



1898

Vol. 28 No. 4

ISSN-0119-2752

2002 PAJ Binhi Awardee

October - December 2019

UMA Senso

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

Sec. Dar turns over P23.8 M farm inputs, machineries in Albay



A total of P23.8 million (M) worth of farm inputs and machineries were turned over to farmer associations led by Agriculture Secretary William D. Dar on October 8, 2019 at the Oriental Hotel in Legazpi, Albay.

Albay province received P8.16 M worth of farm implements composed of 2 mini chainsaws, 20,000 grafted cacao seedlings, 10,000 grafted pili seedlings, 1,000 bags of hybrid seeds, 1,000 bags of fertilizer, 22 sachets of disinfectant, and 20 knapsack sprayers.

117 farmers get SURE aid

Agriculture Secretary William D. Dar led the awarding of P1.75 million-worth of loan assistance to 117 rice farmers during the Launch of the Expanded Survival and Recovery Assistance for Rice Farmers (SURE AID Program) on October 8, 2019, this city.

(Please turn to page 8)

Sen. Villar, Dar, grace 18th Nat'l Vegetable Congress in Albay

Agriculture secretary William "Manong Willie" D. Dar joined Senator Cynthia A. Villar who was the keynote speaker of the 18th National Vegetable Congress held at the Albay Astrodome in Legazpi City on October 8, 2019.

The congress jointly

hosted by the Albay Agriculture Cooperative, the Provincial Government of Albay and DA Bicol gathered some 1,000 vegetable growers, LGU representatives and agricultural extension workers from all over the country. Anchored on the

(Please turn to page 5)



Rodel Tornilla is full-fledged Regional Executive Director

Economist Rodel P. Tornilla recently took his oath of office as full fledged Regional Executive Director (RED) of the Department of Agriculture RFO 5. His appointment was signed by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte on Dec. 3, 2019. RED Tornilla was sworn to office by Agriculture Secretary William Dar on December 20, 2019. RED Tornilla now holds the position Director IV.



Bicolanos brace for ASF pro-actively and collaboratively

The first African Swine Fever outbreak in the Philippines started in July last year. Since then there have been ASF outbreaks in eleven provinces/cities on Luzon island as of December. Despite its proximity to Region IV where the ASF was first detected so far the Bicol region has been spared as it has managed to protect its territories from the entry of this dreaded swine disease.

The elevated quarantine measures, aggressive enforcement of laws and regulations, intensive surveillance and information dissemination; the coordinated efforts and enhanced collaboration of the DA regulatory personnel, the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) National Meat Inspection Service, the LGUs and even the private sector are the major factors why up to now Bicol has no case yet of ASF and has been classified as a protected zone.

The DA -Bicol regional executive director Rodel P. Tornilla had immediately reactivated the Regional Quick Reaction Team (RQRT) and has instructed all those involved to act with dispatch and procure the needed supplies and collaterals. The BAI personnel manning the checkpoints of entry and exit points to the Bicol region were beefed up upon orders of Dir. Tornilla to immediately hire additional personnel. The Provincial government of Cam. Sur also deployed its personnel to augment the DA and BAI personnel in the checkpoints.

The DA veterinarians in partnership with the provincial veterinarians took to task by immediately conducting briefings and information dissemination in all the provinces and major cities and towns of the

region. IEC materials were immediately printed and distributed. The regulatory personnel also intensified its surveillance and monitoring of any reported case of swine disease in any locality. The Regional Animal Diagnostic acted with dispatch in collecting bloods samples. The NMIS for its part aggressively carried out its mandate to confiscate frozen meat and meat by-product without the necessary documents brought in to the region by land, by aircraft or by sea crafts. Confiscated items were disposed of in designated disposal pit. It also intensified its surveillance and monitoring of slaughterhouses and business establishments selling pork and its by-products

A group chat for the RQRT was created for easy access and sharing of information. The RQRT regularly meet to get updates and discuss updates and problems encountered in the ground. The members of the team always make themselves available even beyond office hours whenever something urgent crop up or there is need to provide reinforcement for the personnel conducting the surveillance, monitoring, and confiscation in the field.

For their part some private companies directly or indirectly engaged in the swine industry offered their voluntary service in the effort to prevent the occurrence of the ASF in the region. Some private companies offered to provide disinfectants to backyard hog raisers and also helped in the dissemination of information about the ASF by reproducing the IEC materials

including the tarpaulins already printed by the DA and BAI and distributed these also to their clients.

To help in assuring the public especially the consumers that Bicol's pork is safe to eat these private companies coordinated with the DA and other agencies and sponsored the "Boodle" fights where lechon and other pork dishes are served.

While the threat of ASF still looms and is getting closer to the Bicol territory the people tasked to control and manage this occurrence are ready and prepared. Having been exposed to various natural hazards and calamities like typhoons, volcanic eruptions, floods and other occurrences that threaten crops, animals, even human lives, Bicolanos have become resilient and have learned not only to respond but to act pro-actively.

But the most critical factor is preventing the entry of ASF into the Bicol region and sustaining its green status as a protected and ASF free zone is the cooperation of the public especially the traders and small businessmen. Some of them in connivance with some bus drivers and conductors and private vehicle owners continue to bring in illicitly frozen and processed meat and other prohibited pork products from infected areas despite the enforcement of RA 10536. Unless these profit driven people would realize the long term and overall benefit of preventing entry of ASF into our region all the efforts already invested to keep Bicol ASF free would come to naught.



Advisers:

Rodel P. Tornilla, MABE
Regional Executive Director

Luz R. Marcelino
Regional Technical Director
for Operations and Extension

Edgar R. Madrid, DPM
Regional Technical Director
for Research and Regulations



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

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

Lay-out Artist: **Lovella P. Guarin**
Photographers:

Eduardo D. Collantes, Jr.
Hermilo Antonio T. Privaldos
Ramon C. Adversario

Graphic Artist: **Zandra G. Abogado**

Published quarterly by the Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Information Section (RAFIS) of the Department of Agriculture, Regional Field Office No. 5, San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur, E-mail Address: darafid5@yahoo.com

Re-entered as a Second Class Mail Matter at the Pili Post Office, Pili, Camarines Sur under Permit No. 2017-18 on March 17, 2017.

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

Bicol provinces receive almost P11B-worth of investments from PRDP's NGA convergence

LEGAZPI CITY, ALBAY – The six provinces of Bicol received P10.96 billion-worth of non-Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) investments as a result of its convergence with other national government agencies (NGAs). This was announced by PRDP-Bicol Planning Specialist Mary Ann Cuya during the Bicol Regionwide Provincial Commodity Investment Plan (PCIP) Implementation Assessment and Interagency Convergence Planning for 2021 Budget Inclusion held in this city on November 26-29, 2019, which aimed to continue the operationalization of the inter-agency convergence and enhance, update and institutionalize the PCIPs with the NGAs and the provinces of Bicol as a planning tool for implementation.

Of the total amount invested, P1.69 billion-worth of interventions were completed, P813,140 million programs and projects are on-going, P8.13 billion are proposed while P323.66 million are under procurement. The report, which was generated from the PRDP web-based Management Information System (MIS) investment tracking, shows that among the top contributors to the inter-agency convergence are the Department of Agriculture (DA), Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA), and the Department of Public Works and Highways. Other supporters are the municipal and provincial local government units (M/PLGUs), the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Trade

and Industry (DTI), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority (PhilFIDA) and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

Present during the Bicol Regionwide Provincial Commodity Investment Plan (PCIP) Implementation Assessment and Interagency Convergence Planning for 2021 Budget Inclusion were representatives from different NGAs in Bicol. These include Joel Valenzuela of PCA, Santos Mirandilla of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), Joelle Benavidez of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), Roy Bañas of the Department of Education, Maria Janice Obias of Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC), Engr. Sergio Uy of Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Melanie Patricio of PhilFIDA, Roussel Balaoro of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Nida Hagos of Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center, Ernesto Tabing of the National Meat Inspection Service (NMIS), Raymond Marcelino, Renato Acacio and Marianito Tesorero of the DA. The NGA representatives assisted the Provincial Project Management and Implementation Units (PPMIUs) of the six provinces in the region in their planning and budgeting workshop.

PRDP-Bicol I-PLAN Component Head Aloha Gigi Bañaria called for the participants' support in the VCA and PCIP updating. She also suggested the inclusion of the private sector in the inter-agency convergence.

"Hopefully next year, maraming VCAs ang ma-update, maraming No Objection Letter (NOL) issuance and that of the PCIP updating. Ang importante yung investment para po sa satuyang mga paraoma asin mga parasira," she added. As of November 14, 2019, I-PLAN Bicol accounts for 29 percent share of approved value chain analysis (VCAs) of the South Luzon Cluster with 11 approved VCAs. Six provinces and one city in the region also have updated PCIPs. The VCAs and PCIPs served as the DA-Bicol's basis in the crafting of the Bicol Regional Agriculture and Fishery Modernization Plan (RAFMP) as well as in the annual planning and budgeting process. (**Annielyn L. Baleza**)

Letters

PANALA Farmers Association, Inc. Balogo, Oas, Albay

A Resolution of thanks from the PANALA Farmers Association, Inc. of barangay Balogo, Oas, Albay to OIC Regional Director Dir. Rodel P. Tornilla Department of Agriculture Regional Office V, San Augustine, Pili Camarines Sur.

Resolution No. 22 - Series of 2019

Whereas; The officers and members of PANALA Farmers Association, Inc. of barangay Balogo, Oas, Albay, do hereby express our sincere thanks to the Department of Agriculture Regional Office V, headed by OIC Regional Director Dir. Rodel P. Tornilla, for providing us Rice Mill and Combine Harvester.

Whereas; in recognition to the efforts and approval exerted by the Department of Agriculture for immediate release of our projects, a motion has been raised by Mr. Rodolfo R. Madrideo, and duly seconded by Myrna A. Lo, to express our sincere thanks through a Board Resolution.

Unanimously approved: November 22, 2019, at PANALA Farmers Association Inc. of Balogo, Oas, Albay.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the above mentioned resolution.

(Signed) FRANCIA S. PANTE
Secretary

Attested by:

(Signed) DOMINGO D. MATEUM
President

Letters



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

November 05, 2019

MR. RODEL P. TORNILLA
OIC-Regional Executive Director
Department of Agriculture RFO 5
San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur

Dear OIC-DIR. TORNILLA:

In behalf of the numerous farmers' associations in Catanduanes, please accept my sincerest thanks and gratitude for giving them priority and opportunity to be among the beneficiaries of the Department of Agriculture's Mass Distribution of Farm Machineries, Equipment and Agri-Inputs on October 24, 2019. This gesture shows our heartfelt appreciation to the many sacrifices and the grueling hours our farmers spend under the sun to put food on our tables. May we remain true to our commitment to support our farmers to ensure the growth of the farming sector of the region and establish innovative programs that will help create a sustainable food system.

Once again, thank you very much.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) **HECTOR S. SANCHEZ**
Representative, Lone District, Catanduanes

CC: Hon. Secretary William D. Dar



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

06 November 2019

MR. RODEL P. TORNILLA
OIC Regional Executive Director
Department of Agriculture Region V
San Agustin, Pill, Cam. Sur

Dear Dir. Tornilla:

The Kasanggayahan Festival Cooking Contest 2019 was successfully concluded last 18 October and your valuable assistance had made it possible.

In this light, I express my sincere appreciation for granting the request to provide various interventions for the participants in form of gardening and farming tools and palay seeds, as listed in your letter dated 30 September 2019.

The overwhelming success of the abovementioned event would not have been possible without your support, so thank you very much.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) **EVELINA G. ESCUDERO, Ph. D.**
Deputy Speaker
1st District, Sorsogon

16 December 2019

RODEL P. TORNILLA
OIC - Regional Executive Director
Department of Agriculture - Region 5
San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur

Dear Director Tornilla:

Greetings of Hope, Peace and Joy!

Thank you for the trust and partnership you have invested with World Vision in bringing hope and lasting impact to the children, families and communities. In the last 3 years, we have reached more than 3 million children in 27 covered provinces through our meaningful partnership.

In the coming years, World Vision assures to align with our country goals and aspirations, as we stay sharp-focused on assisting children especially those living in the most vulnerable and poorest areas of the Philippines. And as we journey together, we continue to be inspired by our vision for every child to experience Life in all its fullness.

This Christmas season, we are reminded by the same Hope and Joy we share in serving God and our people. Indeed, we are One for Children!

A meaningful Christmas and abundant New Year to you!

Sincerely,

(Signed) **Rommel V. Fuente**
Executive Director



DA Bicol rolls out initial assistance to typhoon-hit farmers

SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR – The onslaught of Typhoon Tisoy in the Bicol region brought an extensive damage to the agriculture sector with an initial estimated production loss of about P2.5 billion in rice, corn, high value crops, organic , abaca livestock, fisheries coconut and infrastructures and facilities.

Immediately, DA Bicol through Rodel P. Tornilla, the OIC- Regional Executive Director has reactivated its quick action teams and mobilized its personnel to assess and validate the damage reports coming from the LGUs and came up with a list of intervention and assistance for each of the six provinces. The assistance amounting to over P43.1 million includes 4, 630 bags certified and 2,000 hybrid palay seeds; 5,000 bags Urea and complete fertilizers; 58,950 bags zinc sulfate; 3, 174 packs plant growth enhancers, 1,700 bags Open Pollinated Variety white flint corn, 1,700 packs assorted vegetable seeds and veterinary drugs and biologics. Some of these goods were already turned over to the provincial government as in the case of Albay.

In addition to the DA's assistance the provinces have started receiving palay seeds for the dry season cropping from the PhilRice under the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund Seed component. The budget for this was derived from the tariffs generated from the imported rice brought into our country with the implementation of the Rice Tarrification Law which removed the quantitative restriction on imported rice . Albay province has an allocation of of 29, 528 bags; Camarines Sur has 91, 412 bags; Sorsogon has 18, 818

bags; and Masbate has 11, 384 bags.

When Typhoon Tisoy hit Bicol there were about 76, 963 hectares standing palay crop at various stages in the Bicol region. Partial damage report on play coming from the LGUs as of this writing show that 26,825.25 hectares of palay areas in the 6 provinces have been damaged. Of these 16,235.13 hectares have been totally damaged and over 10, 461hectares have been partially damaged valued at over P946.9million. For corn 8,11.84 hectares have been damaged valued at over P167,227 million. Of these 4,116 hectares of the corn areas were totally damaged and over 3,994 hectares were partially damaged.



Truckloads of _____

For high value crops which include, vegetables and fruit crops over 6,596 hectares were damaged valued at over P 697 million. Of these 5,520.13.86 hectares are totally damaged and 1,076 hectares are partially damaged. For organic agriculture an estimated production loss valued at P3.8million was reported by the provinces of Albay, Catanduanes and Masbate. For the fisheries an estimated production loss valued at over P25 million were also reported in Albay and Sorsogon. For coconut an estimated production loss valued over

P29 million were also reported in Sorsogon and Masbate.

For livestock a total of 6,246 heads of various animals valued at P49,880, 686 million were reported damaged in the six provinces.

Damage to DA facilities and properties at the regional office and its outreach stations in the six provinces is estimated at almost P29million.

A rehabilitation plan has been prepared and submitted to the DA Central office for funding. **(Emily B. Bordado)**

Dar, Sen. Villar graces ... (from page 1)

theme: "Ensuring Food Security Amidst Climate Change Adversities, the 3-day congress tackled food security, climate change, inclusive development and market access discussed by top caliber resource persons. There were also trade exhibition and equipment expo by private seed companies and other agri-input providers. One of the major outputs of the congress was the re-organization of the National Vegetable Board and the drafting and approval of resolutions.

Senator Cynthia Villar, underscored the importance of sustainable agriculture and environment in achieving food

security. To strengthen the resiliency of farmers under extreme weather conditions, Villar filed a senate bill on "Free Index-based Agri Insurance which will encourage the involvement of the private sector. "Let us also support family farms as they are the ones which will feed us," she added.

DA Undersecretary for High Value Crops and Rural Credit Evelyn G. Lavina presented the "Status of the Philippine Vegetable Industry." PhilMech Executive Director Baldwin G. Jallorina discussed the "Recent Innovations in Machineries on Vegetable

Production; Bureau of Plant Industry Director George Y. Culaste discussed "Seed Quality Management" and "How to Be a GAP Certified Farm." Bernadette San Juan, Director of Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Service discussed "Market Status and Opportunities for Vegetables."

Dr. Cedric Daep, Albay Executive Director of Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management and Training Institute shared his expertise on DRR in Agriculture – Protection of Farmers and Farm Inputs. **(Emily B. Bordado)**



Organic farmers of Tigaon, CSur win nat'l OA awards

(Left) The Agri Planters and Food Processors Association of Tigaon (TAPFPAT) received P500,000 as 2019 National Outstanding Organic Farmers' Group. (Right) Elmer Salazar received P200,000 for winning the Small Farmer category.

ALFONSO, CAVITE – Organic farmers of Tigaon, Camarines Sur received their second national award during the 16th National Organic Agriculture Congress held at Camp Bejamin, this town on November 12, 2019.

Elmer Salazar, 43 year old organic producer from barangay Huyon-huyon bagged the National Outstanding Small Farmer category. He received P200,000 cash award.

Meanwhile, The Agri Planters and Food Processors Association of Tigaon (TAPFPAT) was adjudged as National Outstanding Organic Farmers' Group. The group received P500,000 cash award. Salazar is currently the president of TAPFPAT, a group of 68 organic farmers granted with 3rd party certification by the Organic Certification Center of the Philippines. These farmers were also registered with the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Standards as producers of organic rice seeds and assorted vegetables and are also compliant to the Philippine National Standard (PNS) for organic agriculture since 2011.

Also recognized during the awarding were the

national finalists to the various categories: Sienna C. Sombrero of Tigaon for national Outstanding Municipal OA Focal Person, Luisita Navo of Baao, Cam. Sur for Agricultural Extension Worker category; Amata family of Goa for OA farming family category.

Agriculture Secretary

sakit na ang ating kalupaaan, so I advocate the use of organic materials," added Sec. Dar.

To help organic farmers in availing organic certification, Sec. Dar announced that DA has revised the Organic Agriculture Standards, and the final document will be issued at the end of the year.

Meanwhile,

DA

is the institutionalization of the Participatory Guarantee System or PGS which will ease the stumbling block to organic certification.

Christopher Morales, National Program Coordinator of Organic Agriculture Program reported that among the Asian countries, the Philippines ranks 5th in terms of number of



William D. Dar in his keynote speech, stressed his support to the Organic Agriculture Program. "Ako ay sumusuporta sa Organikong Agrikultura," said Sec. Dar. He also emphasized the importance of analyzing the condition of the country's 12 million hectares of agricultural land to come up with informed decisions. "May

Undersecretary Evelyn Laviña, Alternate Chairperson of the National Organic Agriculture Board, in her speech, announced that the proposed amendments to the Organic Agriculture Act is already undergoing the required legislative process in the Congress and Senate. The major provision for amendment

organic producers with 166,001 organic farmers and 4th in terms of organic area with 200,065 hectares.

This year's theme is "Organikong Agrikultura sa Kumikitang Kabuhayan para sa Kalusugan at Kapaligiran. (Lovella P. Guarin)



(L-R) National finalists: Amata family of Goa for OA farming family category; Luisita Navo of Baao, Cam. Sur for Agricultural Extension Worker category; and Sienna C. Sombrero of Tigaon for national Outstanding Municipal OA Focal Person.

Bicol team bags nat'l Corn and Cassava Achievers awards

ILOILO CITY. The Tuburan United Farmers Association from Masbate under the leadership of Robinson Rival bagged the top award for the Cassava Cluster Management Excellence Award and received a plaque of recognition and P 5 million worth of monetary incentives for farm inputs, machineries, equipment and vehicle.

The Recognition and Awarding ceremonies was held in Iloilo City on November 12-14 during the staging of the 4 in 1 event that is: The 15th National Corn Congress, the 17th National Quality Corn Achievers Award, the 3rd CORNCUPIA Award and the 3rd Cassava Cluster Management Awards.

Also recognized and awarded were the Outstanding municipalities/cities. The city of Iriga along with its City Agriculturist Ruben de los Santos were conferred the Hall of Fame award after being a national awardee for 3 consecutive years. The LGU was awarded a cash grant of P2 million to be used for their proposed project. While the City Agriculturist received a cash incentive of 30,000.00.

Meanwhile the LGU of Tigaon headed by Mayor Pamela Rhina Fuentebella along with its Municipal Agriculturist Leah Beltran also made it to the top 20 outstanding municipality/municipal agriculturist. The LGU received P 1 million project grant while the Municipal Agriculturist received 30,000.

Also recognized were the Outstanding Agricultural Extension Workers: Susana Arcenal of Cataingan Masbate; Marife Bonsobre of Uson, Masbate, Noel Paz of Ligao Albay; Ryan Calatrava and Carlos Azanes, of Calabanga Camarines Sur; Honesto Sirios Jr. & Meda Monge of Iriga City; Arlene Repaso of Nabua



The Agri Extension Workers and LGU awardees from Bicol region.

and Buster Ibarbia of Buhi, all of Camarines Sur. The AEWs were awarded cash price of 20,000 each and a plaque.

The Outstanding Regional Team composed of: Rodel Tornilla, Regional Executive Director, Adelina Loza, Regional Technical Director, Marygrace Rodriguez, OIC chief, Operations Division, Lorenzo Alvina, Regional Rice & Corn Coordinator, Michelle Bergantin & Ailene Babilonia,

and Cassava Industry vibrant despite economic challenges. It also serves as venue for the various stakeholders of the corn industry to come up with a common goal and tackle current issues of the sector. The role of the Agricultural Extension Workers with the support of the Local Government Units is also recognized as partners in the effective implementation of DA programs. This year's theme is "Productivity Growth:

participants from different regions to promote rice-corn blend as well as organize model cluster areas for corn. He also emphasized the value of sharing to Extension Workers. "The real test is not only in school but what you learn, you acquire then you apply and eventually, you teach" he said. "The important parameter is, you should bear fruit, you multiply yourself in so many and we will be all builders of



The Tuburan United Farmers Association of Cawayan, Masbate won P5 million as Champion of the 2019 Cassava Cluster Management Excellence Awards.

both Agriculturist II and Corn Program staff. They were also awarded a certificate of recognition and a plaque.

The more than 60 delegates from Bicol was represented by Lorenzo Alvina together with Marygrace Rodriguez during the flag march.

The National event is held yearly to give due recognition to the key players who have made the Corn

Key to Sustainable Corn Production and Food Security." The Department of Agriculture in collaboration with the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI), the Philippine Maize Federation (PhilMaize) and the Provincial Government of Iloilo hosted the event.

In his keynote speech, Engr. Ariel Cayan, DA Undersecretary for Operations, encouraged the more than 1,000

this planet" he added.

Other guests present were: Arthur Defensor Jr., Governor, Province of Iloilo; Edralina Serrano, PhD, Chair, National Technical Working Group, Dir. Lorenzo Carangian, National Corn Program Coordinator, Engr. Remelyn Recoter, MNSA, Regional Executive Director, DA RFO-VI. (**Emily B. Bordado**)

Bicolana corn farmer-leader conferred as National Gawad Saka Outstanding Corn Farmer 2018

PASAY CITY- “Nag-umpisa kami sa sobrang hirap sa buhay na kung hindi ka magsaka hindi ka aani. Dun nabuo yung motto ko na kung hindi ako magtatanim, wala akong aanihin, wala kaming magandang buhay,” said corn farmer Angelita Cerillo of Brgy. Libod Tigaon, Camarines Sur as she recounts her humble beginnings.

Winning the Most Outstanding Corn Farmer Award, Cerillo was among the 20 national awardees during the 48th Gawad Saka Parangal sa mga Natatanging Magsasaka at Mangingisda Awarding Ceremony held at the Philippine International Convention Center on October 22, 2019. She was the first female corn farmer from Bicol to bag the said award. She received a certificate of recognition, trophy and P250,000 cash award.

An innovator and early adopter of agricultural technology, Cerillo's five-hectare farm served as a venue for techno-demo projects and as a model farm for the Department of Agriculture (DA)-Bicol's Site Specific Nutrient Management (SSNM) research. With careful application of innovative production technologies from seed selection, land preparation, planting, pest and diseases management, harvesting to postharvest practices, her farm boasts an average production of 11 tons per hectare.

“Na-encourage ako ng Department of Agriculture, na-build up nila ako, nahubog nila ako sa mga bagong kaalaman na nai-share nila sa akin para makamit ko ang magandang ani, magandang buhay para sa aking pamilya... Talagang hindi matatawaran ang aking nakamit na tagumpay at ang

aking nakamit na premyo o karangalan sa buhay kong ito. Sana maging model po ako at inspirasyon ng kapwa ko magsasaka ng mais,” she said.

DA-Bicol OIC-Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla and Tigaon Municipal Agriculturist Lea M. Beltran accompanied Cerillo on stage together with the representatives of the DA-Bicol Gawad Saka Committee.

Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO) Secretary Jose Ruperto Martin M. Andanar, who represented President Rodrigo R. Duterte during the



occasion, acknowledged the awardees as heroes for their perseverance and sacrifices in providing food for the Filipino people. He also reaffirmed President Duterte's vision to give every Filipino a life of comfort and dignity with the basic premise of adequate food on every table.

In his message, Secretary William D. Dar underscored

the DA's renewed commitment to champion the farmers and fisherfolk's causes and advancing their welfare.

The 48th Gawad Saka Awarding Ceremonies honored 11 individual and 9 group achievers in 5 categories namely crops, livestock, fishery, institutions and agricultural research. (Annielyn L. Baleza)

117 rice farmers get SURE ... (from page 1)

Each of the 53 rice farmers from Sta. Magdalena and 20 rice farmers from Bulusan, Sorsogon as well as 44 rice farmers from Malilipot, Albay received cash cards containing the full loan amount of P15,000 during the said activity. The SURE AID is a lending program that aims to help cushion the impact of plummeting farmgate price of palay by assisting eligible rice farmers whose incomes were adversely affected by low palay prices. The P2.5 billion-worth program being implemented by the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) nationwide provides rice farmers who are tilling one hectare of land and below with a one-time, zero-interest and

no collateral direct loan assistance amounting to P15,000 payable for eight years.

Some of the recipients of the loan assistance under the Survival Recovery Assistance Program (SURE) AID program.

Joining the DA Secretary at the event were DA-Bicol OIC-Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla, Albay Governor Al Francis C. Bichara, Albay 3rd District Representative Fernando T. Cabredo, Legazpi City Mayor Noel E. Rosal, LBP Manager Hil Benedict G. Manzanadez, and Paulo Antonio Rodriguez of the Agricultural Credit and Policy Council (ACPC).

A total of 3,771 rice farmers in Bicol will benefit from the SURE AID Program. These consist of 1,000 farmers in Camarines Sur, 1,500 farmers in Camarines Norte, 1,130 farmers in Albay and 141 farmers in Sorsogon.

On the same occasion,

Dar discussed the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Program (RCEP). The program, which has an annual appropriation of P10 billion for the next six years, is designed to complement and supplement the existing DA-National Rice Program (DA-NRP) by providing machineries and equipment, rice seed development, propagation and promotion, expanded rice credit assistance and rice extension services to qualified rice farmers.

“Makakaasa po kayo na this is just the starting year and this will be through for the next six years,” Dar said. (Annielyn L. Baleza)



DA honors 2019 Regional Gawad Saka and Rural Women Achievers...

NAGA CITY – Department of Agriculture Bicol honored 10 Regional Outstanding Gawad Saka achievers three Rural Women Achievers in a simple awarding ceremonies held in a hotel here.

Under the 2019 Regional Gawad Saka awards, five (5) individuals and five (5) groups were recognized for their exemplary contributions to the development of agriculture in their different areas.

The following were the winners in the individual categories: Edgar A. Pesebre of Balanguibang, Polangui, Albay is Regional Outstanding Rice Farmer. Nomer C. Mortega of Magallanes, Sorsogon is Regional Outstanding Young Farmer. Lino C. Jamora, Sr. of Aroroy, Masbate is Regional Outstanding High Value Crops Farmer. Josephine G. Artiaga of Lupi, Camarines Sur is



Regional Outstanding Organic Agriculture Farmer. HML Foods Corporation of Daraga, Albay is Regional Outstanding Agri-Entrepreneur.

For the Gawad Saka group categories, the awardees were: Bayani Purisima and family – Outstanding Farm Family; San Roque Rural Improvement Club (RIC) – Outstanding RIC; Municipal Agricultural and Fishery Council (MAFC) of

Baras – Outstanding MAFC; Provincial Agricultural and Fishery Council (PAFC) of Camarines Norte – Outstanding PAFC; City Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council (CFARMC) of Masbate City – Outstanding CFARMC.

The winners in the Gawad Saka individual categories received P50,000 cash award each, and P75,000

for the winning groups. The Agricultural Extension Workers who assisted the winners in packaging the scrap book also received cash prize of P15,000. Meanwhile, three admirable rural women were also feted during the ceremony.

Hailed as 2019 Regional Outstanding Rural Woman is Rossini Obligation of Ligao City. Obligation owns and
(Turn to page 17)

...and Regional Corn and Cassava Achievers



The 2019 regional corn and cassava achievers. The Department of Agriculture-Bicol recognized 17 outstanding Local Government Units (LGUs), municipal and city agriculturists, corn coordinators, agricultural extension workers, and the regional champion of the Cassava Cluster Management Excellence Awards with exceptional performance in the promotion and development of corn and cassava during the Awarding of the 2019 Corn and Cassava Achievers held in Naga City on November 7-8, 2019.

The regional outstanding LGUs were Tigaon, Cam. Sur, Iriga City (Hall of Famer), and Ligao City Albay. Outstanding Municipal/City Agriculturists were: Lea Beltran of Tigaon; Ruben delos Santos of Iriga City; and Engr. Dexter Mendoza of Ligao City, Albay. The regional outstanding LGU and municipal/city agriculturists received P25,000. Ten Outstanding Corn AEWs received P17,500 and plaque of recognition. They were: Susana Arcenal (Cataingan) and Marife Bonsobre (Uson) both from the province of Masbate. From Albay: Noel Paz (Ligao City). From Camarines Sur: Honesto Sirios, Jr. (Iriga City); Meda Monge (Iriga City); Ryan Calatrava (Calabanga); Carlos Azañes (Calabanga); Arlene Repaso (Nabua); Buster Ibarbia (Buhi); Benedicto Heraldo (Naga City).

Cassava Cluster Management Excellence Award was given to Tuburan United Farmers Association (TUFA) of Cawayan, Masbate. The TUFA received P25,000.

NEWS in PHOTO

First 800 Albay rice farmers received rice seeds under RCEF

Over 800 rice farmers of Daraga, Albay were the first recipients of 1,000 bags certified rice seeds (RC 222 and RC 216) distributed by the DA-PhilRice under the Seed Component of the P10 billion Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF).

Governor Al Francis Bichara, DA Bicol OIC -Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla, and Albay Provincial Agriculturist Cheryl Rebeta led the distribution of seeds and technical briefing at the Albay Farmers Bounty Village in Cabangan, Camalig Albay on November 27, 2019.

The RCEF aims to reduce the average production cost of palay (unmilled rice) from the current P12 per kilogram (kg) to P8/kg by 2025 through various interventions under the Rice Tarrification Law.

Of the total RCEF fund P5 B will be set aside for farm machinery, P3B for inbred rice seeds, and P1B each for credit, and training and extension.



Sec. Dar consults with Local Chief Executives of Bicol

DA Secretary William D. Dar underscores the importance of strong partnership between the national government represented by DA vis-à-vis local government units (LGUs) in attaining DA's vision of a food secure country with prosperous farmers and fisherfolk during a meeting and dialogue with local chief executives held in Oriental Hotel, Legazpi City on October 8, 2019. Dar said that with this vision, the overarching goal is bountiful harvest and high income for farmers and fisherfolk (ani at kita). He also sought the support of the Local Chief Executives (LCEs) in promoting the eight paradigms to level up the country's agriculture sector with the hope of doubling the incomes of the farmers and fisherfolk after five years.

Albay Governor Al Francis C. Bichara, Masbate Governor Antonio T. Kho, Acting Governor of Catanduanes Shirley Abundo, Sorsogon 1st District Representative Evelina G. Escudero, Albay 3rd District Representative Fernando T. Cabredo and other LCEs and their representatives attended the meeting.

Also present were top officials of DA regional office and its bureaus and attached agencies headed by DA 5 Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla; and provincial agriculturists.



NEWS in PHOTO

Secretary William Dar and OIC RED Rodel P. Tornilla hold a press conference with the media persons in Albay during his visit in Legazpi City on October 8, 2019.



Bicolano farmers gear up for mechanization

CAMALIG, ALBAY - As the Department of Agriculture revs up to modernize the agriculture sector, DA - Bicol in partnership with Korean farm machinery manufacturers recently staged an agricultural mechanization Roadshow for modern farming Techniques and technologies at the Albay Farmers Bounty Village here. The two-day event which was dubbed: "Gear Up Bicol 2019" showcased latest machineries and technologies developed by Korean manufacturers. Over 600 Bicolano farmers, association farmers leaders and even students attended said event which also featured seminars and actual field demonstrations.

According to Rodel P. Tornilla, DA Bicol OIC -Regional Executive Director "farm mechanization must be widely accepted and adopted by our farmers as this is one strategy that could help increase their production and income, lower the cost of production and address the problem on labor shortage especially during peak farming operations. Thus, we brought this roadshow here so that our farmers can see for themselves the benefits and advantages of mechanization. From among the machineries showcased and demonstrated the farmers can choose which is appropriate, responsive and adapted to their

needs and environment. These will then be the basis of the DA in procuring the machines which will be made available to farmers as stipulated under the Rice Tarrification Law".

The Tarrification Law or Republic Act (RA) 11203, establishes the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Program (RCEP) which stipulates for the allocation of P10billion per year in the next

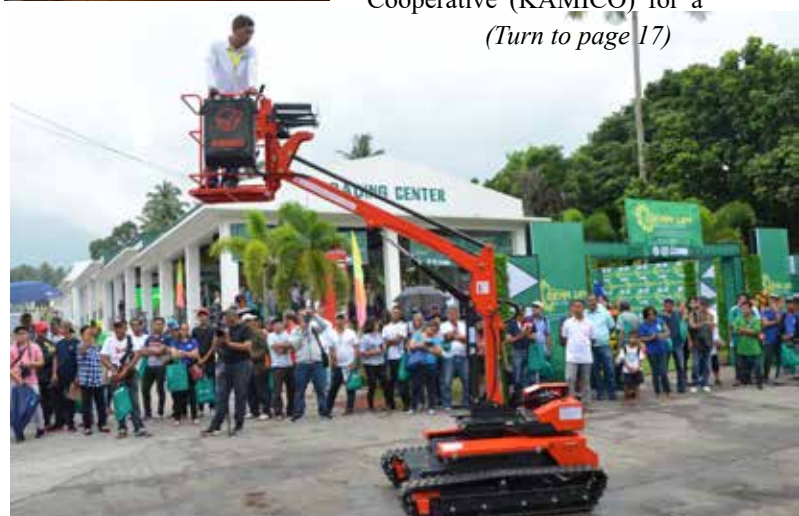
6 years up to 2024 to increase their productivity and make them more competitive. Of the 10 billion, P5 billion would go to farm mechanization, P3billion will be invested for the provision of quality seeds, P1billion for credit support and P1 billion for training of rice farmers.

Meanwhile, Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and

Mechanization (PHilMech) Director Arnel Ramir A. Apaga underscored the importance of the support of all sectors especially the LGUs in promoting farm mechanization. He enjoined the farmers to propose to the DA what machineries they need. But more than that they should learn how and when to use these machinery effectively, efficiently and optimally.

Dr. Valentino C. Perdido, Project Development Officer and consultant at the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Operations explains that in 2018, the Philippines through Department of Agriculture has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Republic of Korea through the Korea Agricultural Machinery Industry Cooperative (KAMICO) for a

(Turn to page 17)



Mainstreaming the Agta-Tabangnon IP into Agri-economic development

By Emily B. Bordado



The tribal community express their thanks to their guests through songs.

The Agta-Tabangnon tribe in Coyao-yao, Tigaon Camarines Sur is a community of indigenous people who had abandoned their former nomadic way of life and have now opted to settle in a permanent location and are now slowly embracing the modern way of life, new farming techniques and welcoming new livelihood opportunities.

About 21 households of this Indigenous People are now settled inside or within the periphery of a 3.5 hectare land which was previously owned by one of the members of the tribe but has now been donated to the Hansel and Gretel Foundation, founded by Carmen Dapilos, whose advocacy is to: "Protect and Promote the Vanishing Culture of the Agta, through Education, Food Production and Revival of Culture".

Five registered private tribal pre-schools with in Rinconada and Partido, two of which in Coyaoyao and

Cabalinadan, Tigaon provides quality education for free to all underprivileged children moreover those from the ethnic tribe. In addition, many Tribal student in from High-school were recipients of scholarship grant from the Foundation, so with the Two-Year German Dual System of Vocational Education for High school graduate who were out of school. Their learned skills turned the once idle hands into productive members in their families and in their village, while others who strived graduated in College as Education and others. Some are now Licensed Teachers and employed. Successful graduates inspired other Agta parents to support their children pursue higher education instead of sending them as household help or laborer.

Carmen, a native of Calabanga, worked in Germany until her retirement, dedicate most of her time for her development work here in Camarines Sur which

she started for 3 decades now. Beside her educational mission, she was instrumental in obtaining free medical operation of a 47-year old Aeta woman from Coyaoyao, Tigaon, with an inborn deformity on her forehead. The woman was illiterate, who looked like a freak, yet well known in the village, yet simply ignored.

Through her German Donors, Carmen was able to bring her to Germany for a free operation from the best Neurologist. While in her home village she was isolated and uncared, she was well cared by the Germans while in the hospital and even after her post operation was provided with her needs for 4 months. Before her departure the Germans who have developed a fondness for her contributed some amount for her house and lot before back in her hometown.

As a gesture of gratitude the Tribal Chieftain graced the Foundation initially with 1.5 hectare, where Carmen build another school for them. The chieftain then challenged Carmen for more development, for another 2 hectares he would give. She continued to develop the land, provided water source, built a Cultural Heritage Center, and invited landless Agta Families to live within the area, provided them space to till their own vegetables for their own consumption, for free. They even get typhoon aid in the form of housing materials and sacks of rice for their existence.

Carmen built her simple, conducive house inside the area to have more time monitor

her projects and be with the tribal people to guide them, celebrate, and join in their gatherings. The Agta are her extended families, whom she cares for as she respects their culture.

Although this new generation of Agta-Tabangnon are now settled in one place and no longer practice the traditional method of cultivating crops through shifting fields and conducting rituals, their livelihoods are dependent on the natural environment.

Planting rootcrops, vegetables and other cash crops is the livelihood of most tribal families in this community. From time to time the men also earn income as hired as farm workers. Most of them are also beneficiaries of the government's cash transfer program or 4Ps.

But recently a new livelihood opportunity was made available for this tribal community in Cayao-yao. For and in behalf of the tribe Carmen requested assistance from Department of Agriculture regional office which initially and readily provided vegetable seeds. But in 2018 the DA through its Livestock Program provided the group with an initial 10 heads of native pig breeders consisting of 9 gilts and 1 hog. An additional 10 was again dispersed to the other members of the tribe. After more than 3 months the pigs started breeding.

Efren Arce and his wife Marilou are among the beneficiaries of the native pigs from the DA. They considered

(Next page pls)



Carmen Dapilos (right), founder /president of the Hansel and Gretel Foundation hands over vegetable seeds to an IP family.

it a big blessing that they were given the pig as it provided them an additional income. On the first farrowing of their sow it produced 11 litters. After 2 months they sold the 3 piglets for P2,200 each which gave them an income of 6,600. The four piglets they passed on to their neighbors who signified intention to take care of it (paataman). The agreement between them is that 3 litters will be returned to them when they become weanlings.

“Marhay ang mag-ataman nin orig para pa-ogbonon ta sa oras nin pangnangaipo o emergency puwedeng ipabakal tolos”, says Efren Arce., “Saka bakong arog kan copra ang orig bakong gayo bantayan.



4Ps I have already advanced the amount from local lenders. But with the sale of the piglets I could at least set aside some amount as savings. It also gives me a good feeling that I know I have invested my effort and time for the income that I have earned).

vegetables provided by the DA and these have been their source of food for their daily consumption.

Adelina Claridad is also one of the recipients of the native pig from the DA. She started with a breeder which gave birth to 7 piglets. After 2 months she sold the 2 piglets

at P2,200 each. The 3 piglets she entrusted (paataman) to her daughter and neighbors who have signified to take care of them with the agreement that 3 litters or piglets will be given back to her after farrowing. She retained 2

cultural coordinator of the tribe has currently 10 breeders and 12 weaners or growers. As there are demands for roasted pig (lechon) She has started accepting orders. Their roasted native pig is sold at P150 per kilo.

On special occasions such as fiestas and birthdays a pig is butchered and the community gather and partakes of the sumptuous food served for everyone.

With the interventions provided by the DA and other institutions helping the tribal community it is slowly veering away from their previous subsistence way of life - that is, they only produced everything they need for their survival. Today, they are producing cash crops and had ventured into native pig production/breeding in order to earn an extra income for their families. They are now giving premium to education, that is why most of the income they derive are spent for the educational expenses of their children who have to commute daily to the nearest school or even to the poblacion.

The community has already access to electricity which is a great advantage. The one lane road leading to the community is already concreted and accessible to motorcycles and light vehicles. But household access to water is quite difficult. Mrs. Dapilos exerted efforts to make water accessible in the area. She spent quite an big amount to drill water from the ground or water tables. The residents fervently hope that a solution to address the water problem in their community will soon be considered and be in the pipeline of their local government.

Despite the simple conveniences and new opportunities that this community is now enjoying, it has not completely abandoned its age-old traditions and values passed on to them by

(Pls. turn to page 15)



Efren Arce, one of the beneficiaries of vegetable and native pigs.



Kun ma ogbon lang, ‘ he added. (Taking care of hogs for breeding is good as you can easily sell it when a sudden or urgent need crops up. Unlike copra taking care of pigs does not require much time except during farrowing”).

Malou shares that while they were assured of receiving monthly cash allowance as 4Ps beneficiary, she noted that even before the scheduled release of the cash assistance she has already loaned it in advance from their informal loan source. “Bago mag abot and kwarta sa 4Ps naitutang na”. Pero digdi sa orig may naititipon maski purupaano. Saka marhay sa pagmati na aram mo pigpagalan mo, pig tawan nin oras para magkaigwa ka kaidtong income.’ (Even before the release of our allowance from

Romeo Mendoza who has seasonal job as calamansi picker is also very thankful for this new livelihood opportunity. He earns P400 daily as calamansi picker in the plantation within the municipality or the adjoining town of Goa. But as the work is seasonal there are days when he has no earnings. He also owns a Carabao but it is only a yearling (less than 2 years) When it gets older he will be using it as a draft animal. When the native pig was dispersed to the community he also availed of it. They have at present 1 breeder and 4 weanlings which they will soon sell. He said that the sale from the pigs has been a big help to their family as they use it to buy food and for the school expenses of the children. They also planted the

litters for breeding.

Rosalyn Claridad, daughter of Adelina is another recipient of the native pig for breeding. She said she enjoys taking care of the pigs. “Nakakahale ni pagal paghale sa trabaho lalu na kung nahiling mo na su mga ogbon. Igua kang aasahan na dagdag na income (Taking care of the pigs can ease your tiredness and stress when you arrive from work especially when you see the piglets. There is something to look forward for – an additional source of income for the family).

The recipients do not have to spend much for the feeds. They use pinawa and other rootcrops and local vegetables as feeds. Their pigs are confined in pens in their backyard.

Marivic Belleza, the

SAAD helps farmers become entrepreneurs

On the second year of implementation of DA's armor against poverty, the Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) in Bicol has extended various technical assistance to a total of 4,393 farmer beneficiaries from the 3 provinces – Masbate, Catanduanes and Sorsogon. These assistance included 19 trainings on upland/rainfed rice production, 22 trainings for corn enterprise development, 24 trainings for high value crops production, 16 trainings livestock production, and 18 trainings for organic agriculture production.

It has organized a total of 65 farmer groups who have received interventions from rice, corn, and high value crops - assistance packages, and 764 individual beneficiaries who received inputs from the livestock and poultry production package.

The rice production livelihood component is composed of 4 packages expected to lessen the cost of production of farmers. The distributed package 1 consisted of 1,920 bags rice seeds, 1,920 bags complete fertilizers, 3,840 laminated sacks, 76,800 empty sacks, 3 palay thresher, 9 brush cutter, and 36 heads of draft animal; package 2 with 1,280 bags rice seeds, 1,280 bags complete fertilizers, 2,560 laminated sacks, 51,200 empty sacks, 6 mobile rice mill, 6 brush cutter, and 24 heads draft animal; package 3 with 300 bags rice seeds, 300 bags complete fertilizers, 600 laminated sacks, 12,000 empty sacks, 15 brush cutter, and 48 heads of draft animal; and package 4 with 2,450 kgs of vermicast, 18 kgs Bio N, and 85 kgs african night crawler.

Under the corn production package, a total of 600 bags of white corn seeds, 600 bags complete fertilizer, 52,000 cassava seed pieces, 3 units corn grits mill, 8 units mechanical corn sheller, 5 units cassava chipper, and 12 heads draft animals were distributed.

SAAD national Deputy Director Ulysses J. Lustria, Jr. (second from left), awards the certificate of recognition to SAAD Bicol for garnering the 3rd place among 11 regions in terms of physical and financial accomplishments in CY 2019. SAAD Bicol also garnered the Best Video award and Best in Cow Girl Attire. SAAD Action Officer Dr. Mary Grace DP. Rodriguez led the Bicol delegation in receiving the award during the national assessment in Baguio City.



Under the high value crops production package, the beneficiaries received 1,576 kilograms vegetable seeds, 9,230 bags organic fertilizer, 650 pieces drums, 1,832 sets garden tools, 6,000 pieces plastic tray, 150 meter HDPE Pipes, 650 pieces wheelbarrow, 85 rolls UV treated plastic, 6,320 grafted mango seedlings, 20,000 grafted cacao seedlings, 12,000 budded calamansi, and 1,500,000 root crop cuttings.

Under the livestock production package, the program distributed 672 heads doe, 192 heads buck, 5,325 heads native chicken, 1,880 heads ducks, 655 heads native piglet, 72,250 kgs rice bran (feeds for native pig), 16 heads draft animals, and constructed 33 goat houses, as well as 7 chicken breeding pens.

Aside from the trainings and distribution of interventions, SAAD helped organized beneficiary farmers into groups which are now starting to venture in enterprise development. Among these organized farmers' groups were Juban Organic Farmers Producers Coop, Bacolod Vegetable Farmers Association,

Aroroy Juban Vegetable Farmers, Binanuahan Vegetable Farmers, Samahang Pangkabuhayan at Pangkaunlaran ng Calpi, Maralitang Magsasakang Association, all in Sorsogon which participated in the Kasanggayahan Festival in Rompeolas, Sorsogon City last October 17-31, 2019. The SAAD farmer organizations sold various agricultural products such as pili, lowland vegetables, peanut, corn, sili, salted eggs, and native handicraft.

The program is also supporting a start-up entrepreneurial activity of processed meat in Masbate under livestock related enterprise and cassava chips in Catanduanes under crops related business enterprise.

The Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) Program is a locally-funded project of the Department of Agriculture with the aim of uplifting the lives of farmers in the poorest provinces of the country.

In 2018, the program has included the 3 provinces in Bicol Region which are Masbate, Catanduanes, and Sorsogon. The covered municipalities of the program in the region are the following - Monreal, San



Pascual, Balud, Mandaon, Esperanza, and Pio V Corpuz for Masbate; Bagamanoc, Baras, Bato, Gigmoto, Panganiban, and San Miguel for Catanduanes; and Donsol, Magallanes, Pilar, Juban, Matnog, and Santa Magdalena

for Sorsogon. The above-mentioned areas were chosen based on their poverty incidence and the "island equity principle".

The program has 2 major components; the Social Preparation component which involves the conduct of trainings for the sharing of technical knowledge to the beneficiaries, and the Food and Livelihood Production component which comprises the interventions and inputs received by the beneficiaries.



DA-Bicol joins Sagip Saka Act public consultation

TAGAYTAY City---“Ang tagumpay ng Pilipinas ay nakasalalay sa tagumpay ng pinakamahirap na sector ng Pilipinas---ang magsasaka.”

This was the message of the principal author and proponent---Senator Francis Pangilinan during the Sagip Saka IRR Public Consultation Luzon B Cluster (CALABARZON, MIMAROPA and Bicol) held on October 4, 2019 at the Tagaytay International Convention Center here.

Signed into law by President Rodrigo Duterte on April 17, 2019, the Sagip Saka Act or the Republic Act No. 11321 established the "Farmers and Fisherfolk Enterprise Development Program." This program is “a comprehensive set of objectives, targets, and holistic approach in promoting the establishment of enterprises involving agricultural and fishery products.” Pangilinan considered the signing of the law as a “major victory for farmers and fisherfolk.”

The program shall be integrated and be made consistent with the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Plan, and the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises Development Plan.

The said law also created the “Farmers and Fisherfolk Enterprise Development Council” to oversee the proper implementation of the program.



Bicol RAFC Chairperson Jose Cordero shoots a question to Senator Francis Pangilinan (right) during the Sagip Saka Consultation.



This council shall be composed of the Departments of Agriculture (DA), Trade and Industry (DTI), Interior and Local Government (DILG), and Finance (DOF), as well as representatives from the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), farmers' and fisherfolk's associations, and agriculture/food/restaurant/business sectors.

Activities and funding support for Sagip Saka will be included in the DA's annual plan and budget proposal.

Farmers and Fisherfolks will be provided assistance through agricultural extension services; skills development; provision of production inputs, equipment and facilities; access to credit, crop insurance, markets and technologies; and infrastructure for production and post-

production activities.

Moreover, government groups will directly purchase agricultural and fisheries products from local farmers, fisherfolks, and accredited cooperatives. They will be exempted from the Procurement Law plus tax incentives and exemptions. With SSA, farmers will be assured of interventions, support, guidance and assistance.

“Nothing is more joyful than a bountiful harvest,” Pangilinan said as he shared his experience with farming.

The Bicol delegation was composed of 30 participants consisted of DA staff, Regional Agricultural and Fishery Council (RAFC), OPAG, and representatives from Gubat St. Anthony Coop (**Jayson M. Gonzales**)

Mainstreaming the Agta - Tabangnon...

(from page 13)

their ancestors. They are very hard working and industrious and they give high value for word of honor. Whatever they say or commit to do - they fulfill. They are not competitive and selfish. Whatever good things they have they generously share with their fellow tribesmen. They value whatever good thing or assistance they receive and consider it as “utang na loob” or debt of gratitude. They may not be able to express their gratefulness verbally but they show it in their action – through songs or dances which they readily obliged to do complete with their traditional tribal wear especially when there are visitors. And they have a high sense of loyalty.

They are proud to showcase their talents and cultural traditions and heritage that is why Mrs. Dapilos has constructed a mini amphitheater for them.

The Agta Tabangon of Tigaon are now slowly getting into the mainstream of development. But they have no conflict with their identity and they are proud of their ancestry. They are no longer in isolation from external, social economic and cultural influences. As of now they are still earning a living for subsistence, yet they strive in farming, engage in animal production. The native pig farming inspires. With their dreamy eyes, they visualize a herd of black pigs roaming around their palm hut. They dream for their children believing that a bright future awaits them.

Respect our farmers



Ang tagumpay ng Pilipinas ay nakasalalay sa tagumpay ng pinakamahirap na sector ng Pilipinas---ang magsasaka. Kaya, respetuhin natin sila.”

These derogatory terms and remarks--“Nangangamote, nangingitlog, pupulutin sa kangkungan, nangangalabasa, bagsakan and ‘Hampaslupa” show how Filipinos looked down on farming.

“Minamasama natin ang pagsasaka” through these terms.

“Kamote, itlog, kangkong, kalabasa” are commodities that have high nutrient contents. Using these terms to attribute to failed grades, stupidity and other negative connotations are completely out of context considering the benefits we get from eating these vegetables and egg.

In other countries like Thailand, King Boribor has high regards to farming as it is the backbone of the economy. In China, Confucius said that Teachers feed the mind and soul but it is the Farmers that feed and nourish the body.

Respect the farmers or else, we will never be food secured.”

- Senator Francis Pangilinan

12th Bicol Organic Agriculture Congress draws more enthusiasts

NAGA CITY – Over 600 organic agriculture practitioners, enthusiasts and advocates from the six provinces of Bicol gathered in one of the hotels in this city on October 21 to 22 for the 12th Bicol Organic Agriculture Congress. Engineer Christopher V. Morales, Director of the DA National Agriculture Organic Program graced the event together with Adelberto Baniqued who sits at the National organic Agriculture Board as Mindanao Small Farmer Representative and who discussed updates and new policies and guidelines on the OA program.

Director Morales commended the Bicol OA program under the leadership OIC- Regional Technical Director and concurrently Regional OA focal person, Adelina A. Losa for consistently bagging top national awards in the National Annual Search for OA Achievers and efficiently disbursing and utilizing the budget allocations for the OA program. He also noted Bicol Organic Agriculture Program's 90% attainment by far of its target for 2019. He asserted that the OA Program is active and firm in accomplishing its goal and urged everyone to continue to support and strengthen the program. He added that the annual conduct of OA congress and recognition of the achievers is an avenue to inspire and encourage more farmers to go into organic farming.

According to DA Bicol's OIC-Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla as of September this year a total of 46,448 or 6.06% of the total agricultural area of Bicol region is either in-conversion or already converted to organic and 98 farms equivalent to 128 hectares were already certified as organic by the Organic Certification Center of the Philippines.



Engr. Christopher V. Morales, program director of National Organic Agriculture Program, led the ribbon cutting during the 12th BOAC.



The event was highlighted by the conferment of awards and recognition to the seven (7) individual and group awardees for the 2019 Regional Organic Agriculture Achievers. Ligao City from Albay province was conferred as Outstanding City in Organic Agriculture and awarded a cash Prize of P300,000 and a plaque. The Agri-Planters and Food Processors Association of Tigaon (TAPFPAT) was conferred as Outstanding Organic Agriculture Small Farmer Group and received a cash prize of P100,000. The Amata Family (Florentino and Edalyn) from San Pedroin Goa, Camarines Sur was conferred as Outstanding OA Small Farm Family and awarded P50,000. Meanwhile, Elmer Salazar was conferred Outstanding

OA Small Individual Farmer and received P50,000. Lorenzo Intia from Caraycayon in Tigaon, Camarines Sur was conferred Outstanding Young Farmer in OA and received P30,000.

The Agricultural Extension workers who have been at the frontline assisting the OA farmers were also recognized and awarded. They were: Sienna Sombrero Of LGU Tigaon as Outstanding OA Municipal Focal person and received P20,000 and Luisita Navo as Outstanding OA extension Worker and received P15,000. All the awardees were also given plaque of appreciation. All these regional winners will vie for the national award which will be announced and conferred during the National OA Congress at Camp Benjamin in Alfonso Cavite on November 12-14, 2019.

Also recognized and given cash prizes were the most promising awardees namely: Municipality of Tigaon as Most Promising Municipality; Borabo family of Tigaon as Most Promising Small Farming Family; Rossini Obligacion, Angelica Sapon and Vincer Quibral as Most promising Individual farmers; Grace Dejumo as Most Promising City Focal person and Felix Gino Murillo as Most promising Extension Worker.

Successful and model organic agriculture practitioners shared their best practices and experiences revolving on this year's adapted theme: Organikong Agrikultura sa Mauswag na Kabuhayan para sa Marhay na Salud asin Kapalibutan. These include Fr. Ian Trillanes of Emiliano's Nature Farm, Cherry T. Lo of Sonrisa Farm; Josephine Artiaga of St. Francis Sta. Rita Nature's Farm, Jose Obligacion of Joross Farm. Patrick Belisario who discussed Sustainable Livelihood & their Impact to Environment

(Next page pls.)

Bicolano farmers gear up ... (from page 11)

collaboration on agricultural machinery research and development, establishment of an agricultural machinery manufacturing cluster and establishment of a demonstration complex on agricultural mechanization and enhancement of workforce skills through trainings.

Albay Governor Al Francis Bichara said that mechanization could address the farmers problem on very costly and diminishing farm labor. He also pointed out the advantage of channeling the farm machineries through cooperatives which can efficiently manage them and generate income for their

coops and members from these machineries.

KAMICO director Kim Kyong Soo graced the event and reaffirmed their coop's commitment to their partnership with the Philippines: "There is enough room, for us to work together. We should unite and join our efforts and resources for development", he emphasized. The other Korean companies who participated in roadshow were: Fit Corea Trading Philippines headed by its president, Philip Kim; Leehwa Industry headed by its president Sekjin Lee and managing Director Jonseung Cho; ASIATECH headed by its president Wonki Chun; and

Joongang Precision headed by its executive manager, Kyonsoo Park.

The machineries showcased and demonstrated include the following: 40HP tractor with Levee & loader; 55 HP tractor with plow; 40HP tractor with Rotavator & Leveler; Seeder; Handy cultivator set with former and mulcher; boom sprayer, drone (for spraying pesticides and fertilizers); rice polishing machine; corn mill, agricultural product dryer; vibration separator. Agricultural product washer; levee production machine; 5 in 1 rice milling & polishing machine; underground crop harvester (for garlic and onion)

paddy seeder, disc plow, Branson Tractors; lifters and many more.

Also present during the event were Albay provincial Agriculturist Cheryl Rebeta, Vicente Moyo, municipal councilor of Camalig; Stephanie Breboneria, president, Bicol Irrigators Association Federation; Carlito P. Aquino; MAFC chair of Ocampo. Hilda A. Lopez, assistant provincial agriculturist, agricultural extension workers and farmer leader representatives from the different provinces of Bicol and media representatives who also covered the event. **(Emily B. Bordado)**



12th Bicol Organic Agriculture ...

(from page 16)

Adding color and drawing crowds to this year's regional OA regional congress were the selling booths of various organic products from the six provinces. Twenty three (23) exhibitors participated in the mini fair and brisk selling was noted as more consumers are now clamoring for organic and naturally grown or processed products.

The event was capped by the drafting and presentation of Resolutions. **(Emily B. Bordado)**

DA honors 2019 reg'l Gawad ... (from page 9)

manages the Joross Farm, commercial producer of organic culinary and medicinal herbs, fruits and vegetables. She is also a certified organic practitioner and consultant and a staunch advocate of organic agriculture and healthy living.

The second place regional outstanding Rural Woman was 76 year old Yolanda De Leon of Gubat, Sorsogon and third place was Anicia Baluzo of Daet, Camarines Norte.

Obligacion received P30,000 while De Leon received P15,000 and P10,000 for Baluzo.

Dr. U-nichols A. Manalo, the Chief of DA Special Project Coordinating and Management Assistance Division represented DA Undersecretary for Operations

Ariel T. Cayan as keynote speaker. In his speech, Manalo cited that most of the Filipino farmers are already greying, as the outstanding farmers are mostly above 50 years old. And even the Agricultural Technicians are also greying, he said. Thus, he encouraged the parents who have children working abroad to encourage their children to invest in agriculture in their respective areas. He also challenged the LGUs as DA's partner, to push the young agricultural students to partner with the farmers in their areas and practice what they learn in school.

Meanwhile, DA Bicol OIC Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla lauded the painstaking efforts of the Gawad Saka and Outstanding Rural

Women search committees for consistently coming up with national winners in the different categories. Eight regional Gawad Saka winners made it as national finalists while the Bicolana rural women were always in the top three in the national level.

Also present during the awarding ceremonies were Adelina A. Losa, DA Bicol OIC Regional technical Director for Operations; Aloha Gigi I. Bañaria, regional Gawad Saka coordinator; Regional AFC Chairperson Jose Cordero; provincial Gawad Saka Coordinators; provincial and municipal agriculturists of winning provinces/ municipalities; and GREAT women entrepreneurs. **(Lovella P. Guarin)**

PRAISE recognizes top performers

The DA RFO Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) gave various awards to the top performing groups and individuals of DA5 on December 18, 2019.

Best Organizational Units Awards were given to Administrative & Finance Division; Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD); Field Operations Division (FOD); Integrated Laboratories Division (ILD); Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation Division (PMED); Regional Agricultural Engineering Division (RAED); Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Information Section (RAFIS); Regulatory Division; and Research Division.



Regional Executive Director

PRAISE Committee Chairperson Dr. Mary Grace DP. Rodriguez (left) and Vice Chair Adelina A. Losa (right) award the plaque of recognition to RED Rodel P. Tornilla.



Admin & Finance

The Administrative and Finance Division got the Best Organizational Unit Award.



AMAD



Research



Field Operations Division



Regulatory



PMED



Integrated Laboratories



Rice Program

Best Banner Programs (in order) were Rice Program; Livestock and Poultry Program; Corn Program; High Value Crops Development Program; Organic Agriculture Program; and Halal Food Industry Development Program.



RAFIS



Livestock Program



Corn Program



HVCD Program

PRAISE recognizes...

Various taskforces/team were also honored and given plaque of recognition during the DA RFO 5 Annual Recognition and Thanksgiving. The awardees included: Regional Task Force Committee for Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Program (RCEP); Regional Fall Army Worm (FAW) Task Force; Regional Quick Response Team (RQRT) for African Swine Fever (ASF); High Value Crops Development Team (HVCD); and Disaster Risk Reduction Management Team.

Meanwhile, certificates of recognition were awarded to the following committees/teams: Bids and Awards Committee (BAC); focal persons and secretariat of Organic Agriculture Awards; Outstanding Rural Women Committee; High Value Crops Development Program Committee; Gawad Saka; Rice and Corn Achievers Committees.

Adjudged as Best Research Outreach Stations (ROSeS) were: Sorsogon Dairy Production and Technology Center (SDPTC); Central Bicol Experiment Station (CBES); and Camarines Norte Lowland Rainfed Research Station (CNLRRS).



SDPTC



CBES



CNLRRS



BAC

DA Bicol holds poster and essay contests on World Food Day and OA month

SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR – Two Grade 6 pupils of Sorsogon Pilot Elementary School won this year's simultaneous Poster Making contests in celebration of the World Food Day and National Organic Agriculture (OA) Month held at the DA training hall on October 1.

Ma. Dominique D. Alcantara, 11-year old pupil from Sorsogon won the first place in the On-the-Spot Poster Making Contest depicting the World Food Day theme which will be celebrated on October 16. Alcantara received P3,000 cash prize and certificate of commendation. The 2nd place was won by Christian James A. Monta of Iriga Central School. The 3rd place was won by Jericho Bermundo of Don Telesforo Llorin Elementary School, Nabua West District of Camarines Sur. They received P2,000 and P1,000 cash prizes respectively and certificates.

The annual poster making contest for public elementary school students has been one of the highlights of the World Food Day which depict this year's theme "Our actions are our future. Healthy diets for a #ZeroHunger world."

Meanwhile, the On-the-Spot Poster Making Contest in connection with the Organic Agriculture Month observance in November was topped by Alyzza D. Dechavez, also an 11-year old pupil of Sorsogon. She received P3,000 cash and certificate. Winnoh R. Ogarte of

Naga City Division ranked 2nd and Renz Gerald S. Carillo of San Carlos Elementary School in Tabaco City ranked 3rd. They received P2,000 and P1,000 cash awards respectively.

All the rest of the contestants received P500 consolation prizes and tokens. On the same occasion, an essay writing contest for the junior high school divisions, also in celebration of the National Organic Agriculture month was conducted in the same venue but the result will be announced later.

The three contests were coordinated by the Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Information Section (RAFIS) and Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD) in partnership with the Department of Education (DepEd) regional office in Bicol.

The winners of the poster making contests will compete in the national competitions in Quezon City on October 15 for the WFD event and on November 4-6 at the Boy Scout of the Phils., Mt. Makiling, Los Baños, Laguna for the National Organic Agriculture Poster competition.

Adelina A. Losa, DA Bicol OIC Regional Technical Director for Operations and Extension graced the event together with Ms. Christie Alvarez, Education Program Supervisor, division supervisors, coaches and contestants. (**Lovella P. Guarin**)



Rice Awareness Month



Media Briefing

Close to 30 media persons attended the media briefing on rice in connection with the celebration of Rice Awareness Month.

Lorenzo Alvina, DA 5 Rice and Corn Program coordinator presented the Rice Production Situationer.

Engr. Henry Tristeza, Regional Director of the National Food Authority (NFA) Region 5 discussed the status of palay procurement and other measures being taken by the NFA to help farmers in the midst of plummeting palay buying price. He assured the media that NFA has adequate rice buffer stock.

DA 5 Regional Information Officer Emily B. Bordado discussed the Eight Paradigms of the DA in line with the New Thinking.



Sorsogon pupil wins in Nat'l. World Food Day poster contest

Ma. Dominique D. Alcantara, a pupil of Sorsogon Pilot Elementary School was adjudged as among the 5 national top winners in the FAO-DA World Food Day on-the-spot poster making contest participated in by 13 regional winners. The national elimination and awarding ceremonies was conducted in Quezon City as a culminating activity for the World Food Day on October 16.

All five winners received

P20,000 cash prize, trophy both for pupil and the school. She was accompanied by her coach Imelda R. Dellosa.

DA Undersecretary for Operations Ariel T. Cayanán handed the award. He was assisted by FAO officials, country director Pearson and Asst. director Tamara Duran.

The contestants depicted on their artwork this year's World Food Day theme: "Our Action, our future: Towards a #zero hunger world."



Department of Agriculture
Regional Field Unit No. 5
Reg'l Agriculture and Fisheries
Information Section
e-mail: darafid5@yahoo.com

visit our website:
bicol.da.gov.ph

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