry, Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Standards (BAFS), LGUs and Municipal Agriculture Offices will take charge of proper source labeling of rice products in the market. The Philippine Information Agency (PIA) as well as all agencies and stakeholders will advocate buying of local rice to support Bicolano rice farmers.

The DA-Bicol, Department of Agrarian Reform and private investors are also planning to adopt the Rice Model Farm and similar projects to help reduce the rice farmers' production cost. Meanwhile, the National Irrigation Authority (NIA), the Department of Labor



and Employment (DOLE), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) will be at the forefront in accelerating Cash for Work Programs for affected rice farmers. The Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC) also commit to simplify existing procedures to expedite smallholder farmers' crop insurance claims, particularly in areas declared under State of Calamity.

At the said meeting, the Regional Agricultural Fishery Council also presented its Technical Working Group on Rice Policy Resolutions which recommended enhancing market linkage with the DSWD's Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), amending the DA-NFA incentive scheme, increasing

production-related costs' PCIC insurance coverage, and implementing additional mitigation measures to alleviate the plight of affected rice farmers.

The Task Force on Rice was created by the Regional Development Council, the highest policy-making body in the region chaired by Legazpi City Mayor Noel E. Rosal, during its third quarter meeting held on September 6, 2019. It is composed of DA, CDA, DSWD, NFA, NIA, RAFC, PMS, DILG, Department of Tourism, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA).

Comparative data from DA-Bicol AMAD shows that as of September 2019, the average local buying price of fresh play dipped by P3 to P5 and P2.50 to P7.00 for dry palay from 2017-2019. (**Annielyn L. Baleza**)

Public Private Partnership

Palaya Agri Ventures buys fresh palay from Bicolano farmers

LIBMANAN, CAMARINES SUR - Palaya Agri Ventures started buying fresh palay at Barangay Aslong, Libmanan, Camarines Sur today on Sept 18. The private company aims to buy 25 tons of fresh palay initially from our local farmers at P3.00 higher than the prevailing price in the area. Jojo Elvira, regional manager of the private group was joined by DA Bicol OIC Regional Technical Director for Operations Adelina A. Losa on the first day of palay buying.



DA Bicol also deployed a rice combine harvester (photo below) to help farmers in harvesting their palay. For the use of the combine harvester, the farmer will pay 3 cavans for every 100 cavans harvested instead of the usual 10% payment for every 100 cavans, to the harvester operator.

Mar Bustarga of Rice Program said that Palaya Agri Ventures has procured a total of 50 tons fresh palay as of September 30, 2019.



Search is on for Best Gulayan sa Paaralan implementer in Bicol

LEGAZPI CITY, ALBAY – The search is on for the best implementer of the Department of Agriculture's Gulayan sa Paaralan in Bicol 2019. This was announced by DA-Bicol High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP) Report Officer Renato D. Acacio during the HVCDP 3rd Quarter Provincial and Municipal Agricultural Extension Workers (AEWs) Meeting and Workshop held in this city on September 12-13, 2019.

Public primary and secondary schools in Bicol with at least a minimum of 200 square meter vacant lot for use as school garden, or the equivalent in several land patches are qualified to participate in the contest. Schools that do not have vacant lot but have adopted container gardening technology in a consolidated land area equivalent to 200 square meters may also join. Only one nominee per school division with complete portfolio shall be subjected to regional technical

review by evaluators from DA-Bicol and the Department of Education-Bicol.

Nominees will be evaluated based on compliance with the required land area as well as on the level of participation, management skills, resource generation, technical skills and decision making demonstrated at their school gardening activities. The Best Gulayan sa Paaralan Contest also puts premium on innovativeness, value adding, and program impact as well as presence of composting facility, creativity, use of recycled materials and documentation.

Deadline of submission of

scrapbook to the DA Regional Field Office 5 will be on October 25, 2019 at 5 p.m. Top five schools will be selected during the technical review and will be visited for final site validation.

Winners will receive plaques of awards and agri-inputs worth P10,000 to P30,000 during the awarding ceremonies in November 2019.

Acacio urged the AEWs to provide technical support to participating schools, especially the teachers. He also cited an online survey which showed that education ranked second among the social causes that millennials are interested in

while agriculture was rated 31st thus, promoting agriculture in schools through the Gulayan sa Paaralan program is a strategic way of intensifying the DA's advocacy of engaging the youth in agricultural-related activities.

The Gulayan sa Paaralan was reintroduced to 720 primary and secondary schools in Bicol in 2018. In 2019, the program engaged about 920 schools regionwide. By promoting self-help food production activities and values among school children, the program aims to support the Department's goal of achieving food security and self-sufficiency. **(Annielyn L. Baleza)**



DA Bicol engages LGUs ... (from page 1)

PLGUs contended that based on their experiences, if an LGU has a business model and has allocated funds for its working capital, trading of agricultural products can be allowed. This is currently being implemented by the PLGU Cam. Norte in their AgriPinoy Pinoy Trading Center (APTC) located at Vinzons.

Other PLGUs are also conceptualizing their own business models to help in buying farmers' palay this coming harvest season. Cam. Norte Provincial Agriculturist Almirante Abad said that they will buy palay using the business model employed by the APTC. In Sorsogon,

Provincial Agriculturist Nestor Nava said that they are helping farmers reduce production cost by subsidizing or offering to farmers the use of the LGU's facilities for free during land preparation and harvesting of palay. The respective provincial agriculturists of Masbate and Catanduanes admitted that they are not experiencing problems as the palay price has rather increased in these provinces.

Cam. Sur OIC Provincial Agriculturist Luzena Bermeo, on the other hand, said that the PLGU of Cam. Sur has already passed an ordinance in support to rice subsidy program. They will also buy palay from local farmers as Camarines Sur's

yearly consumption of rice for their local programs and projects can reach up to 75,000 bags.

During last week's meeting with Agriculture Secretary William Dar, the PLGU of Cam. Sur represented by Congressman LRay Villafuerte pledged its support.

Camarines Sur is considered as the rice granary of the region having over 82,000 hectares of rice areas and attaining an annual rice production of more than 600,000 metric tons.

Meanwhile, Lorenzo Alvina, DA Rice and Corn Program regional coordinator, presented different models and good practices of PLGUs in other regions which have already started providing

subsidy in palay-buying.

The Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD) presented a monthly monitoring report on the average local buying price of fresh and dry palay in Camarines Sur and Albay randomly gathered from commercial rice traders and DA funded Rice Processing Centers being operated by farmers' associations. The report showed that in August, the buying price of dry palay in Camarines Sur was P18.15 and P14.47 for fresh (wet) palay. In Albay province, dry palay was bought at P18.38 while the fresh (wet) palay buying price was P13.61 last month.

Also present during the meeting were regional and provincial managers of the National Food Authority,

DA Bicol distributes 30,000 citronella tillers to prevent dengue

CANAMAN, CAMARINES SUR – To halt the steady rise of dengue cases in Camarines Sur particularly in this municipality with over 80 reported cases in the last three months, the Department of Agriculture in tandem with the Tabang Bikol Movement has initiated the planting of citronella in barangays.

On August 12, 2019, the DA Bicol



led by OIC Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla distributed 30,000 tillers of citronella, together with 1,000 pieces pili seedlings, 500 pieces grafted cacao and 300 packets vegetable seeds to some 300 beneficiaries of Tabang Bikol. The mass distribution was held at the Mariners Polytechnic Colleges in Baras, Canaman.

representatives from the LBP, the Agricultural and Credit Policy Council (ACPC).

As an immediate assistance to rice farmers tilling less than one hectare and affected by dwindling palay price, the DA through the ACPC will give P15,000 SURE-AID loan to farmers payable in 8 years at zero (0) interest starting September 19. The DA will also continue to give incentives to farmers' organizations that will sell their palay to NFA based on the number of bags sold. The DA regional office will however issue a new guidelines to reduce the number of bags required to avail of the incentives in the form of farm machineries. This incentive scheme is on a first come first served basis.

Citronella works by masking scents that are attractive to insects namely carbon dioxide and lactic acid in humans.

OIC RED Tornilla said that, aside from its strong smell which drives mosquitos away, citronella can also be a source of income as the extracts are used in making essential oils. Pili and cacao are also champion commodities of Bicol due to the big demand for confectioneries, pili oil and chocolates here and abroad. Tornilla also reiterated the marching order of our new Secretary William Dar to help farmers double their income in three years through crop diversification.

Mayor Nelson Legaspi of Canaman said that as of July 31, there were 82 reported cases of

dengue in his municipality, 60 of which came from the coastal barangay of Mangayawan.

During the mass distribution, Dr. Mary Grace Rodriguez discussed the techniques in planting citronella. The plant needs six hours of early morning sunlight. One to two tillers can be planted in the holes at a distance of 0.6 x 1 meter. It can be harvested after 8-9 months.

OIC RED Tornilla and Tabang Bikol chairperson Jimenez also signed a MOA along with the recipients of the project namely: Philippine Coast Guard Authority, Magarao People's Council, Pili Peoples Council, People's Organization of Disaster

Survivors (PODIS) –Ilaw ng Kababaihan sa Canaman, Irayangsolong Agriculture Coop, and Isarog Garden Society.

Earlier this month, DA Bicol has turned over a citronella oil extracting machine to Tabang Bikol through its Chairperson Evita Jimenez-Tuazon.

Citronella is a cogon-grass look-alike which has various industrial uses. Its oil is highly valued as it is used in perfumes, soaps, spray, disinfectants, paints and polish. At present, the Philippines still imports citronella oil for industrial consumption. **(Lovella P. Guarin)**

DA rolls out 6th banner program - the Halal Food Industry Development Program

NAGA CITY - The Department of Agriculture is currently conducting across the country an orientation and awareness campaign on Halal Food Industry Development Program (HFIDP) –its newest banner program in compliance with the Republic Act No. 10817, or the Philippine Halal Export Development and Promotion Act of 2016 .Engineer Ibrahim Racmat, the HFIDP National Focal Person of the DA came all the way from Manila to personally conduct the first of a series of orientation and awareness campaigns on this latest program

According to Racmat, Halal is a term from Qur'an which means permitted, lawful, legal, legitimate, allowed acceptable, unprohibited, or unforbidden, free from impurities (when referring to food) and allowed for consumption or to be eaten in accordance with Shariah

Law. Racmat added that it is an Islamic value, a code for Muslim to consume only what is permissible and lawful by Islam anchored on the principle of Thayyiban which refers to wholesomeness, wherein safety, cleanliness, nutrition and quality is assured. But Halal is not only limited to food but also includes non-food products.

Over 50 participants consisting of leaders and representatives of the Muslim communities, Officials and representatives of the Provincial Agriculture Offices and provincial Veterinary Offices, DA regional officials and staff attended said briefing held in one of the hotels in this city.

DA – Bicol Regional Technical Director for Research and Regulations Dr. Edgar R. Madrid in his message to the participants



underscored that the bottomline is the implementation of the Halal Program is food safety and compliance with the Halal requirements to make our products competitive especially in the export market where Halal certification is now a consideration.

Eng. Racmat also discussed the concept, principles and understanding of Halal and where the Religion and Business intersect, the Philippine National Halal Certification Scheme including the Food Safety Assurance Plan and the Halal agriculture and Fisheries and Halal feed products. Meanwhile, Alfred Transfiguracion Planning Officer III of HFIDP presented the Halal Food Industry Development Program and Roadmap.

Another speaker, Jayson Ajero, Science Research Analyst of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) discussed the mandate of their agency on the Philippine halal Export Development and Promotion Act of 2016 and Halal Opportunities.



Rosita M. Imperial, DA Bicol Chief of the Regulatory Division and Regional Focal person of HFIDP explained that DA's role in the implementation of this program is more focused on the production and postharvest aspect in the value chain. She bared that so far the pili products of J. Emmanuel have already obtained Halal certification. More Bicol products and entrepreneurs have submitted their application for Halal certification which is being done by an accredited third party accreditation body. A series orientation and information campaign activities will also be conducted at the provincial levels.

Also discussed during said activity were the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP Principles and Certification Guidelines by Editha Pelin, Senior Agriculturist; Good Animal Husbandry Practices (GAHP) Principles and Practices and Organic Agriculture Principles and Certification Guidelines by Ailyn Rafer, Regional Organic Agriculture Focal Person. **(Emily B. Bordado)**



2nd Agri... (from page 4)

Farming.

Senator Cynthia Villar, Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, was the guest of honor during the summit. She cited the barriers confronting farmers which could be solved if farmers will be entrepreneurs. This could be possible, according to her, with agricultural mechanization

as it is key to be competitive with our Asian counterparts.

That is why she espoused the rice tariffication law which will provide P10 billion Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF).

"50% of the country's rice production is produced by only 10 provinces (Cagayan Valley, Isabela, Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, Pangasinan, Camarines Sur, Iloilo, Negros Occidental, Leyte and North Cotabato).

That's why I keep on coming back here, said Villar.

DA Bicol OIC Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla, in his message lauded the agri summit as a form of public and private sector partnership where synergy and collaboration is very evident. "Providing support to regional expositions such as the Cam. Sur Business Expo is one of the department's thrusts under its ASPIRE (Agribusiness Support

for Promotion and Investment in Regional Expositions) being implemented by the Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division for three years now.

Meanwhile, Governor Miguel Luis Villafuerte announced in January 2020, the provincial LGU will enlist Youth Agri Scholars to be sent to other countries to study agriculture. **(Lovella P. Guarin)**

AMAD links local farmers to supermarket chain

SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR – Over 30 farmers' organizations in Camarines Sur, engaged in commercial production of agri-commodities, have a bright market prospect as the Libertad Consumers Corporation (LCC) decided to buy directly from farmers/producers.

"Our goal is to have 50% to 60% of our products in fresh agri produce category. Hindi na delata kase marami na ang nagkakasakit," said Aldrin Borbe, group category head of LCC during the Market Matching on Fruits and Vegetables held on July 29, 2019 at DA RFO 5 training hall.

"This time, LCC na ang mamimili as opposed to concessionaires where quality and pricing are not controlled. Before, we dealt with traders which resulted to very expensive products which are not affordable to the consumers," Borbe added.

He also urged the agri producers to look at this initiative as a partnership. There is no seasonality as the demand for fresh produce is on a daily basis, Borbe quipped.

Adelina A. Losa, OIC Regional Technical Director for Operations and chief of Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD) urged the farmers to put premium to product quality to be competitive.

LCC has 80 stores in 50 towns and cities in the Bicol region. Due to the growing consumer interest in obtaining fresh products, especially produce directly from the farm, LCC has tapped the DA to match them to the farmer-producers.

To support its chain of supermarkets, the LCC requires the following fresh produce on a weekly basis: 1,500 to 2,000 kilos of native tomato every week; at least

1,000 kilos kalamansi; 1,000 kilos ampalaya and eggplant; minimum of 1,500 kilos squash; 2,000 kilos sweet potato; 10,000 kilos watermelon; and 200-300 kilos oyster mushroom per week.

Among the participating farmers' organizations during the market matching were: Agripreneur Farmers and Producers Association based in Libmanan, Cam. Sur (producer of hot pepper, kalamansi and lowland vegetables); Binanuanan Farmers of Pili, Cam. Sur (supplier of hot pepper, pole sitao, cucumber and gabi); Naga City Organic Farmers Association (supplier of cucumber, lettuce, hot pepper and kalamansi); The Agri Planters and Producers Farmers Association of Tigaon, Cam. Sur (producer of organic vegetables, lettuce, ginger and gabi); Magarao Vegetable Farmers Association (producer of cucumber); Cam. Sur Multipurpose Coop (Pamplona East and West cluster) (producer of cucumber, squash, ampalaya, pole sitao); Cri-San Vegetable Growers Assn of Lupi, Cam. Sur (producer of eggplant, cucumber, pole sitao, and squash); May-ogob ARB Coop of Ocampo, Cam. Sur (producer of cucumber and lettuce); Lupi HVC Growers (producer of hot pepper, eggplant, pole sitao); Minalabac Farmers Assn (producer of lowland vegetables); Nabua Gabi Farmers Assn (producer of dried gabi leaves); Sto. Nino



Tornilla is new OIC ... (from page 1)

Santos on June 30, 2019.

At 45 years old, OIC RED Rodel is the youngest director to be entrusted with the highest post at the DA regional field office in Bicol. On his first week as OIC RED, he immediately conferred with the different divisions and operating units of the DA regional office to lay out his plans and know their predicaments. He

also conferred with NFA and PCA officials and Local Chief Executives on the on-going and proposed projects in their respective provinces.

An economist, OIC RED Rodel graduated Cum Laude with the degree of BS in Agriculture major in Agricultural Economics at the Central Bicol State University of Agriculture. He also tucked

(Turn to page 13)



Aldrin Borbe, group category head of LCC.

Pili Vegetable Growers Ass (producers of lowland vegetables); Bicol Entrep Assn for Mushroom and Pili vegetable



growers. Some of these associations are also included in the group of OMA Senso sa Kabuhayan Farmers being supported by Vice President Leni Robredo.

OIC RTD Losa said that AMAD has already prepared a plan to help the farmers come up with the required

volume of production at the time when it is needed by the buyer to facilitate sustainability of supply and ensure that the farmer-producers get the reasonable price for their fresh products.

The AMAD also conducted similar market matching activities in Cam. Norte, Albay and Sorsogon. (Lovella P. Guarin)

On July 31, AMAD together with Romy Tan, LCC Executive Director, visited papaya and pineapple producers in Sorsogon and were able to close a weekly delivery deal for three stores of LCC in Albay.



DA Bicol hosts South Luzon Cluster Rice Achievers 2018 Awarding

The Department of Agriculture (DA) conferred the 2018 Rice Achievers Awards (RAA) to 74 agricultural extension workers (AEWs) and 11 local farmer technicians (LFTs) from Calabarzon, Mimaropa and Bicol during the South Luzon Cluster Awarding Ceremonies for CY 2018 RAA. DA-Bicol hosted the event in Naga City on July 24, 2019.



The RAA recognized the dedicated efforts of the local government stakeholders and agri extension workers to boost the country's rice production. Each awardee received a plaque of recognition and cash award worth P20,000 to encourage their commitment and excellent performance.

DA Assistant Secretary Designate for Planning and Project Development Carlos L. Magnaye graced the event. Magnaye addressed the awardees as modern heroes and acknowledged their contributions to the agriculture sector. He also challenged them to promote the adoption of modern technology among local farmers.

Likewise, DA-Bicol newly-designated Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla reminded the awardees that more than the accolades that they received from the agency, what is more important is how they inspire the rice farmers to increase their harvest and how they encourage their colleagues



to persevere.

Five of the 27 Outstanding AEWs from Bicol were declared as Hall of Famers this year namely Anicia P. Mancita of Magarao, Camarines Sur, Janice B. Orciga of Iriga City, Camarines Sur, Julieta G. Deris of Nabua, Camarines Sur, Rosa V. Belgica of Canaman, Camarines Sur and Celedonio O. Elevado Jr. of Nabua, Camarines Sur. Other winners for the 2018 RAA Outstanding AEW category were from Magarao (1), Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPAg) in Sorsogon (5), Iriga City, Camarines Sur (2), Tabaco City, Albay (1), Nabua, Camarines Sur (3), OPAG-Camarines Sur (1) Canaman, Camarines Sur (3), Manito (1),

OPAg-Camarines Norte (3), Masbate City (1), San Jose, Camarines Sur (4), OPAG-Albay (1) and Pioduran (1).

Meanwhile, special recognition was given to Genaro A. Tamon Jr., a Hall of Famer for winning three consecutive years in the Outstanding LFT category. The Outstanding LFT Award was also given to Librado



Banastao Jr. of Canaman, CamSur, Salvacion C. Buena of Canaman, Camarines Sur, Dominador R. Paa of Canaman, Camarines Sur Rolando B. Oliver of Magarao, Camarines Sur, and Arnulfo D. Bernas of Magarao, Camarines Sur.

Rodolfo Nuñez Jr., Outstanding AEW from Canaman, Camarines Sur and Librado Banastao, Outstanding LFT from Canaman, Camarines Sur, shared their success stories as well as their struggles in assisting rice farmers in the region. Nuñez asked the DA officials to remember the plight of AEWs and LFTs, particularly those devolved in 4th, 5th and 6th class municipalities by pushing for the approval of the Magna Carta for AEW.

"This Rice Achievers Awarding will inspire more Agricultural Extension Workers as soldiers of the kingdom of the Department of Agriculture to strive more. Therefore, it will never deplete the purpose of encouraging commitment among the local government units... We are doing this not for ourselves but for our clientele—the farmers," Nuñez said.

Meanwhile, Banastao reassured the DA Management that the LFTs will continue to help strengthen the agriculture sector by intensifying their support services to the LGUs and fellow farmers. He also reiterated their request for an increase in their incentive. Amelia Ramos, Outstanding LFT of Buenavista, Quezon, thanked the DA for its staunch support saying "Salamat di kami iniwan ng DA."

Carlo Realeza, Outstanding AEW of Siniloan, Laguna, said that the recognition he received is a fruit of the interdependence and unity among the farmers, LGUs and the DA.

Dr. Santiago R. Obien, DA National Rice Program Consultant; Emerson S. Yago, Planning Officer III of the DA National Rice Program; Dennis Arpia, OIC-Regional Technical Director (RTD) for Operations and Extension of DA-Calabarzon; Ronie F Panoy, RTD for Operations and Extension of DA-Mimaropa and Adelina A. Losa, RTD for Operations and Extension of DA-Bicol also graced the activity.

(Please turn to page 17)

VP Robredo graces ASPIRE event

NAGA CITY - Vice President Ma. Leonor (Leni) G. Robredo graces this year's staging of the ASPIRE event in her home city on July 10, 2019 which showcased the various agricultural products of some 70 local farmers, processors and small and medium entrepreneurs. ASPIRE which stands for Agribusiness Support for Promotion and Investment in Regional Expositions is a program of the Department of Agriculture which aims to bridge the gap between the farmers, producers and processors, buyers, investors and consumers.

In her message the vice president urged for a change or shift in the mindset of program implementers. She said that development program implementers should not measure success or outcome in terms of the number of

beneficiaries served or number of goods or interventions provided. "We should focus more on the impact on the income and the social benefits of these assistance on the life of the people we are assisting." She underscored the need to take into account the current needs and baseline data when providing intervention and assistance to farmers and other stakeholders. She cited the result of the survey conducted by her office prior to their launching of her Angat Buhay Program. According to her the survey result showed that most farmers in Camarines Sur plant eggplant. "But this is not what most business establishments and restaurants and traders in the province need. So there is a mismatch and we need to address this," she underscored. For his part newly designated DA – Bicol OIC- Regional



Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla pointed out that the ASPIRE program is a convergence undertaking of government and private sector which aims to integrate efforts in the entire agri-business value chain. Thus, the DA has partnered with the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Metro Naga Chamber of Commerce, the Provincial Chamber of Commerce, the DTI and the City government of Naga and other partners. He assured of DA's commitment to help the local producers and SMEs and to aggressively promote Bicol's regional commodities such as pili, abaca, gabi and queen pineapple. He said that at the regional level the ASPIRE Program is being orchestrated by the Agribusiness Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD).

Clarín P. Tobias, the regional governor of the PCCI explained that the role of the business sector in said convergence is to mentor the small and medium entrepreneurs in terms of determining costing, innovations, improving quality and value adding.

Meanwhile, Dir. Bernadette F. San Juan, DA Director of the Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Service who came all the way from Quezon City announces the good news that DA will now be implementing the Sagip Saka Act or R.A. 11321 which aimed at "helping the agricultural and fishing communities reach their full potential, increasing farmers'

and fishermen's incomes, and bridging gaps through public-private partnerships, thereby improving their quality of life." The law signed by the president on April 17 establishes the Farmers and Fisherfolk Enterprise Development Program, a comprehensive set of objectives, targets, and holistic approach in promoting the establishment of enterprise involving agricultural and fishery products.

To oversee the implementation of the program, the law creates the Farmers and Fisherfolk Enterprise Development Council, which will be chaired by DA Secretary or his duly authorized representative who is at least an undersecretary.

Members include one representative each from the DTI, the DILG, the Department of Finance, the Cooperative Development Authority, a national organization of farmers cooperatives or associations, and a national organization of fisherfolk cooperatives or associations; and two representatives from the agriculture, food, restaurant and business sectors.

Also present during the opening ceremonies of the 4-day event were : Naga City vice-mayor Cecilia V. de Asis; DTI director Edna Tejada; Ferdinand D. Sia, president of MNCCI along with other MNCCI officers; Adelina A. Losa, Chief of DA 5-AMAD. **(Emily B. Bordado)**

Bicol pork is safe ... (from page 1)

and Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) Veterinary Quarantine Services were present, as well as heads of the Provincial Agriculture Office of Camarines Sur, Phil. Information Agency (PIA),

and Camarines Sur Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Private feed millers and other swine industry stakeholders, members of the media and DA employees also joined the boodle fight which was co-sponsored by the Univet Nutrition and Animal Healthcare Co. or UNAHCO.





Want to De-stress? --Hie off to Mirisbiris and immerse in nature's bliss

By Emily B. Bordado

The town of Sto. Domingo in Albay province is known for its beaches and proximity to Mayon volcano. But there is a new spot in this town which is attracting tourists even locals. The Mirisbiris and Nature Garden along the road to Barangay Salvacion is a perfect destination for nature lovers, plant enthusiasts, beach bums or those who simply want to relax and get away from the noise and bustle of city life.

This nature garden is owned by the couple Glenda (nee Tapel) who hails from Camarines Sur and her American husband Christopher Newhall, a world renowned geologist and volcanologist who has decided to settle in the Philippines after retiring from his work in the United States. They met when Chris was assigned in Bicol as a peace corps volunteer and she was a teacher. When they got married

they settled in the US and built their family there. They have two children. She pursued a degree in Nursing and earned a Masters Degree in Nursing and worked as a Family Nurse Practitioner. But after their retirement they decided to return to the Philippines and Chris who been a volcanologist has been fascinated by Mount Mayon so they looked for a place close to the volcano.

This 10-hectare garden nature farm is also a learning center which promotes and advocates conservation and protection of natural resources and bio-diversity and adopts organic gardening. On its upper portion, the farm showcases a rain forest-to-reef environment as it is located in the middle of a forest with lush vegetation and agro – forest trees and bamboo groove. Forest animals like birds, lizards, insects, plus a few mammals like the nocturnal civet are also seen in the area.

Down below the property about a 10 to 15 minutes' walk is the couple's home and Villa Serena guest house fronting the Albay Gulf where tiny coral polyps and other marine life build a reef and provide habitat or sanctuary for varied colored reef fishes. The iconic majestic Mayon volcano provides a scenic backdrop.

Local medicinal and culinary herbs, spices and ornamental plants and those which she collected from her travels abroad and other parts of the country abound in their garden and these are now being propagated and multiplied. Some of them are for sale.

But Mirisbiris Garden and Nature Center operates not for profit and does not cater only to guests or visitors who come to stay or visit their place. It is driven by its vision and mission to promote and advocate love and respect



for nature, environmental protection and sustainable farming fishing and living not only for this generation but for future generations as well. The Newhall couple has invested much for the maintenance of the naturally growing trees and vegetation in their 10-hectare land and establishes new plantations. They regularly conduct information and education campaign for school children and provide assistance for their education through scholarships.

They came up with a simple catalogue with accompanying photos and brief write up of some indigenous plants that thrive in Mirisbiris. Her husband Chris being a geologist has also traced and published in a flyer a brief historical evolution of the town of Sto.Domingo and the coastal barangay including Salvacion where Mirisbiris is part of. These are framed and

(Next page pls.)



hanged on the walls of their center.

Ms. Glenda who has never forgotten her love for teaching, trains and assists mothers in the area to engage in livelihood activities using the available resources or recycling materials such as plastic into usable bags such as bags. "The mothers have also to earn somehow so they contribute to the family income," Ma'am Glenda said.

She takes delight in unravelling the potentials and the many good things that can be derived from our rich natural resources if we only are creative and innovative enough. She thus, concocted many recipes and products from the indigenous fruits in their garden. She has baked cookies and pastries with malunggay. She has also processed the fruit an indigenous but now rarely found and known I our country - the Flacourtia inermis (commonly known as lovi-lovi or batako plum) into jam with mixed lemonsitong castila which are now available in bottles. She also makes her own blend of juices using the passion fruit (mirinda), cucumber, blue ternate and other concoctions which are served along with local delicacies in their B & B Kapehan or mini restaurant. She generously shares with the folks in their community especially the women whatever new learnings or discoveries she has found. She has organized the Bgy. Salvacion Mother Society, Inc.

Although Ma'am Glenda no longer nurses the sick and the recuperating patients she is now preoccupied nurturing and caring for nature – a passion which she shares with her husband.

They have organized an annual Earth Day Festival in April which features

various learning activities such as lessons on art, crafts, yoga, photography, cooking demonstration, and forest tours.

The Mirisbiris Garden Educational Foundation, Inc. which they have organized and registered with the SEC as an NGO is dedicated to nature education. It has been working with local high school students to expose them to horticulture and organic gardening. They also provide assistance to school children through scholarships.

For this, their foundation was among the awardees recognized by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in the prestigious "Saringaya Award" in 2017 which has 10 staff.

Today, the Center is frequented by guests, tourists for tour, seminars, retreats, receptions, medication, adventure and relaxation. Here, one can enjoy the tranquillity and serenity of the countryside while enjoying the comforts that most travellers expect. It utilizes solar energy to run most of its facilities. They also practice water harvesting. Almost 99% of their water is rain water.

The place is 45 minutes away from Legazpi City and is just along the newly cemented and widened provincial road. It is accessible by car, tricycle, and motorcycles.

For those who want to de-stress, immerse yourself in nature or take a dip into the beach of Mirisbiris Garden and Nature Center and be re-charged and be rejuvenated.

Tornilla is new OIC ... (From page 9)

a Master's degree in Applied Business Economics major in Food Systems Management from the University of Asia and the Pacific in Pasig City in 2008. He has achieved his impressive educational acumen through various scholarship grants from the PCARRD in Los Baños, Laguna and Agricultural Training Institute in Quezon City.

His first job was in the government sector as Coconut Development Officer at the Philippine Coconut Authority –Region V from 1996 to 2000. In 2002 his stint at the Department of Agriculture Regional Office V begun when he was appointed as Science Research Assistant at the Crop Improvement Unit of the Bicol Integrated Agricultural Research Center (BIARC) of the Research Division. The following year, he was promoted as Agriculturist I or Researcher at the same division where he authored and co-authored 16 research papers some of which garnered Best Paper Awards. In 2010, he was appointed as Technical Assistant of the then Regional Technical Director for Operations and Extension Dr. Ellen delos Santos and was also appointed Regional Rice Program Report Officer, a post which he held until 2019. In 2012, he was tasked as Co-Project Investigator/Extension Specialist of the Bicol Agri-Water Project, a five-year USAID funded project that aimed to introduce innovative rice farming practices to farmers in Bicol to mitigate the impact of climate change. In 2013, he was appointed as Economist of the Phil. Rural Development Project regional project coordination office, a position he still holds as of this writing.

In 2016, he was promoted as Agricultural Center Chief II and OIC Chief of the Field Operations Division. He was catapulted to post of OIC Regional Technical Director for Operations on March 2017 and has held said position before he was appointed as OIC RED effective July 1, 2019.

Having been mentored by his predecessor, Dr. Elena B. delos Santos, who is a very hard working and an expert manager, OIC RED Rodel is also expertly steering DA Bicol to perform at its best, both in financial disbursements and in achieving the physical targets of the agency without prejudice to the welfare of the farmers. As he has been closely involved with the Rice Program for the most part of his 23 years in the government, the rice farmers are closest to his heart and he has been aggressively taking steps to help them become globally competitive. Among these steps were provision of agri-machineries, seeds and farm inputs to qualified farmers. He has also detailed a number of six-wheeler trucks to the NFA provincial offices of Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur and Sorsogon during the peak of palay harvest season this year (2019) to encourage farmers to sell their palay to NFA at high price. The farmers' organizations that sell their palay to NFA also received incentives in the form of farm equipment and machineries based on accumulated points or number of bags sold to NFA.

Baao farmer unearths luxury cacao variety

By Lovella P. Guarin

If there is anyone who can attest that cacao bears fruit to a hundred years, it is Romeo B. Quiñonez, a cacao farmer of Baao, Camarines Sur. He and his cousins have inherited more than five hectares of land planted with century old cacao trees from their grand father - Albino Beldua Bismonte (1898 – 1979), a home-bred “chocolatero” who introduced the first Criollos and Forasteros in Sitio Igamot, in Baao. Criollo, Forastero and Trinitario are the three varieties of cacao or cocoa beans. Criollo is a very high quality cocoa bean and is very aromatic and lacks bitter taste. This variety is used as main ingredients in luxury chocolates that is why it is the most prized variety of cacao in modern day. Only 3% of the world’s cocoa production came from Criollo as it is becoming very scarce and expensive. Meanwhile, Trinitario is a cross breed of Forastero and Criollo. It

represents about 12% of the world’s cocoa production. Forastero is a high yielding variety, an everyday cocoa with strong, earthy flavors. It represents about 85% of the world’s cocoa production. (source: chocolate.co.uk/blogs)

Transforming a century old farm was very hard at first as Romie has no background in farming. He was a former government employee and has also worked with an NGO. Luckily his cousin Aldo B. Bismonte was also interested to resurrect the cacao

plantation of their grandfather. They went into a research frenzy to learn the ropes of cacao production. They hired farmhands who helped them in the identification, recovery and rehabilitation of the heirloom cacao trees. Instead of getting seedlings from other sources, they germinated their own native cacao seeds.

Through painstaking efforts and research, they discovered that the dominant variety in his farm that has survived for over a hundred years was the pure Criollo – the “rock star” of all cacaos. This discovery fueled their passion and

enthusiasm to restore the Señor Albino farm to its old glory.

The duo managed to get their first training on cacao under the COCOAPHILS in 2017. Thereafter, they attended series of trainings and seminars sponsored by the

3,000 cacao seedlings at a distance of 3 meters x 3 meters as intercrop between coconuts and bananas in vacant areas. They practice traditional and organic approaches as they strive to bring out the distinct flavor of their native beans. As they have

learned from the trainings they attended, they began to produce their own concoctions to sustain the fertilizer and pesticide requirement of the cacao trees.

Their efforts were amply rewarded every time they harvest the cacao pods which they process into handcrafted chocolates and tabrillas.

While most cacao bean producers value quantity over quality, Albino’s heirloom cacao gives much weight to flavor.

Romie and Aldo are full of visions for the Señor

Albino Farm. It was registered with the Department of Trade and Industry in April 1, 2016. It carries the trademark logo of Albino’s Heirloom Cacao duly registered with the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) on June 21, 2018. The tireless duo is also working on the farm’s application for Organic Agriculture certification.

Cacao farmers like Romie and Aldo can look up to a bright future in cacao as demand for chocolates worldwide is rising while there is a slump in production in cacao producing countries such as Ivory Coast, Ghana, West Africa and Indonesia.

(Next page pls.)



Department of Agriculture and Department of Trade and Industry. They were also lucky to attend trainings on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Manufacturing Practices. In 2018, the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) introduced them to Organic Agriculture. Later on, the DA Bicol Organic Agriculture program, and the Baao Municipal Agriculture Office in partnership with the Baao Organic Producers and Processors Association (BAAOPPA) poured out their support.

After rehabilitating the century old cacao trees, they also planted an additional

RCEF to benefit ... *(from page 1)*

Glenn C. De Peralta and his team discussed the program particularly its scope and process flow to 22 Municipal Agriculturists in the province and their staff.

According to De Peralta, RCEF was created based on the Republic Act 11203 or the Rice Trade Liberalization Law, which lifts the quantitative restriction on rice and replaces it with tariff. He mentioned that the Rice Fund established the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Program (RCEP) designed to complement and supplement the existing DA-National Rice Program (DA-NRP).

To help improve the competitiveness and income of rice farmers along with other components of the RCEF such as mechanization, credit and extension, the six-year RCEF Seed Program will implement four component projects:

1. Promoting and distributing certified seeds of



2. Mobilizing and strengthening local seed production,
3. Supporting variety development, and
4. Strengthening farmer organizations.

These components aim to increase the adoption of certified inbred seeds and integrated crop management to contribute to the Philippine

Rice Industry Roadmap of achieving an average yield of six tons per hectare in high- and five tons per hectare in medium-yielding provinces towards a rice secure Philippines. The RCEP is also projected to reduce production and marketing costs by 30 percent as well as postharvest losses.

The program covers a total of 75,400 hectares of rice area in 59 LGUs in the region with high potential for improving competitiveness—27 in Camarines Sur, 12 in Albay, 11 in Sorsogon and nine in Masbate. According to DA Rice Program Report Officer Arra Nicole Nicolas, these areas were selected based on their cumulative scores on various criteria

depending on farm size. Eligibility to receive seeds in the next program cycle shall depend on farmer organizations' ability to achieve the yield target for the two seasons that they received free seeds.

Hector O. Llagas, Municipal Agriculturist of Bato, Camarines Sur said that this is a good news especially now that rice farmers are worried about the seeming imbalance in the country's rice industry as buying price of fresh palay dropped to only P12 per kilogram as of August 2019.

"Medyo nangangamba ang mga rice farmers na dapat may maging suporta na programa galing sa gobyerno kung paano mapataas ang presyo ng bigas kasi yung



including the size of area harvested, yield level, cost of production and share of irrigated area. Targeted RCEF areas were also verified by comparing data on area planted and area harvested to rice from the LGU, Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) and the Philippine Rice Information System (PRISM). Its initial implementation will focus on cities and municipalities with an annual area planted larger than 100 hectares as potential operation areas. For dry season 2020, only LGUs with areas greater than 500 hectares were allocated with RCEP funds because of budget constraints.

RCEP will benefit rice farmers who belong to a DA-accredited farmer organization or any accrediting government agency recognized by the DA, farmers listed in the DA-updated Registry System for the Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA), farmer-members whose rice farms can cover at least 20 hectares in total in one to two adjacent villages in one city or municipality and farming in rice fields located in the selected municipalities. Qualified farmers will receive free seeds initially for two consecutive planting seasons. For dry season 2020, a maximum of four bags containing 20 kilograms of seeds per bag will be given to farmers

nakikita nila parang hindi balanse ang sistema na kung saan laging mababa yung bilihan ng palay samantalang hindi natin makontrol ang pagbaba. Makakatulong itong RCEP kasi unang-una makaka-avail sila ng binhi na siguradong de-kalidad at least nakikita nila na may tulong o ayuda galing sa gobyerno," he said.

Victoria C. Lapitan, PhilRICE-Bicol Branch Director sought the LGUs' and partner agencies' support to the RCEP particularly in validating potential beneficiaries. **(Annielyn L. Baleza)**

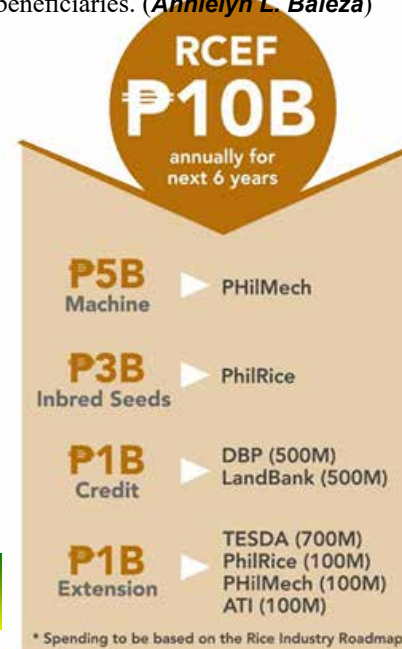
Baao farmer ...

(from page 14)

Taking advantage of this development, the High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP) of the Department of Agriculture (DA) in Bicol is focusing its efforts on this dollar earner as a priority commodity.

Recently, the HVCDP provided organic fertilizer, cacao planting materials and garden tools to Romie and Aldo.

The DA regional office is giving 500 pieces cacao seedlings (UF 18 and BR 25) to farmers who are willing to put up a techno demo. To capacitate the recipients of the planting materials, the DA is conducting trainings on cacao production and Good Agricultural Practices as well as nursery management. Fermentation boxes, pole pruner, moisture meters are also being provided to farmers.



House of Rimas Ice Cream opens in Naga City

Taste our Rimas ice cream available at the newly opened House of Rimas Ice Cream located at Universal Road, Zone 6, Triangulo, Naga City.

Its very unique and creamy flavor will surely impress your taste buds. You will also keep coming back for more once you taste the Vegie de Fruta Ice cream.

This is a breakthrough public private partnership between the Department of Agriculture Research Division and the Yulaik Food Products owned by the fabulous entrepreneur and wine connoisseur Lorna Daud.

Rimas is a very healthy alternative as it is rich in potassium and carbohydrates. It helps prevent intestinal and bowel movement related problems. It also effectively reduces cholesterol level.

Luz Marcelino, chief of the Research Division, said that Rimas ice cream was one of the 17 different products from the breadfruit which were developed by the DA's product development team led by Arlene I. de Asis. Other products include Rimas flour, pastillas, custard, muffins, pinoy fries, torones, kimchi, cookies and a lot more.

This project which was funded by the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) was cited as "Best Innovative Product" in 2013.

Aside from rimas ice cream technology, the DA also provided the materials for the construction of this House of Rimas Ice Cream.

The Yulaik Food Products also include Lipote and mango wines, marmalades among others. **(Lovella P. Guarin)**



DA R&D projects vie for Best Paper award

NAGACITY - The Department of Agriculture Bicol held its 1st Regional Research, Development and Extension Network (BRRDEN) Research Development & Extension Review and 2nd Regional Technology Investment Forum on August 22-23 at a hotel here. The activity is an annual undertaking of the Research Division which aims to evaluate completed Research & Development projects funded by DA and Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) and technologies generated with location- specific adaptation to Bicol condition and at the same time showcase developed/generated technologies that has been adapted by farmers, agri-entrepreneurs, manufacturers and other stakeholders.

Dr. Edgar Madrid, Regional Technical Director for Research and Development encouraged more than 100 participants to take note on



Dr. Edgar R. Madrid

the policy direction of newly appointed Secretary William Dar in the preparation of R & D proposals and in the implementation of R & D projects. He also mentioned the twin goals under Dar administration, "Masaganang ani at Dagdag Kita." "Dapat may katuturan at gamit ang produkto ng inyong pananaliksik. Sayang lang kung hindi magagamit ang resulta ng inyong research" he continued.

Simultaneous presentation and critiquing of research projects dominated the 2 day



Luz Marcelino

activity.

Adjudged as best research paper under various categories (ranking 1st, 2nd and 3rd) respectively were: For Technology Commercialization category: Community Based Mushroom Production in Bicol Region (by P. Oliver, E. Hilotin, A. De Asis, L. Marcelino, and E. Madrid); Participatory Performance Testing & Validation in Bicol Region (by C. Orbon, T. Machica, M. Aldecoa, L. Bermillo, M. Bibay and M. Noceda). For the Socio Economic Research category: Enhancing the



Cora Orbon

Capability of Bicol's Agta IPs through Palayamanan Approach (by G. Nunez), Assessment of Queen Pineapple Industry in Camarines Norte Towards Effective Value Chain Management (by M.C. Campita MC and A. Abordo), Magnitude & Viability of Mechanization of Agri Fishery Industry in Cam Norte (by R. Diño, J.M. Nape). For Technology Adaptation/ Technology Verification category: Community Based Action Research for Climate Resilient Agriculture in Region V (by L. Marcelino, L., *(Next page pls)*

Trainings

DA Bicol's partnership with SMFI boosts cassava model farm production

CAWAYAN, MASBATE – What used to be a dry wasteland in Brgy. Tuburan, in this municipality is now a source of income of rural folks living within the area.

In partnership with San Miguel Foods Inc. (SMFI), the Department of Agriculture-Bicol's Cassava Program now reaps the harvest of its 30-hectare Cassava Model Farm, being managed by the Tuburan United Farmers Association (TUFA), in Cawayan, Masbate.

According to Robinson C. Rival, chairman of TUFA, DA-Bicol's efforts to connect them to an established and sure market drew cassava farmers in his locality back to farming.

At the Cassava Model Farm Harvest Festival attended by TUFA members and prospective farmer-members on September 17, 2019, Engr. Michelle Maligang, Cassava Program Report Officer, stated that the association has

recorded a total production of 600 metric tons and a yield of 30 metric tons per hectare fresh tubers from its 1200-hectare total production area.

TUFA, the first cassava model farm in Bicol, has received various inputs from DA-Bicol including planting materials, fertilizers, machineries such as cassava chipper and cassava granulator as well as trainings and market-related activities since November 2018. DA-Bicol also provided the organization with a four-wheel drive tractor to aid in land preparation, a cassava digger, mobile drier and a cassava drying plant. The agency also facilitated soil sampling in the area. As of September 2019, the TUFA has reported a net income of P20,270.00.

To encourage more farmers to plant more cassava, Raymund R. Britanico, SMFI's Luzon Operational Head, discussed the company's



Cassava Assembler Program, which stresses the role of assemblers in SMFI's raw material sourcing business strategy. The program encourages farmers to organize and form business units and assemble a minimum of 20 hectares of cassava plantation. It offers a guaranteed market with purchase agreement, a definite floor price and technical assistance.

"May pera sa cassava," he said.

Britanico cited the increasing demand for cassava as a high energy raw material for feeds because it is highly digestible, contains high energy as well as lactic acid and nurtures good bacteria

resulting to low population of pathogenic bacteria.

SMFI Agri-Technician Jerick C. Marcaida also demonstrated the process of vertical planting of cassava, proper peeling and cassava chopping, as part of the Cassava Harvest Festival's program highlights.

The TUFA is one of the national finalists in the 2019 Cassava Cluster Management Excellence Awards, which recognizes cassava cluster organizations with outstanding performance in the implementation of cassava-related projects and interventions by the DA Cassava Program. (**Annielyn L. Baleza**)

DA R&D ... (from page 16)

Alvina, A. Nicolas, S. Bobier); Accelerating the Development and Dissemination of Technologies for Direct Seeded Rice in Irrigated and Rainfed Ecosystem (by M. De Peralta, G. Nunez, A. Rivera); Maximizing Productivity of Queen Pineapple through Leaf Harvesting and Application of

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DA Bicol hosts ... (from page 10)

"Mas kailangan natin ang mas mahigpit at mas matingkad na paglilingkod para masiguro na ang ating mga magsasaka ay hindi bibitiw sa kabila ng mga hamon," Arpia said.

The RAA Awarding Ceremonies is an annual event by the DA to honor and celebrate all achievers who made exemplary contributions and wielded unwavering support towards the implementation of the National Food Staples Self-sufficiency Program. (**Annielyn L. Baleza**)



Masbate's mining town eyes sorghum production to boost rural economy

ARORAY, MASBATE – Despite its flourishing economy as a gold-rich town, Mayor Arturo Virtucio deemed it necessary to invest in renewable sources of income. The training on sorghum production conducted by the Department of Agriculture-Bicol in partnership with the San Miguel Foods Inc. (SMFI) came in timely as the local chief executive aims to boost its agricultural economy. About 70 representatives of different farmers' organizations from Aroroy and the nearby municipality of Balud attended the activity which was held in the Municipal Hall of Aroroy on September 19, 2019.

“Malipay ako san pagkita ko saiyo na damo na interested sadi na pangkabuhayan. Most of all, amo ini an pinakaimportante

kaya an iyong tanan adi kita sa pangabuhayan kay an importante sa tao pagkaon, pangabuhayan (I am very happy to see that many of you are interested in this livelihood project because most of all, food and income are equally important for us),” Virtucio said.

A team from DA-Bicol headed by Sorghum Program Report Officer Engr. Michelle Maligang discussed the Techno Guide on Sorghum Production which includes the growth and development of the sorghum plant, tillage and planting practices, water management, fertilization as well as weed and insect pest and diseases control. Maligang also shared some updates about the sorghum techno demo farm at the Masbate Breeding Station.

Maligang mentioned

that sorghum is one of the Department of Agriculture's new priority commodities with a targeted expansion area of 191.50 hectares in 2019. She also sought the LGU's commitment to achieve the required sorghum production area. Meanwhile, SMFI Luzon Operational Head Raymund Britanico and Central and South Luzon Corn Production Specialist Orlando Agustin oriented the participants about the SMFI Assembler Program/ Sorghum Production. They also assured the farmers of a guaranteed market with purchase agreement and a guaranteed floor price.

“Whatever you produce, we will buy at an agreed price,” Agustin said.

As of June 2019, the DA-Bicol has two techno demo farms for sorghum which are both in the vegetative stage -- the 1.5-hectare techno demo in Asid, Masbate and the 1-hectare techno demo in Aroroy, Masbate. The agency proposes to develop

200 hectares for sorghum production in 2020. Farmers from Aroroy committed 50 hectares of its agricultural land for sorghum production while Balud agreed to develop 12 hectares for the same purpose.

A similar training was conducted in Cawayan, Masbate on September 18, 2019.

“Kun kikitaon ninyo an kuwarta ada saiyo barangay. Napakatahom na opportunity ini dili lamang kay an ada is sorghum, kun hain an inyo kalipay, didto kamo—balinghoy, sorghum, isad na alternative (As you can see, you have the money in your barangay. This is a big opportunity not only because of sorghum, you also have cassava as an alternative. Do what makes you happy),” Virtucio added.

Sorghum, one of the world's top five cereal crops, is considered an ideal raw material for livestock and poultry feeds. (Annielyn L. Baleza)

Starbex fair showcases products of DA Bicol's GREAT Women proj. beneficiaries

About 12 individual beneficiaries and rural women organizations under the DA Great Women Project 2 participated in the Grand Starbex Fair (TGSF), a two-week pre-Christmas expo on agri-trade, tourism, food and bazaar for a cause, organized by the Starbex Corp. and co-sponsored by the DA-Bicol Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD) in Ayala Malls Legazpi City which opened last August 25, 2019.

Their booths showcase local products with some innovations like coco jam, seaweed noodles, rice puto, muscovado sugar, brown rice, turmeric tea, and dried dilis, among others.

In his message during the Opening Program of the TGSF, DA-Bicol Regional Executive Director Rodel P.

Tornilla thanked the Starbex Corp. and Ayala Malls Legazpi for their initiative to highlight agri-business and farm tourism in their activity. Tornilla underscored that their partnership is a big contributor to the agency's goal of attaining food security, poverty reduction and a progressive economy in the region.

“Ang mga ganito pong activity ay naka-align po sa new thinking na pino-promote ng ating bagong Secretary ng Department of Agriculture—yung partnership with private sector and other partners para lalo pang mapaunlad ang ating mga maliliit na magsasaka, maliliit na negosyante para sila ay makapag-compete globally. Kailangan po tayong magtulungan,” Tornilla said.

Aside from the trade exhibit, TGSF also featured learning sessions for aspiring

entrepreneurs. Investment opportunities in Mushroom Production was also discussed.

The rimas or breadfruit-flavored ice cream being commercially produced by Lorna Daud under the brand Yulaik was also launched.

The GREAT Women Project 2 is a collaborative project of the DA-Bicol and the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) and funded by the Government of Canada which focuses on the competitiveness and sustainability of women's enterprises. Aside from marketing assistance, Labor also profited from GREAT Women Project 2-funded trainings on basic accounting, product development, market testing and packaging. (Annielyn L. Baleza)



Emilyn M. Labor, a DA GREAT Women beneficiary, was one of the exhibitors in the Starbex fair. She owns the Jireh Food Products, manufacturer of the famous veggie chips in Daet, Camarines Norte, which won 5th place in the Best Product Competition at the 14th Agriculture and Fisheries Technology Forum and Product Exhibition sponsored by the Bureau of Agriculture in 2018 in Mandaluyong City. She received a P1M project grant.

DA Bicol's AMIA to strengthen eco-efficiency of agri-fishery sector thru CRVA

The Department of Agriculture-Bicol is banking on the Adaptation and Mitigation Initiative in Agriculture (AMIA) Project's Climate Risk Vulnerability Assessment (CRVA) to establish an eco-efficient agri-fishery sector.

Using an adaptive capacity tool based on the survey tool developed by the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), a Consortium of International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) center and leader of the CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security, the DA-Bicol AMIA Project has started conducting the CRVA in June 2019 to draft a map that will show vulnerable areas, climate hazards and crop models in the region from 2019 to 2050. Also, CRVA results will be used as basis in preparing investment briefs of climate-resilient and sustainable agricultural practices and interventions.

During the AMIA Monthly Meeting and Updating held on August 13, 2019 at the

DA regional office this municipality, Sandy B. Bobier, DA-Bicol AMIA Project Technical Staff, said that the CRVA is a tool that DA policy makers can use in planning and implementing long-term interventions to address climate risks. He mentioned that AMIA deployed 11 enumerators in the six provinces of Bicol to gather data on every municipality's adaptive capacity indicators including economic capital, crop occurrence, and anticipatory systems and institutions. The CRVA also covers the natural capital, social capital, physical, institutional, human capital and health. The conduct of CRVA is being undertaken by the AMIA project in partnership with the DA-Bicol's Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office.

Bobier appealed to the concerned provincial and municipal offices to facilitate the CRVA process by providing accurate and timely information to the AMIA Project's enumerators. AMIA conducted a series of provincial



The DA 5 AMIA team.

orientations on the CRVA process to the Provincial Local Government Units (PLGUs) to rally support from the Office of the Provincial and Municipal Agriculturist, Provincial and Municipal Planning and Development Office and agricultural extension workers (AEWs).

The CRVA results, due for completion this September 2019 will be used as basis in identifying new AMIA villages in addition to the 11 existing AMIA model villages in Pamplona, Gainza, Tigaon and Buhi in Camarines Sur. Bobier added that upon project completion, AMIA will present the CRVA results to local policymakers through stakeholder consultation meetings for possible cross sectoral collaboration.

AMIA villages, are model

communities in terms of technological and institutional innovations as well as access to climate-relevant support services. AMIA is the DA's flagship program for climate adaptation and mitigation. Coordinated and managed by the Systems-Wide Climate Change Office. It is designed to establish climate-resilient agri-fishery communities nationwide. (**Annielyn L. Baleza**)

Making biotech

... (from page 20)

Technology. As rice and corn farmer he shared how he had increased his yield and income and reduced his production cost by using BT corn which no longer required spraying of chemicals. He shared his good practices and how his success has also had its impact on the other farmers in his community.

The activity was facilitated by Rev. Fr. Emmanuel N. Alparce, the Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Technical Committee chair of the DA -BPO. He also shared his journey as priest from Tabaco City who was forced to go on leave to tend to an ailing father (who eventually passed away) and experienced mild depression over his loss and how he found and responded to a new mission or calling to help feed the hungry by helping the scientific community and the government in advocating safe, affordable and sustainable food for every Filipino especially the poor. (**Emily B. Bordado**)

DA R&D ... (from page 16)

WCAI (by M.C. Campita, E. Dipasupil, J. Evangelista, and F. Campita). For Technology Generation/Information Generation category: Efficacy Trial of RCM-Based Nutrient Recommendation In Direct-Seeded Inbreds and Hybrids (by C. Orbon, T. Machica, L. Aldecoa, L. Bermillo, B. Bibay, M. Noceda, R. Malazarte, E. Sibuc, and S. Rili).

Production Performance, Sensory Characterization and Carcass Quality of Camarines Native Chicken Fed with AMFR and Concoction as Additive (by A. San Buenaventura, M. Peñas, S. Ampongan, and S. No-o); Staggered Planting of Queen Pineapple Suckers and its Effect on Growth and

Yield Performance (by M.C. Campita).

Winning Posters were: Community Based Action Research for Climate Resilient Agriculture in Region 5; Efficacy of RCM-Based Nutrient Recommended for Drilled Inbreds and Hybrids; Community Based Mushroom Production Project in Bicol Region.

The board of judges was composed of Dr. Maria Dulce Mostoles, VP Research & Entrepreneur Project Extension of CBSUA; Dr. Vicotria Lapitan, Branch Manager of PhilRice Bicol; Prof. Vladimir Foronda of CBSUA; Dr. Aries Ativo (CBSUA), Mr. Tomas Arroyo of DA, Regional

Agriculture & Fishery Council; Dr. Luis Amano, Professor of Bicol University; Dr. Raul Bradecina, President of Partido State University; Dr. Luis Amano, Professor of Bicol University; Dr. Edith Lomerio, Guinobatan Albay (Private Sector); Dr. Marissa Estrella, BICARRD Consortium Director; Dr. Yolanda Castroverde, Consultant of Universidad de Sta. Isabel (USI).

Cash Prizes and certificates were awarded to winning entries. Certificates of Technology Transfer were also awarded to Technology Adaptors as tangible measure of indicator of Research & Development's accomplishments. (**B. Nunez**)



Palakihin ang Ani at Kita, Magparehistro na!

Magparehistro sa Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA)
para makasali sa mga programa ng Kagawaran ng Pagsasaka.

PAANO MAGPAREHISTRO?

1. Pumunta sa C/MAO na sakop ng inyong sakahan.
2. Sa tulong ng C/MAO, punan ang enrollment form at dalhin ang mga sumusunod:
 - government-issued ID o sertipikasyon mula sa barangay
 - orihinal na kopya ng titulo ng lupa, kasunduan ng renta ng may-ari o anumang ligal na dokumentong patunay ng pagmamay-ari ng lupa
3. Matapos tanggapin ang RSBSA enrollment stub, ikaw ay kwalipikado nang makalahok sa anumang programa ng kagawaran.



Making biotechnology acceptable to more Filipinos

NAGA CITY - To address the problem of providing food to a rapidly growing population, the scientific communities worldwide including the Philippines are advocating a balanced, safe and sustainable approach using the best conventional crop technology and the best of biotechnology to achieve sustainable food production. Biotechnology is a modern technology that makes use of organisms (or parts thereof) to make or modify products; improve and develop microorganisms, plants or animals; or develop organisms for specific purposes in a more precise manner.

The Biotechnology Program Office (BPO) of the Department of Agriculture is thus, intensifying its advocacy and information dissemination campaign on Biotechnology and promoting the Healthier Rice Project across the country. It has recently partnered with the DA Bicol Regional Office to impart the necessary knowledge and deepen appreciation about Biotechnology among the program/project implementers of agricultural programs on the ground and the farmer themselves.

DA- Bicol OIC Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla in his welcome message expressed his support and appreciation to the initiative of the BPO to launch an information dissemination campaign about the various initiatives of the government on Biotechnology which are



intended to help achieve food security and food sufficiency. He related the uprooting incident of the field trials on Golden Rice in 2013 right inside the DA compound which he said is an indication of the opposition of some group to that project. He underscored that the challenge is how to make Biotechnology products and methods acceptable to most Filipinos. He assured of DA Bicol's continuous support to the Biotech programs and projects.

Over 80 municipal agriculturists, extension workers, farmer leaders, and DA staff attended the 2-day seminar on Biotech in one of the hotels in this city. High caliber experts and speakers came all the way from Manila to discuss various topics on Biotechnology, impart their knowledge and experiences on the subject matter and to dispel misinformation, myths and false claims about biotechnology.

One of the speakers was Dr. Nina G. Gloriani, Consultant, Clinical Microbiology Section,

Institute of Pathology, St. Luke's Medical Center who gave the overview on Biotechnology. Another speaker was Dr. Peter M. Magdaraog, who is also a member of the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) Biotechnology Technical Advisory Group. He discussed the Philippine Regulatory System for Genetically Modified Crops: the DOST-DA-DENR-DOH-DILG Joint Department Circular No.01, series of 2016. Dr. Lourdes D. Taylo, university researcher from the UP Los Baños - Institute of Plant Breeding presented updates on the Bt Eggplant

Project. Marcellas Y. Barrogo, Project Development Officer IV of the BPO discussed the DA Biotech Program's Initiatives and Projects.

On the second day Dr. Reynante L. Ordonio, of the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) discussed the Healthier Rice Project of which he is the project leader.

To cap the gathering a Gawad Saka Awardee (2013) and a very successful farmer who came all the way from Nueva Ecija, Juanito Rama shared his success story as adopter of Genetically Modified

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**RE-ENTERED
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MAIL MATTER**
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