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## GREAT Women Project 2 beneficiaries join DA's 1st Online Trade Fair for women

by Annielyn L. Baleza

When COVID-19 disrupted the travel and tourism industries, many entrepreneurs were forced to shut down their businesses or lay off some of their employees to stay afloat. But not the Gender Responsive Economic Action for the Transformation of Women (GREAT Women) Project Part 2 beneficiaries Hunny G. Quiano, Aurora A. Rico, and Carina V. Arellano. Knowing that there are families and communities that depend on their agri-enterprise's operation, they hurdled past the difficulties brought about by the pandemic and embraced the new normal with courage and hope.

Yet, they admitted that it wasn't an easy feat especially as COVID-19 threats linger. They appreciated and welcomed initiatives by the Department of Agriculture to provide marketing support services via online or digital platform. "Ang pandemic po kasi masyadong nakaapekto sa atin and then ang ginagawa po namin sinu-sustain po ng HGQ Handicrafts ang weavers kahit po walang order during pandemic, sinu-sustain po namin 'yan and hindi po kami tumitigil na mag-online selling. I'm very thankful kasi nag-live selling po ang Department of Agriculture. Ipinagpapasalamat ko po 'yun," Quiano said. Quiano, who is the proprietor/manager of the HGQ Handicrafts in Nabua, Camarines Sur, was among

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## Bicol continues to supply vegetables and other agri-products to Metro Manila

by Emily B. Bordado

With the continuous rain hampering the transport of vegetables and other fruit crops from Northern Luzon, the Bicol region continues to supply Metro Manila with some of its vegetables, fruits and other food crops. From July 1 to July 31 this year farmers cooperatives and associations and private traders from Bicol brought and sold their agricultural products to major markets in Metro Manila.

A total of 200, 970 kilograms assorted fruits and 22,685 kilograms vegetables from Camarines Sur and Camarines Norte were transported to Metro Manila. These included 194,600 kilograms of pineapple, 5,120 kg watermelon; 20,400kg eggplants, 700 pieces coconut, 300 young coconuts; 700kg squash, 300kg cucumbers 560



kg bitter gourds (ampalaya); 460kg of dried and 100 fresh taro (gabi) leaves and corms; 150kg papayas and 100kg avocados, 60kg, patola; 25 kg kalamansi, 20kg tomatoes and 20kgs string beans. They

were brought and sold in Balintawak, Divisoria, Pasig, Quezon City and the Kadiwa outlet in Cainta Rizal. This was reported and monitored

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## Balik Probinsya Program beneficiaries get livelihood support from DA Bicol

by Lovella P. Guarin



One of the interventions given to Balik Probinsya Bagong Pag-asa Program 2 beneficiaries is the 50 heads of lay hens including the chicken cage with 50 heads capacity

SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR – Initial 21 beneficiaries composed

of 70 family members were the first group of Balik Probinsya Bagong Pag-asa

(BP2) Program recipients in Bicol who were given direct livelihood interventions by the Department of Agriculture regional office here.

DA is one of the government agencies assisting the BP2 beneficiaries in collaboration with the Provincial Government of Camarines Sur. Camarines Sur is one of the pilot provinces of BP2. The PLGU of Camarines Sur expressed its intent to accept applicants bound for CamSur as early as February 23, 2021.

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# EDITORIAL

## DA Bicol invests big for Small and Medium Enterprises

**The agribusiness sector is poised to reboot and recover after a hiatus of more than a year due to COVID-19 pandemic. Small and Micro Enterprises (SMEs) and Marginalized Small Farmers and Fisherfolk (MSFF) in the Bicol region are beginning to bounce back.**

Thanks to the timely and responsive interventions and assistance of various government agencies and the support of private sector who have helped them recover and get back to business using new paradigms, platforms, strategies, tools and easy access credit means.

**The Department of Agriculture, through the Agricultural Credit Policy Council (ACPC) has opened new loan windows to individuals, cooperatives, associations and SMEs to address the loss of income and livelihood of vulnerable sector affected by the pandemic. These loan packages require no collateral and has no interest payable at a minimum of 5 years and maximum of 10 years.**

There is the **Agri-Negosyo (ANYO) Loan Program designed to finance the capital requirements for agri-fishery based MSEs.** Under this Program is the Financial Assistance for Women Program where women beneficiaries may avail of uncollateralized and zero interest loan up to P100,000 payable in five years.

There is also the **Kapital Access for Young Agripreneurs or KAYA** loan program to provide financial assistance to the agribusiness venture of budding entrepreneurs aged 18-30 years old. It offers up to P500, 000 loan at zero percent interest payable in five years.

Said loan should be used to finance working capital or fixed asset acquisition requirements of start-up or existing agri-based projects of young entrepreneurs and agri-fishery graduates of either formal and non-formal agri-fishery schools.

Last year, DA-Bicol through the ACPC released total of P175.13 million worth of loan assistance to 3,720 marginalized small farmers and fisherfolk (MSFF) worth P93 million and 14 agri-fishery based micro and small enterprises worth P82 million under the Expanded SURE Aid and Recovery Project of SURE AID 19—the DA’s emergency and loan assistance program which aimed to provide the recipients with working capital to tide them over the pandemic.

Another project is the Marketing Logistics Support for Inclusive Food Supply Chain implements by the DA through the Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division provides FCAs with logistics and transport services such as the refrigerated vans to reduce postharvest losses of agri-fishery products during transport by using appropriate vehicle, increase mobility in the delivery of products, maintain quality of transported goods and comply with Food Safety Law.

Moreover, the DA in partnership with the private sector like the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other private groups continue to support SMEs through marketing assistance, investment and investment promotion.

**DA and the Metro Naga Chamber of Commerce partnered to stage the 1st on-line trade fair for women entrepreneurs.**

**The DA is also helping promote the on-line buying and selling via the Mura Mart app.**

Through the Kadiwa ni Ani at Kita, the DA links local FCAS with local and Metro Manila markets.

**Thus, local SMEs and FCAs are recovering and gaining headway and set to regrow and sustain its gain despite the still raging pandemic.**

# Bicol MAYA interns completed immersion and now *ready* to soar high

The 15 aspiring young agri-entrepreneurs in Bicol who qualified and took part as interns in the Department of Agriculture’s Mentoring and Attracting Youths in Agribusiness (MAYA) Program were in high spirits during the completion ceremonies held for them at the DA regional Office on June 28. Enriched with new knowledge, skills and experiences and buoyed with a new confidence the interns happily shared their journey via the audio visual presentations they themselves prepared and through personal narrative and storytelling.

Ailyn Bertumen an Animal Science major who graduated from the Sorsogon State College was among those adjudged Best Interns out of 791 nationwide for their exemplary performance during the duration of their internship. She will receive a cash prize of P7,500. She was also among the winners for the “best photo journey” given to those who have garnered the most likes, reactions and shares in the Facebook MAYA photo diary posts. She



will receive an additional cash price of P4,000.

Another Bicolana intern, Ivy de la Pacion, a graduate from the Central Bicol State University of Agriculture was

finalist to the “Best Business Plan” where a 40 thousand start-up capital was at stake.

Regional Technical Director for Research and Regulations, Dr. Edgar Madrid congratulated the 15 interns for completing the program. He said only one of the original 16 interns who qualified dropped out for some personal circumstance. He explained that the MAYA program was conceptualized to address the problem of having more graduates but less job or employment opportunities are available. He added that while the MAYA interns have two options either to seek employment or go into agri-preneurship he urged them to continue their journey in pursuing agri entrepreneurship and improve their business proposals and apply what they have learned. He also conveyed the instruction of DA-Bicol Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla to all program coordinators to look for funds for the proposals crafted by the MAYA interns.

During the closing ceremony the partner institutions which hosted the interns were also recognized and given plaques of recognition. These were the Pilipinas Shell Foundation Inc. represented by Jomar Basco and James Charlou Otida and the Sonrisa Farm represented by its farm administrator, Lani Botor. A virtual “Recognition Day” to honor the MAYA graduates was also held on June 29 and graced by Agriculture Secretary William D. Dar. The DA chief says “MAYA serves as one of our strategies to engage more youth and help revitalize  
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Republic of the Philippines  
Province of Sorsogon  
MUNICIPALITY OF PILAR  
OFFICE OF THE SANGGUNIANG BAYAN

**RESOLUTION NO.113-A, SERIES OF 2021  
“A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING OUR UTMOST GRATITUDE, DEEP APPRECIATION AND PROUD  
COMMENDATION TO THE PUBLIC SERVANTS OF THE SPECIAL AREA FOR AGRICULTURAL  
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (SAAD) ASSIGNED IN PILAR, SORSOGON FOR THE YEARS 2018-2022”**

**Proponent: Hon. Emmanuel H. Sia**

**WHEREAS**, SPECIAL AREA FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (SAAD) is a national funded program of the Department of Agriculture (DA) that aims to alleviate poverty and help local farmers and fisherfolk’s associations, especially those that are not beneficiaries of the Local Government Unit’s programs;

**WHEREAS**, the SAAD is a comprehensive agricultural program that spans from product development up to marketing and sale of the agricultural products;

**WHEREAS**, in 2018, SAAD commenced its program in the Municipality of Pilar, Sorsogon and the following individuals were responsible in the implementation of the SAAD in this jurisdiction:

- |                                  |                               |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Rodel P. Tornilla             | - Regional Executive Director |
| 2. Mary Rose A. Detera           | - SAAD Provincial Coordinator |
| 3. Jonas B. Guañizo              | -SAAD Pilar Area Coordinator  |
| 4. Florentino Ubalde             | -APCO-SAAD Supervisor         |
| 5. Mary Grace DP. Rodriguez Ph.D | -SAAD Focal Person            |

**WHEREAS**, the abovenamed individuals has exhibited great passion and dedication in serving, mentoring and catering to the needs of Pilar farmers and fisherfolk, and has rendered work on a daily basis, even on weekends;

**WHEREAS**, this August Body would like to express its utmost gratitude, deep appreciation and proud commendation to the abovenamed individuals of the SPECIAL AREA FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM assigned in this jurisdiction;

**WHEREAS**, this August Body exclaims that the public servants of the SAAD are epitome of true public service serve and act as role models to other government employees, and farmers and fisherfolks alike;

**WHEREAS**, the SAAD is scheduled to end in the year 2022, and this August Body prays for a possible extension of the program so that they may help more individuals, farmers and fisherfolks in this jurisdiction, and ultimately, help alleviate the poverty in Pilar, Sorsogon;

**NOW THEREFORE**, by the Sangguniang Bayan of Pilar in session assembled, to resolve this **RESOLUTION EXPRESSING OUR UTMOST GRATITUDE, DEEP APPRECIATION AND PROUD COMMENDATION TO THE PUBLIC SERVANTS OF THE SPECIAL AREA FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (SAAD) ASSIGNED IN PILAR, SORSOGON FOR THE YEARS 2018-2022;**

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED: September 20, 2021  
CERTIFIED CORRECT, Pilar, Sorsogon, Philippines

(signed)  
**FRANCES MARIE L. BOTIN**  
Secretary to the Sangguniang Bayan

Attested by:  
(signed)  
**HON. LUIS C. LEOSALA, JR.**  
Vice-Mayor/ Presiding Officer

## Bicol MAYA interns...(from page 3)

the country's agriculture fishery and agribusiness sector. It is our response in investing in people."

The virtual recognition ceremonies was hosted by the Bureau of Agricultural Research which also coordinates the implementation of the MAYA program.

The interns received a monthly allowance of P20,000 during their immersion. Aside from Bertumen, the other interns who completed their internship were: Princess E.



Arcilla, Darwin I. Barrameda, Billones, Ivy de la Pacion, May B. Basilan, Almira R. Jomar S. Pagador, Domingo

B. Sabularse, Jr., Roberto O. San Agustin, Jr., Juliana Louise N. Santos, and Paolo Pardiñas (all from CBSUA); Cherry Mae B. Mallo and Melvin Paclibar (from SSC), John Paul J. Baytan (from CNSC) and Joeje C. Salvador (from DEBESMSCAT).

The focal person for the MAYA Program in Bicol is Corazon A. Orbon, chief of the Research Division ably assisted by Pedro A Oliver.

(Emily B. Bordado)

## Stakeholders oriented on PAFES in Albay

CABANGAN, Camalig, Albay-The Department of Agriculture-Bicol conducted its Orientation and Workshop on Province-Led Agriculture and Fisheries Extension System (PAFES) in Albay as the pilot province in the Bicol Region. More than a hundred attendees composed of mayors, provincial/municipal/city agriculture officers, representatives of DA-Bicol, DILG, Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA), Philippine Fiber Development Authority (PhilFIDA), City/municipal AFCs, Albay Provincial Agriculture Office (AVO) and the Albay Veterinary Office (AVO) participated from July 5-7, 2021 held at the AFBVillage Negosyo Auditorium here.

According to Philippine Council for Agriculture and Fisheries (PCAF) Executive Director Julieta Oplencia, "Albay will serve as an extension hub that synchronizes agricultural plans and programs as well as orchestrate the activities of the various stakeholders. This is also in time for the impending implementation of the Mandanas-Garcia Ruling, where more agriculture and fishery programs will be rolled out at the LGU level."

Through PAFES, DA-Bicol will have a stronger collaboration with the Local Government Units (LGUs), Bicol University, the private sector, and farmers' organizations. Thus, improving

the delivery of extension services and provision of technical and marketing assistance to farmers and fisherfolk.

In the message of Bicol Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Council Chair Jimmy Cordero, this strategy will increase the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) of LGUs that will put up mechanisms to develop their extension programs. He underscored that PAFES "is not a venue for politics but instead an opportunity to increase the productivity of the farmers." RAFC Executive Officer and DA-Bicol Chief of the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Division (PMED) Aloha Gigi Bañaria cited that the present One DA Key Reform Strategies is primarily geared towards the attainment of the agency's twin goal - Masaganang Ani at Mataas na Kita as all sectors enter the new normal set-up.

With this, DA-Bicol will co-plan, co-invest, co-implement, and co-monitor priority projects in Albay as the strategy will cut across all the phases of value chain from input, production, processing and marketing with inception of proper climate change adaptation mechanisms, communication and digitalization needed to upgrade the different agricultural commodity industries.

Bañaria added that the Agriculture Dialogue and Information Network Group

(ADING) Integrity Circle was already established in the Bicol Region and that the Albay Provincial ADING will begin this July 2021.

According to Department of Interior and Local Government-5 (DILG-5) Monitoring and



Evaluation Division Chief Olivio D. Ramirez, PAFES is DA's preparation for the full implementation of the Mandanas Ruling to fully capacitate local government units (LGUs) in the delivery of agricultural programs and services to its constituents, among others as the ruling entitles LGUs to their Internal Revenue Allotments based on all national taxes and not just from national internal revenue taxes. The IRA of LGUs this 2022 is expected to increase about 27.61%.

With the full implementation of this ruling, Ramirez urged those affected

personnel to transfer to other units within the agency; transfer to other agencies within the Executive Branch; and opt to retire or be separated from the service, and be given preference to vacant positions in LGUs amid the challenges of devolution.

Oplencia challenged the province to "showcase the leadership of the LGUs as prime movers and prime frontliners in ensuring food security in their

respective areas and with the AFCs to sustain transparency, inclusivity, and accountability in every program and project that will be implemented."

Albay inked the Memorandum of Agreement as the pilot province of PAFES in Bicol with DA-Bicol and BU on March 12, 2021 and is expected to have a strong research and extension linkages; increased rural income and livelihood; improved institutional capabilities; and sustainable co-financing arrangements.

(Jayson M. Gonzales)

# Bicol fishers get P8M rehab funds

SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR – Guided by the principles of One-DA Reform Agenda to transform agriculture, the DA RFO 5 thru Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla turned over P8 million Quick Response Fund check to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resource (BFAR) through OIC Regional Director Nelson T. Bien on August 4, 2021 at the DA regional office.

Director Tornilla said that the said check is intended to ensure continuous and sustainable sources of food and income for the Bicolano fishers who were affected by the three strong typhoons that caused massive destruction in the region from October to November

2020, namely: typhoon Quinta, super typhoon Rolly and typhoon Ulysses.

In the comprehensive project proposal submitted by Director Nelson Bien of BFAR to the DA RFO 5, a total of 587 fishers regionwide will benefit from this P8M rehab funds through the provision of tilapia fingerlings, bangus fingerlings, grouper fingerlings, bangus fry, seaweed propagules, net gears, and marine engines. Also included are aquasilviculture and green mussel culture as well as procurement of materials for the repair of fishing boats. Director Bien added that the rehab assistance also will open window of opportunities to the marginalized fisherfolks who are vulnerable to calamities.

He explained that post disaster reconstruction shall not only be restoration to its pre-disaster condition but incorporating a higher level of resiliency standards as well as

Operations Luz R. Marcelino and BFAR TRRP focal person Ruben M. Peyra, Jr.

BFAR is one of the 25 bureaus, attached agencies and corporations of the Department,



climate change and mitigation measures in all recovery interventions. The turn over of check was witnessed by DA 5 Regional Technical Director for

all operating under One DA Reform Agenda to level up Philippine Agriculture.

(Lovella P. Guarin)

# Agri Coop of Tigaon gets P1.9M ref van from DA-AMAD

SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR – The Agriculture Cooperative of Tigaon (ACT) based in Tigaon, Camarines Sur recently received a P1.9M refrigerated van, one component of the

Chief of the Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD) said that this project will increase the participation of farmers in the food supply chain and expand their consolidation activities.

vehicle; increase mobility in the delivery of products; maintain quality of transported products; comply with Food Safety Law on safe handling of products during transport.

the National Dairy Authority (NDA).

Organized on July 8, 2016, the Agriculture Coop of Tigaon (ACT) is now composed of 97 members, most of whom are farmers of Tigaon, Ocampo, Pili, Goa, Sagñay, San Jose and Lagonoy, Camarines Sur.

Jasmin Cueto, Secretary and Project Manager said that in December 2020, the coop was commissioned by the Department of Education (DepEd) Division Office of Camarines Sur to supply the fresh milk requirement of public elementary schools in the 4th Congressional District of the province or Partido Area.

Under the program entitled School-Based Milk Feeding Program (SBFP) for 2019, the ACT will supply fresh milk to 22,157 children for 20 days starting from January 18, 2021 until April 7, 2021. The project is in collaboration with the National Dairy Authority (NDA).

(Please continue to page 7)



project entitled “Marketing Logistics Support for Inclusive Food Supply Chain” being implemented by the DA-AMAS nationwide and AMAD in the regions under the One DA Reform Agenda.

DA Bicol Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla and Adelina A. Losa,

“Giving small farmers/fishers access to logistics and transport services will remedy the major constraint in marketing their produce,” Losa said. Losa added that the project also aims to reduce postharvest losses of agri-fishery products during transport by using appropriate

Tigaon, Camarines sur and their milk products are processed supplied in the Milk Feeding Programs of the government.

ACT Chairperson Dr. Lydia Mapua said that the coop started producing fresh cow’s milk in June 2020 when the coop received 27 dairy cows of Holstein-Jersey breed from

# Libmanan Agripreneur inks 2-yr contract with LCC Supermarket



NAGACITY – The Agripreneur Farmers and Producers Association, Inc. (AFP AI) of Libmanan, Camarines Sur led by its President Robert S. Buayaban recently signed a 2-year partnership agreement with the Lion Commercial Corporation (LCC) Supermarket. Vice President Leni Gerona Robredo personally graced the event as the AFP AI is one of the

beneficiaries of the Omasenso sa Kabuhayan Program of the Office of the Vice President.

The AFP AI with over 300 -member vegetable growers from the 11 towns of Camarines Sur agreed to produce and sell to LCC the agreed volume and quality of various high value crops produced at its production site, namely: watermelon (3,000

kgs), calamansi (1,250 kgs), tomatoes (1,250 kgs), sweet corn (1,250 kgs), and assorted lowland vegetables (1,500 kgs) twice a week. Meanwhile, the LCC Supermarket which was represented by its General Manager for Merchandising Anne Maybelle Astillero and LCC Executive Director Romeo S. Tan, agreed to buy the agricultural produce made available by the AFP AI as scheduled and in accordance with the volume and specifications agreed upon by the parties. The LCC also committed to provide enhancement trainings in collaboration with third parties such as government agencies or instrumentalities.

This is one of the activities under the **LCC's Bayanihan Program which aims to improve the livelihood of local farmers and contribute to food sustainability.**

Also present were Dr. Mary Grace DP Rodriguez, Chief of the Field Operations Division (FOD) and regional coordinator of the High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP) of the DA RFO 5 and Adelina A. Losa, Chief of the Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD).

The DA's HVCDP and AMAD have been helping the AFP AI in terms of production inputs, farm equipment and machineries, technical assistance, market linkage and provision of delivery trucks which the AFP AI used in transporting and marketing their produce.

Dubbed as "Bayani: Ani para sa Bayan, the signing was held at the LCC Mall Event Center in Naga City on July 25, 2021.

Photo from HVCDP  
(*Lovella P. Guarin*)

# Bicol GWP 2 Beneficiaries receive semi-expendable equipment

SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR - Sixteen (16) rural women enrolled in the DA-PCW Great Women Project (GPW) 2 were awarded semi expendable equipment for use in their current small scale enterprises.

The equipment with a total value of about P240, 000 included 9 units of 4-burner stoves with stand; 4 units chest type freezers and 3 units blender (3 liters capacity).

The budget for said expendable equipment were provided by the Philippine Commission on Women which oversees the implementation of the various projects of the GWP Projects which is now on its 2nd run.

The awarding was held during the GWP meeting held on August 24 via blended virtual and limited face-to-face scheme hosted by the DA Bicol GAD focal person and Planning and Monitoring Division chief,

Aloha Gigi Bañaria.

Also present during said meeting cum awarding ceremonies was Karina Jana Nerva, planning officer of the

R. Marcelino who led the awarding of the equipment urged the recipients to sustain their value adding activities as she reminded them that the role of the

Mrs. Bañaria assured the GWP beneficiaries that the DA will continue providing technical and other assistance as it continues to do so notwithstanding the limitations and difficulties brought about by the still raging pandemic. She added that her office is considering to conduct a one-on-one mentoring and coaching



Provincial Management Office of the PCW.

DA Regional Technical Director for Operations Luz

DA does not end with the provision of the needed interventions and assistance as identified by the recipient themselves.

for the GWP enrollees to enhance or upgrade their skills on value adding and product development.

(*Emily B. Bordado*)

## Bicol continues to supply vegetables...(from page 1)

by the Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD) of the Department of Agriculture Bicol.

The pineapple came from Basud, Labo, Capalonga and Paracale all in Camarines Norte. The eggplants came from Libmanan and Ragay in Camarines Sur province. Most of the watermelons, and vegetables such as eggplants, squash, cucumber and patola were supplied by the Agripreneur Farmers and Producers Association, Inc. (AFPPI) headed by Robert S. Buayaban, the Libmanan Farmers Association, and the Uson Rice and Vegetable Planters Association all from the municipality of Libmanan and the Awayan Farmers



Association from Sipocot in Camarines Sur.

The other vegetables and fruits like calamansi, sweet potato, watermelon, papaya and avocado and fresh gabi leaves and corms were supplied by the Bakiad Vegetables Growers Association care of Nirma Quijance from Labo, Camarines Norte.

The dried gabi leaves were supplied by the Nabua Gabi Farmers Association Inc.

According to AMAD Bicol Chief, Adelina Losa, the DA-Bicol has been assisting farmers cooperatives and associations in marketing their products by facilitating market matching and providing technical assistance and helping them access loans from the various loan windows offered by the DA through the Agriculture Credit Policy Council (ACPC) and other banks or lending conduits, provision of farm machineries and equipment and post-harvest facilities.

In 2020, at the height of the pandemic, the AFPPI received from DA-Bicol through AMAD P2M worth grant under the Kadiwa ni Ani at Kita program. The association used this to purchase a delivery truck with lifter which is now uses for its trading operations. Moreover, the DA through the High Value Commercial Crops Program has provided them with plastic mulch to conserve water and suppress weeds.

Another group, the Caayunan Multi-purpose Cooperative (CMC) in Basud, Camarines Norte is also a recipient of a P2M worth Kadiwa on Wheels 10-wheeler truck under the Enhanced Kadiwa ni Ani at Kita Inclusive

Food Supply Chain Program of the DA. This coop also regularly brings and sells pineapple to major markets in Metro Manila.

On the other hand, the Bakiad Vegetable Growers Association has been provided with a truck by the DA under a different program and the AMAD has facilitated its market linkage with KADIWA outlets in Quezon City, and Cainta.

The other suppliers were private individuals namely; Glen Pajarillo and Rolando Giza all from Camarines Norte who supplied pineapple; and Jorge Michael from Ragay, Camarines Sur who regularly supplies eggplant to Divisoria. The Field Operations Division through the High



Value Commercial Crops Program headed by Dr. Mary Grace DP. Rodriguez have been aggressively providing assistance to vegetable and fruit farmers through provision of seeds, seedlings, planting

materials and other production inputs including technical assistance.

The FOD has likewise been tasked by Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla to lead the implementation of the farm clustering and consolidation which is one of the 18 strategies laid out by Agriculture Secretary William D. Dar under the One DA Reform Agenda to Level Up Philippine Agriculture.

The DA under the leadership of secretary William D. Dar is aggressively pushing for the consolidation and clustering approach as it promotes the Farm and Fisheries Clustering and Consolidation or F2C2 Program where community production

and processing activities are implemented through coordinated and organized value chain systems to achieve increased productivity and income.

## Agri Coop of Tigaon...(from page 5)

*"Kapag kumukuha ang parents ng modules from the teachers, kasabay na nilang kinukuha ang fresh milk para sa mg anak nila during Mondays and Wednesdays," Cueto said.*

At present, the Pelham farm produces 880 liters milk and pasteurizes about 9,900 liters of milk and other ingredients every week to sustain the feeding program.

The SBFP (2020 Budget) implementation will commence this September 2021, of which ACT committed to supply to 4,790 grade school students of the Goa, Camarines Sur School District. Comes SBFP (2021



Budget), ACT committed to supply pasteurized milk to 31,260 grade school students of the 4th Congressional District for 33 feedings days.

The National Dairy

Authority, one of the attached agencies of DA is mandated to implement the National Milk Program to alleviate children from poverty and malnutrition while providing steady income to local dairy farmers and cooperatives.

*"Nagpapasalamat po kami nang marami sa Department of Agriculture sa natanggap naming dairy cows sa National Dairy Authority at sa DA Bicol kay Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla sa naibigay po sa amin na Village-Type Feedmill at ngayon po ay itong refrigerated van," Engr. Raul Carerras, Vice-Chair of*

ACT enthused.

Adelina A. Losa, Chief of the Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD) in Bicol said that five farmers associations have been beneficiaries of the "Marketing Logistics Support for Inclusive Food Supply Chain," namely: Ambos Camarines Agriculture Coop; Farmers Field School Palayamanan Farmers Association; The Agriplanters and Food Processors Association of Tigaon; Saradit na Kristiyanong Komunidad Farmers Association; and the Agriculture Coop of Tigaon.

(Lovella P. Guarin)

## Balik Probinsya Program beneficiaries...(from page 1)

The first batch of beneficiaries (13 families) arrived at the quarantine facility in Baao on April 30 while the second batch (8 families) arrived at the quarantine facility in Iriga City on July 25. The PLGU of CamSur took care of the food and survival kits of the beneficiaries during the entire duration of the quarantine. They were transported back to their residences in CamSur in coordination with their respective LGUs.

On August 19-20, this first group of beneficiaries underwent an in-house training on poultry production and management, and vegetable gardening at the DA - ATI grounds.

After the completion of beneficiaries' training on August 20, Lorenzo Alvina, DA regional coordinator of BP2 program and Regional Technical Director for Operations Luz R. Marcelino turned over 1,050 heads of ready to lay hens, 21 chicken cage with 50 heads capacity, and 63 bags feeds and drugs and biologics as DA's livelihood assistance to the beneficiaries.

Each family received Poultry Production Module with 50 heads hens, chicken cage with 50 heads capacity, and three bags feeds and drugs and biologics.



The DA-BP2 program also provided Gulayan Project composed of assorted vegetable seeds, water hose, hand garden tools and knapsack sprayer.

One recipient was Carlito Nabus, a native of San Jose, Camarines Sur. "Nagtatrabaho ako dati sa isang kompanya sa Manila . Biglang nagka-pandemic, nawalan ako ng trabaho. Nagbakasali po ako sa Balik Probinsya, at maswerte

pong napili ako," Salamat sa lahat ng bumubuo ng BP 2, malaking tulong po itong natanggap namin sa aming panibagong buhay," he said.

Jessa, 24 year old wife of Jelon Buenavente from Tigaon, Camarines Sur was also very thankful to the BP2. "Sobrang hirap po ang buhay namin sa Maynila dahil lahat binibili. Hindi katulad dito sa probinsya na kahit nakikitira lang kami basta may tanim kami sa paligid ay siguradong kakain na kami. Delivery boy dati sa gulayan ang asawa ko, tapos lumipat sa construction.

Pero dahil sa pandemic, pabago-bago ang sitwasyon sa Manila, laging ECQ, kaya mas marami ang araw na sarado ang pinapasukan ng asawa ko.

Salamat po ng marami sa BP2 program, sa Department of Agriculture sa mga ibinigay sa aming manokan at pantamin. Naturuan din po kami kung paano magtanim at mag-alaga ng mga manok," she said.

The BP2 program encourages people, especially informal settlers in Metro Manila to return to their provinces. The beneficiaries are being assisted in their transition with support and incentives on transportation, livelihood, housing, subsistence and education, among others.

To qualify for the BP2 program, eligible families must signify and enroll in the online registration system.

Aside from the DA, other government agencies assisting in the BP2 program are NHA, DSWD, DOH, TESDA, and DepEd.

(Lovella P. Guarin)

## DA and DBP sign supplemental MOA for the Fertilizer Discount Support Project



SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR - The Department of Agriculture Regional Office No.5 and the Development Bank of the Philippines through their respective representatives signed a supplemental

agreement in connection with the implementation of the Fertilizer Discount Vouchers Support to Rice Farmers under the National Rice Program.

The DA RFO-V was represented by Regional

Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla while the DBP was represented by SAVP Roderick F. Barbado, head, Branch Banking Group-Bicol.

The MOA stipulates that the DA shall provide the funds necessary to support the project implementation to be entrusted/deposited to the DBP through a project fund account to be opened by the former. Payments for merchandise or fertilizers as supported by vouchers in accordance with the prescribed rules and regulations shall be made by the DBP.

It would be recalled that on January 08, 2021 Agriculture Secretary William D. Dar issued a Memorandum to the RFOs for the implementation of fertilizer distribution

activity under Crop Year 2021 to 2022 to allow blended fertilizer distribution scheme in partnership with government financial institutions. The DA and DBP national offices entered into and signed as MOA on June 24, 2021 and June 29, 2021 for the implementation of programs and projects of DA offices and agencies with DBP.

The DA-RFO-V has been allocated with P348,854,000 for this Fertilizer Discount Vouchers Project for Rice Farmers for Wet and Dry Season Cropping 2021 to 2022. Priority provinces are Camarines Sur, Camarines Norte and Catanduanes. However, farmers in CLUSTER areas (provinces included in the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund or RCEF which are Albay, Masbate & Sorsogon) are also eligible. Farmers who are registered under the Registry System

(Please continue to page 10)

# IPs trained on crops and livestock production

SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR—More than 418 members of the Indigenous Peoples in Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur and Sorsogon participated in two agricultural trainings on high-value crops and livestock and poultry raising held recently in their respective barangay Tribal halls as part of the interventions for the implementation of Kabuhayan

with representatives of the Department of Agriculture (DA) Bicol and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) on March this year.

IPs in Tiwi, Albay own a total of 1453.8462 hectares of ancestral domain with an estimated population of 5,000 IPs. However, majority of the area remain idle and unutilized



at Kaunlaran ng Kababayang Katutubo or 4Ks Program.

These trainings were conducted in response to the clamor of the IPs for capability activities during the coordination meeting

because of the IPs inability to develop it for livelihood, farming and economic undertaking.

According to Tiwi Agricultural Officer Jose R. Claudio, these trainings will

equip the IP communities with skills in organic agriculture production, asexual propagation of Pili and Cacao, and provide them with alternative livelihood since their abaca and coconuts are still recovering from the devastation wrought by the typhoons last year and the effects of the pandemic (crisis).

The forthcoming interventions of vegetable seeds, garden tools, organic fertilizers and these trainings will transform their ADs into productive farms.

Vilma Casimiro 34, shared that she felt helpless for her family when Typhoon Rolly destroyed almost all of the abaca in their town. Their only source of income is making abaca twine. With the training on organic vegetable production and grafting of pili and cacao, she can make extra income while waiting for the abaca to mature.

Joseph Ariat 35, related that planting sweet potato and abaca in his small area in Sitio Tabgon, Joroan is not enough to feed his family of three. With his new learning on intercropping, multiple-cropping, and grafting, he is excited to develop his small area into a diversified farm.

Tiwi HVCDP Coordinator and lecturer Maricel Copino urged the IPs to venture into Pili and Cacao Grafting. She said that through this propagation, they will be assured of a good

and prolific, early maturing and fruiting variety and they can sell their grafted trees for P250.00.

In his lecture on Organic Agriculture, Tiwi OA Focal Person Michael Francisco encouraged the IPs to practice farming without the use of chemical pesticides and synthetic fertilizers.

Tiwi has fertile soils so organic agriculture is a practical system for the IPs. Agricultural Programs Coordinating Officer for Albay and Sorsogon Florentino Ubalde said that through this training, the IPs will have a more sustainable system by utilizing their resources as potential food production areas.

The said trainings were also conducted in barangay Osmenia, Jose Panganiban, Camarines Norte; barangays Atulayan, Kilomaon, Minadongjol, Patitinan, Bongalon and Sibaguan in Sagñay, Camarines Sur; barangay Tinawagan, Tigaon, Camarines Sur; barangays San Jose and San Rafael, Bulusan, Sorsogon; barangays Sta. Cruz and San Rafael, Donsol, Sorsogon; and barangays Joroan, Mayong and Misibis, Tiwi, Albay.

4Ks is a special program crafted by the DA to promote and enhanced provision of agricultural and fisheries related livelihood, investments and services to the Indigenous Peoples (IPs) nationwide through provision of needed interventions.

(Jayson M. Gonzales)

# DA gears up to ease food, fish inflation

the highest movement among the food groups for July 2021.

SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR - Following the Philippine Statistics Authority's latest report on Bicol Region's 6.5% overall inflation rate in July, DA Bicol Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla called for a meeting with Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) top officials to come up with doable strategies to fight inflation.

Inflation is the steady rise of prices for goods and services over a period. The PSA report showed that Bicol's overall inflation in July

2021 was 6.5%, the second highest among all regions nationwide next to Cagayan Valley. This is 0.2 ppt higher compared to June 2021 record.

In terms of food inflation, Bicol posted 0.5 ppt increase from 6.1% in June to 6.6% in July. The food items with significant contribution to the food inflation of Bicol Region from May to July 2021 are meat (ave. 24.1%), fish (ave. 12.3 %) and fruit (ave. 6.6%).

Fish registered the highest increase in inflation rate (0.3 ppt) from 14.7% to 14.4%,



(Please continue to page 11)

## GREAT Women 2 beneficiaries...(from page 1)

the 25 exhibitors nationwide who participated in the Department of Agriculture's 1st Women in Agriculture Online Trade Fair held live via a social media platform on August 25 to 26, 2021.

**The activity was designed to encourage agripreneurship among women and support the promotion and marketing of women agripreneurs' products to boost their income and productivity under the new normal.**

Two other Bicolano women entrepreneurs and GREAT Women Project beneficiaries, Rico of T'imlams Foods and La Mode Vines from Calabanga, Camarines Sur and Arellano of Arellano Nature's Farm and Products from Castilla, Sorsogon sold and promoted their products via said virtual and digital event. The DA-Bicol Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD) headed by Adelina A. Losa facilitated their participation in the activity in collaboration with the WEE GREAT Women Project led by DA Gender and Development Regional Focal Person Aloha Gigi I. Bañaria. Each exhibitor was given 20 minutes to discuss her products and advocacies. DA-Bicol AMAD staff assisted them in receiving, recording and responding to queries as well as in the consolidation and recording of actual, booked, and negotiated sales.

During the actual live selling held on August 26, 2021, Quiano generated P21,100-worth of sales for her native bags, Arellano sold P5,505-worth of sales for FDA-certified bottled food products while Rico gained P2,285-worth of sales for her soy-based products. *"Actually sobra po akong nagpapasalamat and very honored po ako na napili ako ng Region V na mag-present sa 1st Online Trade Fair ng Department of Agriculture. Gusto ko lang pong magpasalamat sa Department of Agriculture and GREAT Women Project para sa pagbibigay ng oportunidad para mai-showcase namin ang produkto ng HGQ at saka maipagmalaki ang Region V na meroon po tayong globally competitive products na maiki-cater sa global market,"* Quiano said. She added that the activity will help sustain her business which

engages and supports over 500 rural women, particularly farmers' wives, who serve as weavers.

Likewise, Rico expressed her excitement and gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the said activity. She related that because of the pandemic, her business relies mostly on walk-in buyers and friends who send their orders through her online account and Facebook page. With her participation in the online trade fair, Rico sees an opportunity to share her soy-based products' health benefits and expand its market not only in Bicol but in other provinces

will promote their products despite limited travel and tourism activities because of the pandemic. Arellano Nature's Farm and Products sell bottled products like atchara, coco jam, and turmeric powder as well as handcrafted pill shell novelties made by members of the Rural Improvement Club of Nasipit in Castilla, Sorsogon.

In his message of support to the activity, DA Secretary William D. Dar stressed that digital marketing—bringing women agripreneurs from various regions nationwide in the social media

**success of the 1st Women in Agriculture Online Trade Fair highlighted the advantages and potential of digital marketing under the new normal.** She therefore encouraged more agripreneurs to invest on packaging and licenses with Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD) and license to operate from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

*"Magandang ma-develop ang online platform sa mga agribusiness enterprises because many consumers are active online,"* she said.



nationwide. She also considers it a breakthrough as she conquered her fear of public speaking. *"It was very exciting! I'm so grateful of course sa GREAT Women Project and then sa DA, sa AMAD very grateful ako. Kasi 'yung live selling kadakol na nakakailang, kadakol ma-inform na ongoing and another 'yung information about the benefits of soya informed din sila,"* she added.

Josie Nonacido, who represented Arellano, agreed saying that the online trade fair

stage to show their products, is one of DA's new normal of doing things to address the issue of limited access to market pursuant to the Magna Carta of Women and Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act (AFMA). This law aims to empower Filipino farmers and fisherfolk, particularly the women and link them to profitable markets for their produce.

From August 26 to 30, 2021, the three exhibitors from Bicol have generated a total sales worth P45,345. **Losa said that the**

The 1st Women in Agriculture Online Trade Fair was organized by the DA Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) in partnership with the Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Service DA Central Office and AMAD at the regional field offices and Regional GAD Focal System as part of the Gender-Based Activities for the DA's preparation for the 2021 United Nations Food System Summit (UN FSS).

*with reports from Kae Perlas Bobis, DA AMAD V*

## DA and DBP sign...(from page 8)

for BASIC Sectors (RSBSA) in areas with low fertilizer adoption rate and those rice farmers who received the high quality seeds in the targeted rice areas shall be given preference to allow them to adopt the full high yielding technology practices.

Qualified farmers will be provided with fertilizer voucher

coupons (with QR code) they can use to claim the fertilizer.

This discount voucher shall have the value equivalent to P2,000 per hectare for inbred and P3,000.00/ha for hybrid palay seeds planted. Discount vouchers are for one-time use and may be claimed at any accredited fertilizer merchant in the farmer's preferred area. DA-accredited

fertilizer dealers/distributors/merchant shall claim the cost of subsidy through the DBP. All vouchers shall be processed/issued by the DA-RFO (to farmers through LGUs) based on the list of seed beneficiaries submitted by LGUs.

The MOA signing held at the DA Regional Office on August 27, 2021 was witnessed

by Luz R. Marcelino, DA-RFO V Regional Technical Director for Operations and Jennifer C. Naval, head, DBP Naga Branch. Also present were: Lorenzo Alvina, Regional Rice and Corn Program Coordinator; Evangeline Poloyapoy, Regional Accountant and some staff of the DA and DBP.

*(Emily B. Bordado)*

# More farms get GAP certification

Ensuring food safety is one of the mandates of the Department of Agriculture. Food safety and regulation are also among the 18 strategies of the DA under the One DA Reform Agenda aimed to mitigate the effects of plant and animal diseases by *“building up traceability systems and unifying sanitary and phytosanitary control measures against plant and animal epidemics”*.

In support of this agenda, the Regulatory Division is aggressively implementing the Good Agricultural Practice Certification Program. Assistance is being provided to farmers who opt to comply with and adapt to this set of practices to ensure not only

Recently, the DA Bicol Regulatory Division has approved and endorsed to the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI), the applications of five new farms applying for Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Certification (GAP) following a series of on-site national PhilGAP inspections.

These five farms are all located in Ragay, Camarines Sur: ARNZY Integrated Farm in Bgy. GRS; Umali Dragon Fruit Farm in Bgy. GRS; Agri-Guro Integrated Farm also in Bgy. GRS; Yungib Integrated Farm in Banga Elem. School; and LES Integrated Farm in Bgy. Liboro.

Meanwhile, six farms have successfully renewed their

Norte; Cerilo’s Farm and VKs Farm in Bgy. Libod, Tigaon, Camarines Sur; Mauswag Agribusiness Inc. in Bgy. Curry, Pili, Camarines Sur;

combined teams from the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) and DA 5. From the BPI, the PHILGAP inspectors assigned at the NSQCS were Evelyn C. Bueza and Sonia L. Manas; from the DA Regulatory Division Edith Pelin, who is



and Mikeliz Integrated Farm in Brgy. Bigaas, Calabanga, Camarines Sur.

Rosita Imperial, chief of the Regulatory Division said that **these 11 farms have passed the national inspection, and awaiting the GAP certificate to be issued by the Bureau of Plant Industry. With the approval of their certification, the number of GAP-certified farms in Bicol will climb to 33.**

In Albay, there are five GAP certified farms; two in Camarines Norte; 21 in Camarines Sur; 1 in Sorsogon; and 4 in Masbate.

The PHILGAP on-site validation was conducted in the provinces of Camarines Sur and Camarines Norte on September 7-15, 2021 by the

also a regional and national inspector, served as PHILGAP Secretariat. Pelin was assisted by Helen Jovillano, Gizel Flores, Jay Ar Baldoza, Clarenz Sabio and Joseph Penaverde.

Also with the PhilGAP team was Arlene San Buenaventura of the Research Division. PhilGAP Certification and Nursery Accreditation are open to individual nurseries, farms owned by corporations or associations, government nurseries, and nurseries or vegetable gardens managed by academic and research Institution. Application for GAP certification is free of charge and renewable every two years.

*(Lovella P. Guarin)*



food safety but also the quality of agricultural products while keeping high regard for environmental protection and workers’ health, safety and welfare.

GAP certification. These are NVAC (Naga View Adventist College) in Bgy. Panicason, Naga City; Labo Progressive Multi-purpose Coop in Brgy. Malasugui, Labo, Camarines

## DA gears up to...(from page 9)

BFAR Regional Director Nelson Bien attributed the high inflation in fish to various events such as increased production of capture fish that are being shipped out of the region for canning/processing, making fish less available locally.

Dir. Bien reported that a total of 57,000 MT of fish were outshipped from Bicol from January to July equivalent to P2.28 billion sales. Director Bien added that BFAR region 5 was hailed as third top producer of fish nationwide during the mid-year national assessment of BFAR

in Quezon City. But due to the higher selling price of fish at the National Capital Region, commercial fishers opt to transport all their produce to the NCR causing an undersupply of fish in the Bicol region. Also, due to high price of meat in the market and for health reasons, there is an increased demand for fish.

**To arrest or ease this inflation, Director Tornilla urged BFAR to find ways to flood fish in the local markets. For its part, BFAR Bicol doubles**

**its efforts in rehabilitating typhoon affected provinces through improvement of hatchery and nursery production to ensure supply of quality fingerlings and broodstock. Fisherfolks are provided with fishing gears and equipment for fishing activities to improve catch. Fishing grounds and aquaculture areas are closely monitored in order to prevent fish kills. Regulatory and law enforcement activities are intensified to protect/manage fishing grounds/ ecosystems for sustainable**

**fisheries production.**

Present during the meeting were: Nonie Enolva, spokesperson of BFAR, Joel Benavides, BFAR Planning Officer; Adelina A. Losa, Chief of Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division that is incharge in price monitoring of agricultural commodities; and Emily Bordado, Chief of RAFIS.

BFAR is one of the 25 bureaus and attached agencies of the Department, all operating under One DA Reform Agenda to level up Philippines Agriculture.

*(Lovella P. Guarin)*



## BICOL BUSINESS MONTH 2021

*“Towards...The great reset”*

# ASPIRE

*ASPIRE is a program of the Department of Agriculture which aims to bridge the gap between the farmers, producers and processors, buyers, investors and consumers.*

## DA joins Bicol Business Month

NAGA CITY - Amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, the Department of Agriculture through the Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD) in partnership with the Metro Naga Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MNCCI) have successfully opened the Agribusiness Support for Promotion and Investment in Regional Expositions or ASPIRE at the Robinson’s Place here.

ASPIRE kicked off this year’s Bicol Business Month initiated by the MNCCI aimed to showcase Bicol products, ingenuities and opportunities for business.

33 local producers/women

entrepreneurs being supported by the DA participated in the ASPIRE for this year. They are: M.A. Haya Dried Fish and Flavored Tinapa, Yulaik Food Products, FABCARR Food Products, Mhina’s Processed Foods, Hayahay Food Products, J Farm Spicy Taro Chips, Lucky Pan’s Food Products, Multi Agri Forest and Community Development Cooperative, Siligaya Food Products, DWS Food Products, MCF Agro-Ventures, Koy’s Crab Paste, Omnaturals Food Producers, Sergio’s Chili Products, Marchilino Food Products, AR-AM Food House (La Comida Goa), Orange Country Enterprise, Maria E Food Products, MYA Food Industry, Manoy Andy’s

Ihawan, Benitta and Flora’s Food Products, Aping’s Food Products, Spize, Sare’s Pilinut Candy, Kuya B’s Mushroom House, HGQ Handicrafts, Golden Paraoma, Planza High Value Crops Planters Association, Umagrisenso, Kopi CamSur, May Oglob Agrarian Reform Coop, Binanuaanan Farmers Community Development Association, Inc., Camarines Garden.

On its 5th year of implementation, ASPIRE continues to support many Bicolano entrepreneurs through marketing assistance and investment promotions of our regional commodities such as pili, abaca, gabi and queen pineapple.





# Bishop Francisco Gainza

TRADE FAIR



The Department of Agriculture once again supports the Bishop Francisco Gainza Trade Fair.



The DA 5 - AMAD has sponsored five exhibitors to join this prestigious trade fair. We have the Rural Improvement Club of Sagrada, the Agripreneur Farmers and Producers Association, LGU Tinambac, Sto. Nino Pili Vegetable Growers Association and Golden Parauma.

*“BFGTF: Katuwang sa Pandemia, sa Tabang ni Jose asin Maria”*



# FE CARRANZA:

## A woman of *faith and determination* defies her physical disability and succeeds

by Emily B. Bordado



*Despite her physical disability she has a very positive attitude and disposition in life and had never been a burden to her family or anyone.*

*She drives her own motor trike and manages her own micro-enterprise and made it flourish. And when an undertaking closes she is always resilient and welcomes new opportunities that comes her way. Most importantly, she managed to sustain the needs of her family and struggled to keep it from falling apart despite some years of estrangement from her husband.*

**Fe B. Carranza has been a polio victim since the age of 3 but this did not deter her from leading a normal life and pursuing a purpose-driven, productive fulfilling and contented life.**

She is well-known and highly respected in her barangay Panicuason where she resides in Naga City, having been once the president of the Association of Person with Disability.

At one time, she was also recognized and awarded as Outstanding Micro-entrepreneur by the City Government and also cited as the Happiest Nagueña by the Naga City Council on Women.

In 2015, she was among those conferred the Mayoral Award

of Naga in recognition of her inspiring life story of hope.

In 2018, she was 2nd runner up in the Department of Agriculture's Search for Agri Achievers or Gawad Saka.

In 2004, she started to engage in soya bean processing after some students came to their barangay for a research study. One of the students taught her how to make tofu or tokwa.



With the help of the Grow Negosyo Program of the City Government of Naga, Fe mastered the skill of processing tokwa but also other soya based products like soya milk, white cheese, chilled taho and soya bread.

She was also linked to potential buyers. She clinched a contract with the Naga City Local School Board to supply 29 schools within the city and another contract with

## Feature

the National Nutrition Council to supply 27 barangay Day Care centers also within Naga.

Other government agencies like the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the Philippine Commission on Women through its GREAT WOMEN Project and later the DA also provided technical, logistics and other assistance to her.

She registered her enterprise under the name



**BANANA CHIPS**



**CASSAVA CHIPS**



**TOASTED GARLIC BREAD**

**and chips from bananas (which she harvests from her farm), toasted garlic bread and other snack and pasalubong items.** She sells them at her store inside the Naga City Hall compound.

She stills processes soya milk and tokwa at a lesser volume especially this time that schools and Day Care centers are still closed but hopes to go full

featured in local and national publications. **She is now being invited as resource person to share her experiences and best practices as a PWD and a woman entrepreneur.**

Women from other provinces and regions would often visit her and her workplace to observe and listen to her narratives as recommended by the NCW.

Most importantly, she is now reunited with her husband who has returned home and is helping her in her business together with her children. Fe had a sense of fulfilment that all her four children have finished a college degree and are now practicing their professions –an opportunity she and her husband did not have.

***Her perseverance, indefatigable spirit,***

FABCARR which is the monogram of her name.

**In 2016, Fe has to slow down on her soya processing business because she was incurring losses especially as most soya products have short shelf life. Also she was beginning to pay for the equipment loaned to her by DOST. So she thought of processing and value adding of less perishable food.**

**She began processing cassava and taro chips, cakes**

operation again once face-to-face classes resume.

**Despite the pandemic she is coping well and taking things in stride.**

She recently received from the DA through the GREAT WOMEN Project a four burner electric stove with stand which she needs for her food business.

She had already purchased her own vehicle and a hectare of rice land. Her story has already been

***positive disposition and unwavering faith in the Lord (she is an active member of the Adventist church) are her strongest assets which made her overcome the otherwise debilitating effects of her physical disability.*** She has defied her physical impairment and the odds that came her way and emerged victorious and gratified not only financially but socially, emotionally and spiritually.

# From farmers to Agripreneurs: CamSur farmers use modern tech to produce vegetables year round

by Lovella P. Guarin

LIBMANAN, CAMARINES SUR – It is true that opportunity knocks but once, says a famous proverb. Thus, when numerous opportunities knocked on them during the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Robert Buayaban, President of the Agripreneur Farmers Producers Association, Inc. (AFPPI), did not hesitate to grab and seize them. Through farm consolidation and with the unified strong support from his over 300-member vegetable growers from the 11 towns of Camarines Sur, they were able to sustain their production and respond to the demands of institutional buyers.

At 35 years old, Buayaban has adeptly maneuvered the 5-year old farmers' association to greater heights. After their organization in 2016, the AFPPI started capacitating their members through attendance to trainings conducted by the DA regional office and the LGU of Libmanan with Municipal Agriculturist Francis Brazal and Irma Intia, AEW incharge in HVCDP. *"Whatever knowledge we have acquired, we practice them at our learning site. Nagdevisite kami ng sarili naming planting calendar para maiwasan ang over supply at yun kawalan ng supply,"* said Buayaban.

They also use plastic mulch provided by the High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP) to suppress weeds and conserve water. This technology involves growing crops through holes lined along the plastic sheeting that covered the elevated plots. Elevated plots also prevent crop damage from flooding.

They seek new technologies which could improve their production. At present, more than 20 hectares of their aggregate 300 hectares plantation are equipped with drip irrigation and fertigation technologies. *"Nag focus talaga kami sa farm lay outing, kaya nakukuha na namin yun tamang oras sa pagharvest ng produkto, tamang suklat at kalidad ng produkto na tiyak na pasado sa institutional buyer."*

One member of the AFPPI is Albert Del Rosario. He used to work as a technician in a private agricultural

inputs manufacturer but he saw the huge potential in farming. He now grows sweet corn, eggplant, squash, cucumber and watermelon in a 14-hectare area plantation in Mambaleta, Libmanan. His farm is equipped with drip irrigation and fertigation technology. He is able to fertilize a hectare area in just two hours with just one laborer. **In one day, they can fertilize three-hectare plantation using the fertigation technology. "Kung walang drip irrigation at fertigation ay kailangan ng 10 tao**

chain, the BIGGS Incorporated and the Lion Commercial Corporation (LCC).

Buayaban renewed their contract with the LCC this year 2021 to deliver the LCC's weekly requirement of 3 tons of calamansi, 1.5 tons tomatoes, 3 tons watermelon, 1,500 pieces sweet corn, eggplant and squash depending on the supply and demand. LCC has over 80 stores in 50 towns and cities in Bicol. Buayaban is also a member of the Tienda Farmers and Fisherfolk Association nationwide representing the Agripreneurs.

The Agribusiness Marketing Assistance Service (AMAS) in DA Quezon City and the Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD) at the DA regional office were instrumental in the continuous market linkage being enjoyed



*upang mag fertilize ng isang ektarya." "Ang mga importanteng requirement for high quality produce ay water supply and nutrient or fertilizer. Pag limitado sa tubig, limitado din ang harvest,"* Del Rosario said.

Buayaban and Del Rosario encourage their farmer members to adopt the drip irrigation technology to be able to plant even off season crops year round to maintain sufficient volume of produce that their buyers require.

Their existing market, which have started in March 2020 during the onset of COVID-19 pandemic is the Kadiwa ni Ani at Kita sa DA Central Office in Quezon City. They also maintain a Kadiwa ni Ani at Kita outlet and trading posts in Sipocot and Libmanan, Camarines Sur.

Since 2019, they have been supplying vegetables to a local food

now by the Agripreneur. *"Nakilala namin ang kapwa namin vegetable producers at iba pang farmers associations in the entire Luzon Visayas at Mindanao. Tumatawag sila sa amin kung wala silang produkto, gayundin kami. Kung anong meron sa kanila na wala sa amin ay binibili din namin. Nagpapalitan kami ng produkto,"* enthused Buayaban. *"Pangarap po namin na maging supplier ng gulay hindi lang sa buong Bicol Region kundi pati sa buong Pilipinas,"* Buayaban shared his long term vision.

While other sectors of the economy suffered a slump during the pandemic, the Agripreneur has received many opportunities during the pandemic. In 2020, the AMAD granted them P2M worth Kadiwa ni Ani at Kita grant which they used to buy a delivery truck with lifter to transport agri-commodities to ensure sustainability and availability

of supply in and outside the region.

Adelina A. Losa, Chief of the AMAD said that in 2020, the Agripreneur has sold or transported a total of 144 MT of various lowland vegetables to Kadiwa outlets in Metro Manila particularly in Cainta, Rizal and Quezon City amounting to P5M, which helped maintain food security in Metro Manila amid the pandemic.

Losa added that as of July 15, 2021, DA 5 through the AMAD has facilitated the delivery to Metro Manila of various agri commodities from Bicolano farmer entrepreneurs, namely: 181 Metric Tons (MT) of vegetables; 2,192 MT of pineapple, 141 MT of corn, 13,446 MT of palay, and 1,665 MT of rice. Out of these, 144.60 MT of vegetables came from the Agripreneurs.

*"We saw the importance of clustering and being an organized group. Noong hindi pa sila miyembro, hirap silang magbenta ng kanilang produkto dahil hindi nga makalabas. Pero ngayong member na sila sa Agripreneur, hindi na nila kailangang lumabas para maghanap ng buyer dahil ang asosasyon mismo ang pumupunta sa farm nila para mag pick up ng produkto at madala sa mga institutional buyers namin,"* Buayabansaid. *"Nagkaroon din po ng kompyansa (confidence) ang maraming magsasaka sa aming lugar na magbalik sa pagtatanim dahil sa nakita nilang may siguradong buyer na ang kanilang produkto pagdating ng anihan,"* he added.

*"Hindi sila masyadong naghihirap ngayon dahil kami ang nagbebenta ng produkto nila. Kumikita na sila nang malaki. Buayaban thanked all the agencies that helped the Agripreneur. Nagpapasalamat po kami sa DA, sa AMAD, HVCDP, sa ATI, DTI, at sa OMA senso sa Kabuhayan-project of Office of the Vice President, and Metro Naga Chambers of Commerce*

and Industry (MNCI)" he quipped.

From the then Bottom Up Budgeting, the Agripreneur received a Cacao Processing facility building which they are now using to

and free technical assistance.

The Agripreneur formulate its own foliar fertilizer which is being distributed to the members. The most important



process surplus produce.

The HVCDP also provided them with a P1.5M worth hauling truck which they use in buying vegetables from their members and transporting produce to Manila. The association also received P3.1 M worth of vegetable seeds and planting materials, fertilizers, rainshelter, PISOS, spring development and farm tools and equipment such as power tiller and multi-commodity solar tunnel dryer.

The members equally benefit from these farm equipment and share a percentage of their produce for maintenance. Members also enjoy the use of farm equipment, free supply of vegetable seeds, fertilizer

benefit of clustering is farmer-members now have ready buyers for their produce.

Agriculture Secretary William D. Dar pushes the four key strategies to transform the Philippine Agriculture under the One DA reform, namely: Farm Consolidation, Modernization, Industrialization, and Professionalization. *"To achieve this, they (farmers) must be transformed from mere producers of raw materials to owners of agribusiness, or agripreneurs, with value added to their products and marketing in order to maximize their profits."*

In response to Farm and Fisheries Clustering and Consolidation (F2C2) Program, the HVCDP led by Dr. Mary Grace DP. Rodriguez, Chief of Field Operations Division organized the CLLS Federation of High Value Crops Growers, Inc. wherein Buayaban is the President. The said federation is composed of high value crops farmers associations from Camarines Sur towns namely: Cabusao, Libmanan, Lupi and Sipocot.

Photos are from facebook page of AFPAL





# First PRDP-funded AA slaughterhouse in Bicol is underway

RAGAY, CAMARINES SUR – For many years, swine farmers, meat vendors and processors in this municipality make do with their existing slaughterhouse, which lacks equipment and non-compliant to the National Meat Inspection Services’ (NMIS) standards.

“Yung ginagamit naming slaughterhouse kumbaga temporary lang talaga sya, hindi sya pasado sa standards ng NMIS tapos yung mga equipment doon. Kumbaga, yung mga pagkakatay ng mga binibenta sa palengke, hindi ganoon kalinis--yung gusto namin na malinis talaga, tapos kalat-kalat palibhasa hindi pa sya accredited na slaughterhouse, nagkakatay pa rin kung saan-saan,” Teresita P. Bravo, Municipal Agriculturist and concurrently the Municipal Project Management and Implementation Unit (MPMIU) Head of Ragay, said.

This situation will soon change as the municipality starts the procurement process for its AA slaughterhouse located in Brgy. Agrupacion.

The project to be funded by the Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) infrastructure development (I-BUILD) component comes with civil works including a 160 square meter slaughterhouse building and 60 square meter holding pen. The facility has an operational capacity of 11 to 58 heads per day for hogs and 1 to 8 heads per day for cattle, and is complete with hog slaughtering equipment, large animal slaughtering equipment, and auxiliary equipment.

During the Pre-bid Conference for the construction of AA slaughterhouse in Ragay, Camarines Sur held on July 21, 2021, the PRDP Project Support Office (PSO) South Luzon and PRDP-Bicol Procurement Unit discussed the eligibility and technical documents, bid opening checklist, general

and special conditions of the contract as well as the bill of quantities for the P32.99 million-worth slaughterhouse project. Four prospective bidders participated in the blended meeting. Deadline of submission of bids is on August 5, 2021 at 10 a.m. in the municipal hall. According to Bravo, the slaughterhouse project will promote food safety and boost the municipality’s swine industry.

“Malaking tulong sa LGU namin na magkaroon kami ng accredited na slaughterhouse, yung fully equipped, tapos nasu-supervise din ng government. Mahalaga yun kasi unang-una importante sa

slaughterhouse, puwedeng pupunta din dito sa amin, magkakaroon ng employment, mas madadagdagan ang income ng mga tao,” she said.

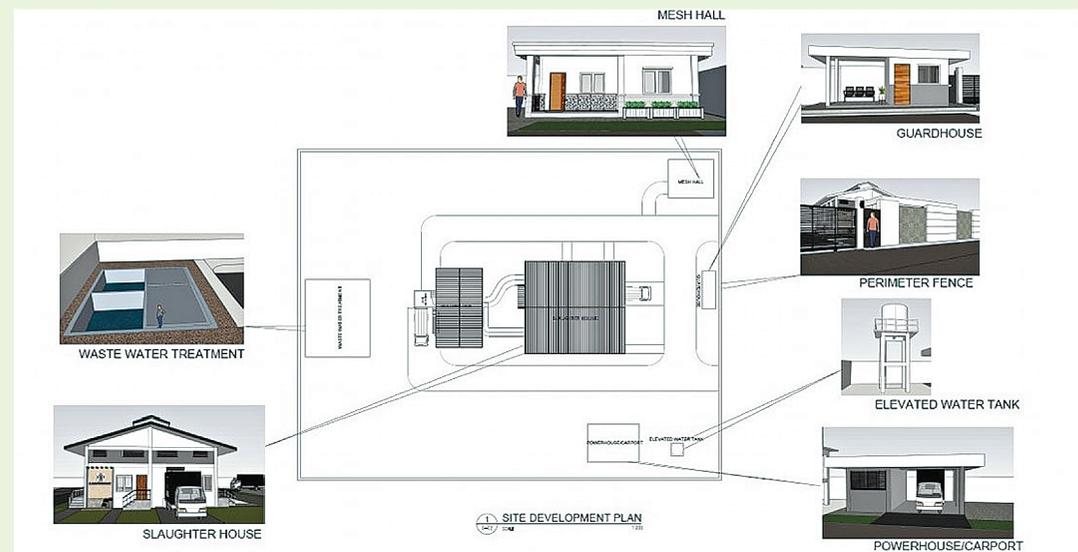
She furthered that the I-BUILD subproject will encourage farmers to

yung mga tao,” she added. PRDP and NMIS eye slaughterhouse subprojects as one of the solutions to the 92.10 percent insanitary meat hygiene situation in Bicol.

According to NMIS-Bicol OIC-Regional Director Dr.



ARCHITECTS PERSPECTIVE



health ng mga tao. Kung may slaughterhouse na kami na secure, puwede naming i-impose yung ordinansa na lahat doon kakatayin sa slaughterhouse. Tapos siyempre pag marami nang magkakatay doon, yung presyo ng baboy gaganda din, tapos yung ibang munisipyong katabi namin na wala pa silang

engage in hog raising and agri-entrepreneurs to invest in meat processing. “Kasi parang yung mga processed meat dito sa amin kung saan-saan pa nanggagaling pero kung may maganda na kaming slaughterhouse, okay na yung supply ng karne namin, puwedeng magkaroon ng ibang business

Alex Templonuevo, of the 114 municipalities and cities in the region, only 59 have locally registered meat establishments (LRME) and five have accredited AA slaughterhouses.

(Annielyn L. Baleza)

With reports from Engr. Jesti C. Bergantin, PRDP-Bicol Procurement Unit and Engr. Joel A. Catimbang, PRDP-Bicol I-BUILD

# PROJECTS



## Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD)

### Sorsogon farmers completed course in *Farmers Field School* under SAAD

DONSOL, SORSOGON—Thirty-two farmer beneficiaries of the Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) completed a season-long Farmers' Field School (FFS) on Vegetable Production Technology on August 20, 2021. All the graduates are members of the Gimagaan Indigenous Peoples' Farmers' Association. The FFS was one

making or preparation of FPJ (Fermented Plant Juice) and FFJ (Fermented Fruit Juice). Municipal High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP) Coordinator Sharmie Guerrero served as resource person assisted by SAAD Area of Coordinator of Donsol, Mark Joven Barja.

**Farmers Field School is a**

eggplant, which were actually the excess after the harvests were divided among themselves for their families' consumption.

The graduation ceremonies held at Bgy. Gimagaan, Donsol, Sorsogon was graced by Dr. Mary Grace Rodriguez, SAAD Bicol Action Officer and Chief of the Field Operations Division. "Magtatapos na

sprayer, pruning shear and brush cutter. Assorted planting materials composed of 100 pcs. Calamansi seedlings, 180 taro cuttings, 2 bags peanut, 2 bags ginger and 10 kilos assorted vegetables seeds were also turned over to the beneficiaries.

Allan L. Magdamit, president of the Gimagaan Indigenous Farmers' Association was grateful for the opportunity given his tribe. "Sobra kaming natulungan ng SAAD sa pamamagitan ng FFS na ito at naibigay din sa amin lahat ng pangangailangan namin sa pagtanim. Sa ngayon po ay marami sa barangay namin ay nahihikayat nang magtanim. Makakasa po ang SAAD na hindi masasayang ang mga itinulong ninyo sa aming barangay lalo na sa aming mga Indigenous Peoples, Allan enthused."

Also present during the FFS graduation were Donsol Municipal Agriculturist Engr. Lindez Espada; Bgy. Captain Benjamine M. Arellano; APCO Officer Florentino Ubalde Jr.; and Engr. Agnes Espinola, OIC Superintendent of Regional Dairy Production and Tech. Center.

Among the criteria in selecting the beneficiaries of SAAD is that they have never received any interventions from DA regular program and from DA attached agencies in the past three years. The SAAD Program is therefore conducting FFS among its beneficiaries to equip them with the skills required to ensure improved productivity in planting various crops.

For 2021, SAAD targets to conduct three FFS on vegetable production for the beneficiaries in each of the three provinces of Sorsogon, Catanduanes and Masbate.

(Lovella P. Guarin)

with reports and photos from Mary Rose Detera, SAAD RPMSO and PPMSO



of the interventions under the Social Preparation component of SAAD in collaboration with the NCIP, to ensure readiness and empowerment of its beneficiaries.

A combination of lecture and hands-on learning, the FFS ran for 12 weeks starting on May 28, 2021. The beneficiaries gathered together every Friday from 6:00 AM until 3:00 PM to learn the basics of vegetable farming from seedling management, soil preparation (plowing, tilling), seedbed preparation, and AESA or Agro-Ecosystem Analysis including identifying of beneficial insects and pest insects. The FFS also included special topics selected by the farmers like organic concoction

**participatory method where the participants can exchange knowledge and experiences in an environment conducive to learning.** The FFS encouraged learning-by-doing and the field or farm served as the space for hands-on group learning. Farmers learned and improved their skills through observing, analysing and trying out their learnings in their own fields, contributing to improved production and livelihoods (fao.org).

For the hands on part of the FFS, the association utilized a half hectare vacant lot as training site cum community vegetable garden where they planted eggplant, pepper, ampalaya, and cucumber.

They were very happy when they sold 17 kilos of

*kayo ngayon, pero hindi pa po ito tapos. Dito pa lang tayo magsisimula. Although may mga interventions na na-provide before sa inyo, we will still provide the farm inputs, farm tools and planting materials para masimulan nyo na after graduation yun pwede nyong gawin para i-apply ang natutuhan nyo sa FFS,"* Dr. Rodriguez quipped.

During the graduation, Dr. Rodriguez distributed a total of P230,000.00 worth of interventions from the HVCDP, namely: 60 bags complete fertilizer, 15 bags urea, 2 muriate of potash; 30 pieces each of bolo, rake, trowel, hand sprayer, and crates; 20 pcs plastic drum, 20 sets garden tools, 15 garden twines, 10 knapsack



# YOUNG FARMERS CHALLENGE KABATAANG AGRIBIZ COMPETITIVE GRANT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

## List of Provincial Winners

### Search for Outstanding Kabataang Agribiz Business Model

NAME OF THE BUSINESS MODEL	NAME OF PROPONENT(S)
<b>Province of Albay</b>	
Ulang-Tilapia Culture	Sherwin C. Caña
Upgraded Native Chicken and Natural Egg Production	Sammy Q. Obedece
60 sqm Bamboo Greenhouse Structure with NFT Hydroponics System	Zyra N. Arnesto Aiza M. Nieva Lyssa Jean N. Revale
Batibot Ecowarriors: Vermicomposting and Biowaste Management using African Night Crawlers and Black Soldier Fly	Shienalyn Joy V. Belen Trecia Mae V. Belen Walter N. Tolosa
NVM Pig Farming Agribusiness	Noime G. Dagta
Green Feed Farming	Jhon Carlo D. Dagta
Mayon Dried Fruits	Shiela S. Marquez Myre Christine S. Rivera Erika Mae B. Bona
Small Scale Zero waste Integrated Farm	Rommel B. Acosta
Bee on the go (Black J)	Joshua M. Ros
<b>Province of Camarines Sur</b>	
Microgenesis: Scalable Microgreens small Enterprise in Urban Setting	Harry King C. Avenido
Right Thorn: Cactus and Succulent Farming and Ornamental Plant Production	Marlon S. Oli
Marlou Goat Farm	Bryan Eric B. Olitoquit
Chili Production and Processing	Erica B. Navelino
One-Stop-Shop Organic Vegetable Garden	James A. Lacbayo
Gem Banana Farm : Saging na Señorita Production	Gemmalyn S. Luceña
Mashed Taro (Colocasia esculenta) Chips	Jobelle Q. Pempollo
Hungry Bees: An Apiculture and Apitourism in CamSur	Schemie M. Baylon Ezra M. Baylon
Automated Vertical Recirculated Aquaculture System	Mark Daniel B. Belarmino
Broiler Production using Copra Bran Feeds and Oriental Herbal Nutrient (OHN) as Extract	Jinky E. Bisenio
Agriculture 4.0: Combination of Relay Cropping, Multi-cropping and Permaculture	John Rafael D. Campita
Breeder Free Range Chicken Egg Production: Improved Rice Hull Incubator	Norman B. Barandon
Vegetable Cultivation and Fish Farming	Christian Paul R. Polon
Maximizing Use of Pili kernel Oil for food and non-food uses	Maria Angelika P. Lomibao

NAME OF THE BUSINESS MODEL	NAME OF PROPONENT(S)
<b>Province of Camarines Norte</b>	
Bahay Teknik: A Garden to Kitchen Social Enterprise	Sandino M. Guinto
Mokusaku (Wood Vinegar) Production as Natural Pesticide Using Coconut Husks	Reilan Leeboy G. Quibrall
J&M Free Range Chicken	Monalisa G. Balon
Daddy G's Hydroponics Farm	Jerick R. Amaranto
Hiraya Integrated Farm	John Ryan S. Villaluz
Rommel Fruits and Vegetable Farm	Ananias R. Perjes, Jr.
Lettuce Production in Camarines Norte	Jeric C. Nape Jay C. Nape
Ace Mushroom Production in Camarines Norte	Jesus Mark C. Nape Precious B. Nape
<b>Province of Catanduanes</b>	
Cristina's Strawberry Farm	Cristina L. Torreda
Little Acre Farm	Hannah Cyrene O. Tablizo
Cassava Chips Production Production Business	Mark Andrew B. Cano
Mushroom Production, Processing and Spawn making Business	Rodel O. Valenzuela
IDOFS: Vermi, Babuyan and Concoctions Production	Czarina Mae J. Tesorero
<b>Province of Masbate</b>	
Broiler Production	Ryan H. Belarmino
Good Quality and Affordable Rice in Mandaon	Robert M. Alcovendas
Duck Raising/ Production	Ma. Isobelle T. Decolongon
Jingky's Dried Dilis	Jingky T. Ariscon
Rice-Based Production and Marketing Project	Annabelee F. Bacar
<b>Province of Sorsogon</b>	
Hydroponics Lettuce Production In Sorsogon	Brian Gabriel J. Buenaobra Argem Marie L. Red Joel John S. Cariño
Parauma: Agri-Tourism-Integrated Natural Farming	Jayryl D. Enano Jomar A. Fortes James F. Fresnido
Lai Natural Healthy Aromatic Rice Cereal Coffee and Rice Ice Cream Processing	Ryan E. Del Prado
Don Pedro's Farmland : Cassava Production and Processing	Pedro T. Agapan Jr.
Free Range Chicken Production	Ana May D. Miranda Karen Funelas





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