



Bicol palay and corn production attain 4.01% and 3.81% growth in 2021

by Lovella P. Guarin

The Bicol Region registered 4.01% growth in palay at 1,346,952.44 metric tons and 3.81% growth in corn production at 292,748.28 metric tons in 2021, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

Palay output increased by 91,960 metric tons which is 4.01% higher than the 1,294,991.12 metric tons output in 2020, while corn production also increased by 3.81% from 282,000.57 metric tons in 2020, despite the still raging covid-19 pandemic, strict border controls and difficulties in logistics in 2021.

The province of Camarines Norte registered the highest increase (7.17%) at 116,292.63 metric tons in 2021; Camarines Sur registered 5.04% increase at 683,203 metric tons; Sorsogon with 3.97% increase at 150,793.40 metric tons; Albay also increased by 3.95% in 2021 at 224,533 metric tons; Masbate recorded a 0.50% increase at 148,754 metric tons. Meanwhile, Catanduanes contracted by -13.48% at 23,376 metric tons. On the national scene, the 2021 palay harvest was an all-time high at 19.96 million metric tons, which is 3.45% higher than the 2020 output of 19.29 million metric tons says Agriculture Secretary William Dar.

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Groundbreaking held for P176.97M-worth DA PRDP-funded FMR in Viga, Catanduanes

by Annielyn L. Baleza

VIGA, CATANDUANES— Benito Tumaquip, resident of Brgy. Ogbong, an abaca farmer, used to pay P65 fare via habal-habal (motorcycle) to reach his three-hectare farm in Brgy. Mabini. During rainy season,

he could hardly tend to his farm because of the unpaved road.

"Pag panahon na tag-uran talagang nasasakitan kami, nagpaparabaklay ta di nakaagi maski bisikleta ta

mahalnas," Tumaquip said.

Tumaquip is among the beneficiaries who witnessed the groundbreaking of the 5.50-kilometer Concreting

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DA Bicol allocates more than P5.5M worth of interventions for IPs in Sorsogon and Cam. Sur this 2022

by Jayson M. Gonzales

SAN AGUSTIN, Pili, Camarines Sur-At 66, Agta Tabangnon farmer Salvador Hamer walked barefoot traversing a distance of four kilometers from the slopes of Mt. Isarog to the covered court of Barangay Del Rosario, Ocampo, Camarines Sur to participate in the Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) activity of the Department of Agriculture-Bicol and National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) on January 20, 2022. Hamer is one of the 5,583 IPs of Camarines Sur and Sorsogon who will now



photo by: 4k Program Staff

receive interventions from the DA Bicol through its Kabuhayan at Kaunlaran ng (Please turn to page 8)

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EDITORIAL

A probe into the surging fertilizer prices

Surge in fertilizer and fuel prices is a global problem and is causing stress and alarm among farmers especially the small farmers and some are even considering to take a respite in planting crops especially palay as it is input intensive. Some rice farmers are mulling to just plant enough for their family consumption. If this happens, then food security and sufficiency will be threatened.

According to the World Bank data blog, fertilizer prices have risen nearly 30% since the start of 2022, after last year's 80% surge. **Soaring prices of fertilizer are caused by a lot of factors globally such as rising input costs, supply disruptions brought about by sanctions and export restrictions.** The situation is exacerbated by the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine. Record-high prices of natural gas especially in Europe also led to widespread production cutbacks in ammonia, an important input in nitrogen-based fertilizer. On the other hand, rising process of coal in China, the major feedstock for ammonia production there, forced factories to cut production resulting to a spike in the price of ammonia, sulfur and phosphate fertilizer.

In the local scene, another factor that contributes to the current exorbitant prices of fertilizers is the removal of price ceilings or caps. In an article by Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Joeson published in the Business World, based on her interview with Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority (FPA) officials, it was learned that our government has stopped imposing import quotas for fertilizer and reduced the corresponding duties and tariffs on fertilizer imports with the implementation of the Trade Liberalization Act and the issuance of an FPA memorandum circular in 1986 where the FPA relinquished its control over the procurement of fertilizers particularly the determination of import requirements, the allocation of import volumes and the management of tenders for fertilizer imports. In effect, FPA lost its power to set prices and impose price ceilings. This could have been the reason why fertilizer scams proliferated before. **The current high prices of fertilizer reflects the market power of importers.**

We import most of our fertilizers from China. But China's inspection and

quarantine policy effectively limit or cut fertilizer export to our country by making the application process stringent and complex. We are thus at the mercy of the Chinese fertilizer exporters. With the recent global economic impact of the COVID-19, China and other advanced countries are limiting their export supplies to other countries for their own food security.

The FPA thus, recommends a 25% increase in fertilizer subsidy to encourage farmers to continue production. Farmers associations and cooperatives must be subsidized and provided with loans at zero interest to increase local fertilizer supply, promote market competition to stabilize local price.

The DA for its part, is set to launch and aggressively promote balanced fertilization program which recommends the combination of organic and inorganic fertilizer to reduce production costs while ensuring yield. This involves application of plant or organic nutrients in optimum ratio and adequate amounts.

Dubbed as Abonong Swak, this balanced fertilization strategy spearheaded by the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) in partnership with the Bureau of Soils and Water Management, Agricultural Training Institute offers different recommended combinations estimated to generate a saving of about P2,000 to P4,000.

The current situation is a challenge to farmers to polish off their crop management skills and hone their resourcefulness to explore locally available alternative nutrients to offset the high cost of fertilizers. Now more than ever, our farmers should value the importance of soil testing so they need not spend for unnecessary nutrients already available in their farms. It is also a test of their resilience, industry and perseverance. One reason most farmers have preferred synthetic fertilizers over organic is because they find the latter laborious and the effect is not immediate. But for now, they have to exert extra effort and be a little patient to wait for slow but sustainable and cost efficient benefits of balanced fertilization.

DA Bicol sends Typhoon Odette relief assistance to Regions 7 and 8



DA Bicol Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla sends off the Typhoon Odette Relief Assistance Operation to DA employees of Regions 7 and 8 consisting of five truckloads of various assistance from the DA employees and management of the DA RFO 5.

As part of DA Bicol's assistance to farmers who were recently devastated by Super Typhoon Odette in Eastern Visayas (Region VIII), a total of 450 bags of certified rice seeds (40 kg) were delivered directly to the municipality of Oras, Eastern Samar on January 7, 2022.

Alex Atian, technical staff of DA RFO 5 Rice Program personally turned over the certified seeds to Municipal Agriculturist Salvador Dalosa and Mayor Vivian Alvarez. Also present during the turn over were APCO Grace Palconit and Dax Gabriel

of 2021 which were not used as Bicol was spared from strong typhoons last year.

Meanwhile, DA Bicol Employees Association President Lovella P. Guarin turned over various assistance such as 85 bags (50 kg) milled rice, 300 laminated sacks, 500 pcs canned sardines from BFAR 5, noodles, mineral water and solar lights to DA RFO 8 Regional Executive Director Angel Enriquez.

Said assistance was directly delivered to Abuyog (Please continue to page 7)



REKOMENDASYON SA PAG-AABONO

SANGGUNIAN:
Department of Agriculture • BSWM • ATI • PhilRice • RFOs

TIMING NG PAGLALAGAY NG PATABA BASE SA PAGGULANG NA ITATANIM NA BARAYTI NG PALAY				TARGET NA ANI		
TIMING	PAGGULANG			COMBO 1 3-4 tons	COMBO 2 5-6 tons	COMBO 3 7-8 tons
	100-110 araw	111-120 araw	121-130 araw			
30 araw bago maglipat-tanim	Dayami: Ikalat sa palayan o pabulukin gamit ang bulati			3-4 tons dayami	5-6 tons dayami	7-8 tons dayami
14 araw bago maglipat-tanim	Organic: chicken manure, commercial organic fertilizer, o vermicompost			10 bags	10 bags	10 bags
Seeding (Punlaan) 7-10 DAS	not applicable	not applicable	not applicable	not applicable	ihalo sa punlaan ang 1-2 kg ZnSO4	
Seeding (Punlaan) 10-14 DAS	not applicable	not applicable	not applicable	2-4 kilo ng 14-14-14		
1st Application (Early Growth)	0-10 DAT/10-14 DAS	0-14 DAT/10-14 DAS	0-14 DAT/10-14 DAS	1 bag 14-14-14	2 bags ng 14-14-14 o 16-20-0	4 bags ng 14-14-14
2nd Application (Active Tillering)	18-22 DAT/24-28 DAS	22-26 DAT/32-36 DAS	26-31 DAT/36-40 DAS	not applicable	1 bag ng Urea	2 bags ng Urea
3rd Application	28-32 DAT	32-36 DAT	36-40 DAT	1 bag ng Urea	1 bag ng Urea	2 bags ng Urea
Panicle Initiation	38-42 DAS	48-52 DAS	58-62 DAS	0.5 bag ng 0-0-60	0.5 bag ng 0-0-60	1 bag ng 0-0-60

DAS- Days after sowing o araw pagkasabog-tanim o pagkapunla
DAT- Days after transplanting o araw pagkalipat-tanim
*Rekomendasyon kung walang analysis ng kulang na sustansiya sa lupa



Nine Bicol towns released from red or infected zone and declared ASF free

Nine municipalities in Bicol namely: Canaman and Iriga City in Camarines Sur and Bulan and Sta. Magdalena in Sorsogon; Daraga, Malilipot, Ligao City, Malinao and Pio Duran in Albay province have been released from quarantine and lifted from infected or red zone to pink zone or buffer zone as of March 31, 2022. The release from quarantine was based on the following criteria: 40 days with no active outbreak in both backyard and commercial farms; negative laboratory test result on the blood samples of the sentinel pigs deployed in the area for 40 days; enactment an ordinance dealing with the prevention and control of ASF at the Provincial and City/Municipal levels as stipulated in the Guidelines on the Recovery and Declaration of Freedom from ASF for Local Government Units (AO No.30) issued by DA Secretary William D. Dar.

As a prerequisite to the declaration of ASF free status and a pre-condition to repopulation in areas previously affected by the African Swine Fever sentinel pigs have to be deployed and be subjected for diagnostic surveillance and negative disease monitoring for 40 days. The DA Bicol

to date has distributed 1,129 sentinel pigs to 1,127 farmers in 41 municipalities and 211 barangays in the four provinces of Bicol. In Camarines Sur, a total of 657 sentinel piglets have been distributed to 19 municipalities previously affected by the ASF.

In Albay province, 170 sentinel piglets were distributed to 9 municipalities and these municipalities are done with the sentinel pig but the remaining 7 municipalities which have not been released from quarantine have yet to comply with some of the documentary requirements. Two hundred twenty eight sentinel pigs have also been distributed to the 6 affected municipalities in Camarines Norte but some mortalities have been reported. Investigation is being conducted to determine the cause of the mortality as some of the sentinel pigs were mixed with newly dispersed hogs from the LGU under its own program. The provinces of Catanduanes, Masbate and Sorsogon have yet to receive the sentinel pigs. But what is noteworthy is that 4 municipalities of Sorsogon namely: Bulan, Gubat, Sta. Magdalena and Barcelona in an effort to speed up the process opted to not wait for sentinel pigs to be provided by but procured their own sentinel

pigs with the guidance of the DA as to the standards and protocol for selecting the pig to be used for sentinel pig. Thus, the municipality of Bulan was one of the two municipalities which earned the distinction of being the first to be declared as ASF free in Bicol.

With the state of calamity throughout the country still enforced due to ASF, the LGUs and government agencies are allowed wide latitude to support prevention and control efforts on ASF, particularly in terms of mobilizing resources to undertake urgent, critical and appropriate measures to curtail further spread of ASF.

Based on AO No. 30 there are three levels of ASF-free declaration. At the city/municipal level the mayor can declare an ASF free status if it has complied with and submitted all the requirements for zone upgrading. It is required that all previously infected barangays within the municipality have been free from ASF. The Provincial Veterinarian shall check the completeness of the documents and endorse and submit it to the DA Regional Office which shall validate the documents. The DA Regional Executive Director shall provide certification to the LGU that it

is qualified to upgrade. Only then can the mayor declare the upgrading of zone color. At the provincial level, the DA Regional Executive Director has the authority to declare ASF free status if all the requirements have been complied with as validated by the DA-RFO and all previously infected cities/municipalities under the jurisdiction of the province have been FREE from ASF. At the national level, the DA Secretary has the authority to declare ASF free status if all previously infected provinces in the region have been free from ASF as validated by the Bureau of Animal Industry. As the hog industry move to recover from the adverse effects of the ASF, the DA through BAI rolled out the Integrated National Swine Production Initiatives for Recovery and Expansion (INSPIRE), a community-based swine production, repopulation and expansion through clustering and consolidation program. This is being complemented by the Bantay ASF sa Barangay or BABay ASF program aimed to institute biosecurity and disease control measures with strong collaboration with the DA, its relevant agencies and concerned agencies, Local Government Units and stakeholders. (Emily B. Bordado)

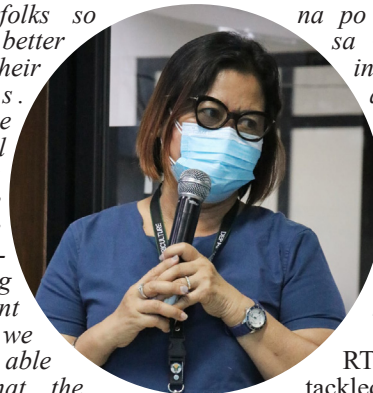
PAFES Consultative Meeting goes to Catanduanes

In preparation for the institutionalization of Provincial-Led Agriculture and Fisheries Extension System (PAFES) in Catanduanes, the DA-Bicol spearheaded a briefing and orientation held on January 12, 2022.

Luz R. Marcelino, DA Bicol Regional Technical Director for Operations represented RED Rodel P. Tornilla during the consultative meeting. Marcelino said that "PAFES is a kind of modality wherein all the support services and all the interventions of the DA

is centered to it. In reality, ito ay responsive sa small farmers and fisherfolks so we can better address their problems. It has the financial resources para may sustainable c o - financing arrangement so that we may be able to say that the project belongs to us. It is the sense of belonging na

kailangan po nating i-inculcate sa ating mga partners na hindi na po sila umaasa lang sa Gobyerno. We are in a better position also to strengthen or mobilize the PPP or the Public-Private Partnership to support the agricultural a d d r e s s investments."



RTD Marcelino also tackled the process of establishing PAFES in Catanduanes and the

roles of the composite team for the said program.

The Province-led Agriculture and Fisheries Extension Systems (PAFES) is among the eighteen key strategies of the One DA Reform Agenda which aims to strengthen collaboration, establishment, and investment in agriculture within Catanduanes. Moreover, this is an institutional arrangement in integrating the implementation of various programs and related support initiatives to strengthen the agricultural extension services to farmers and fishers in Catanduanes.

The meeting was attended by the representatives of the Provincial Agriculture Office, (Please continue to page 8)



DA-ACPC to release P25,000 SURE Covid-19 loan assistance to 75 corn farmers in Iriga City

To reduce their production cost in 2021, 48-year-old corn farmer Felix M. Amoroso, his wife, Marycris, and their two sons, tilled their two-hectare corn farm in Brgy. Niño Jesus by themselves. However, their farm income for their subsistence and for payment of debts was depleted due to high cost of fertilizer and low buying price of corn. Their situation was made worse when Felix suffered from stroke early this year. Nevertheless, he and his wife are determined to continue farming. Thus, they find hope on the approval of their loan application with the Department of Agriculture Agricultural Credit and Policy Council (DA-ACPC) as a lifeline.

Felix is among the 75 corn farmers in Iriga City, Camarines Sur who will receive P25,000 loan assistance under the DA-ACPC's Expanded SURE AID and Recovery Project (SURE Covid-19) not later than third week of March 2022. "Para po sa amin, napakagandang programa po nito. Hindi na po kami mangungutang. Nagpapasalamat po kami. Tuloy-tuloy na po ang pagtatanim namin dahil may budget na kami," Marycris said. DA ACPC Regional

Focal Person Kenneth D. Valencia, Land Bank of the Philippines Camarines Sur Account Officers Dick Allen B. Bernas and Jethro M. Florida together with DA-Bicol Corn Program Technical Staff Debbie M. Pante and the Local Government Unit of Iriga City Agriculture Office headed by City Agriculturist Engr. Janice B. Orciga facilitated the signing of the farmer-beneficiaries in Iriga City's loan documents during the Orientation of SURE-AID Corn Program Beneficiaries held at the LGU Compound in Brgy. Sta. Cruz, this city on February 24, 2022.

SURE Covid-19 is a loan credit program under the DA's "Ahon Lahat, Pagkaing Sapat (ALPAS)

offers emergency and production requirements assistance worth P25,000 per household, payable up to 10 years with zero interest, and no collateral for marginalized small farmers and fishers (MSFFs) adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic are eligible to avail of the said program.

To qualify for this program, borrowers must be registered/enrolled in the Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (R S B S A) - registered MSFFs

and must be included in the validated list as certified and endorsed by the Municipal/City Agriculture Office.

"Isa pong problema na nai-encounter ko kasi ako talagang may direct contact ako sa aming mga farmers. Talagang napi-feel ko po ang kakulangan sa capital na pambili ng inputs na gagamitin po nila. Isa pa po ang high cost of labor na rin. Isa pa rin po yun sa nagpapahirap sa mga magsasaka so kailangan na kailangan po talaga ng pera para sa mga gastusin po nila. Itong SURE Covid-19 na ito is sobra-sobrang mahalaga para sa mga nagtatanim ng mais... Sobrang pasasalamat po because ang umutang ka ng walang interest is talagang

and aside from that talagang may sigurado po sila na pera na gagamitin para sa mga expenses din po nila," LGU-Iriga Corn Program Coordinator Marly L. Corporal said.

Orciga expressed her gratitude to the DA for the SURE COVID 19 program saying, *"Pasalamat po ang siyudad kan Iriga ta nagkaigwa po kaining SURE COVID-19 na para po matabangan an mga farmers mi na at least po ma-lessen ang problema po ninda in terms of capital. Kung mahiling ta po an paroy, grabe po an assistance na itinatao unlike po sa corn kaya po ining SURE COVID-19 dakula po ining oportunidad para po matabangan mi an mga paratanom nin mais na at least po may capital na, payable for 10 years, no interest. Siyempre po para sa sainda, dakulang tabang para po at least masuportahan po ang pangangaipo ninda sa pagbakal po nin inputs and mapadagos po kasi po para maiwasan ta na maging idle an mga daga po digdi sa Iriga through the SURE COVID-19."* Corporal and Orciga also reminded the borrowers to develop a loan repayment plan or strategy. The LGU in partnership with LBP will be providing financial management trainings to the farmer-borrowers to ensure timely loan repayment semi-annually.

According to Valencia, about 389 MSFFs in Camarines Sur, Albay, and Camarines Norte qualified to avail of the SURE COVID-19. Their loan proceeds will be deposited to their respective savings account not later than March 2022. The SURE COVID-19 loan window is funded under Republic Act 11494 or the Bayanihan to Recover as One Act. Agri-fishery-based micro and small enterprises (MSEs) may also avail up to P10 million working capital loan, payable up to five years with zero interest to continue their operations, recover from their losses caused by the COVID-19 lockdowns, and guarantee available and sufficient food supply amid the pandemic.

(Annielyn L. Balezza)

with reports from Kenneth D. Valencia,



Kontra COVID-19" or Plant, Plant, Plant Program that

sobra-sobrang tulong na po yan sa ating mga magsasaka



DA Bicol joins DILG's Serbisyo Caravan for Albayano youth

STO. DOMINGO, ALBAY—The Department of Agriculture (DA) Bicol participated in the Bicol Youth Leadership Camp Serbisyo Caravan sponsored by DILG from March 3-5, 2022 in this municipality to provide an avenue for the youth to develop their leadership skills.

More than 60 Sanggunian Kabataan (SK), student leaders of Bicol University (BU)

with the theme “**Bicol Youth Leadership Camp: Improving Youth Participation in Local Governance—Mga Jovenes na Bicolano para sa Marhay na Pag Gobierno.**”

According to the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Bicol Assistant Regional Director Jun Razal, this activity will capacitate the young

Various government agencies including the provincial government of Albay showcased their programs and activities that will address the issues and concerns of the youth in their community, especially during the Solution Seeking Dialogue, the participants expressed their concerns regarding health, agriculture, education, internet and environment. Florentino Ubalde, Jr., DA Bicol Agricultural Programs Coordination Officer (APCO) for Albay and Sorsogon presented the various programs and services of the DA. He also underscored the role of the young people in agricultural development. Ubalde cited the scholarship program of the Agricultural Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (ACEF) to encourage the young people to engage in agriculture and study agri-related courses; the Sloping Area Land Technology (SALT) to prevent soil erosion and landslides; the role of DA in the construction of Farm-to-Market roads; and promotion of Organic Agriculture to address pollution and waste management. He also discussed the provision of free vegetable seeds and other farm inputs to qualified

farmers and the various support of the DA to farmers, fisherfolks and those who want to engage in agriculture to provide employment or be “agripreneurs”. 4H Club member and SK Chairman of Misibis, Tiwi, Albay raised his concern on the rising prices of fertilizers citing the worry of his farmer-father. Ubalde said that only 10% of the raw materials needed in fertilizer production are available in the Philippines and 90% are imported. As such, DA cannot control the rising prices but presented some ways to lessen fertilizer application of the farmer like Balanced Fertilization Strategy and the importance of soil testing and analysis. Other government agencies present during the activity were representatives from the regional officers of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), National Youth Commission (NYC), National Intelligence and Coordinating Agency (NICA), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Provincial Government of Albay, Philippine National Police and the Philippine Army. Serbisyo Caravan will also be conducted in the provinces of Catanduanes, Sorsogon, Camarines Norte, Camarines

(Jayson M. Gonzales)
Photos by: Jayson M. Gonzales



and Divine Word College of Legazpi (DWCL), and members of the 4H Club from the province of Albay participated in the caravan

leaders to actively participate in local governance and inform them of the different services of the government agencies.

Groundbreaking held for...(from page 1)

of Junction Ogbong to Mabini Farm to Market Road in Viga, this province on January 12, 2022. The P176.97 million-worth infrastructure development (I-BUILD) subproject under the Department of Agriculture Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP) aims to upgrade the existing gravel road traversing five barangays in the road influence area (RIA) namely Brgys. Ogbong, Ananong, Mabini, Sta. Rosa and Magsaysay.

The PRDP-funded FMR is designed to connect abaca farms to the market. Data from the Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority (PhilFIDA) shows that as of 2019 Viga is the third top abaca-producing municipalities in Bicol with 1,889 farmers cultivating 5,156.17 hectares.

Catanduanes Governor Joseph Cua thanked the DA-PRDP for facilitating the approval and implementation of the FMR subproject. "By making this road concrete, we provide our fellow Viganon especially the three barangays of Ananong, Mabini and Ogbong, the local farmers an advantage and convenience of passing through the farm-

to-market roads which will lead them to the market towns or any centers of enterprise without facing difficulties that they used to struggle with these unpaved roads." DA-PRDP Regional Project Coordination Office V (RPCO V) Deputy Project Director Adelina Losa oriented the audience about the PRDP. She also acknowledged the vital role of the Provincial Government, particularly the provincial governor, who pushed for the budget allocation of the 10 percent fund counterpart to the I-BUILD subproject.

Losa also enjoined the barangay captains and their constituents to do their part in strictly monitoring the project implementation saying "Hindi lang po ito responsibilidad ng kontraktor, responsibilidad din ito ng mga residente na maki-cooperate sa kontraktor. Tulungan po natin na matapos itong proyekto na maganda at sa tamang oras."

Likewise, the barangay captains of three adjoining barangays that will benefit from the I-BUILD subproject expressed their gratitude and high hopes once the project is completed. "Para sa amin po sa Brgy. Mabini, pag makongkreto

na ang daan namin, mabilis lumabas ang aming produktong pang-agrikultura. Marami kaming abaca, copra, saging, pinya at marami pang iba at saka mga coconut dito. Nagpapasalamat po ako sa Kagawaran ng Pagsasaka dahil sa dalawang oras naming mino-motor papunta ng Brgy. Mabini, pag nakongkreto na tabi yan, mga kalahating oras na lang andun na yung aming produkto," Jommel T. Tilo, barangay captain of Brgy. Mabini said. "Sa mga agriculture products, malaking bagay itong PRDP project na ito. Sa ngayon, gumagastos ng halos dalawang oras, lalo na pag ang tricycle nasisira. Pag naayos na ang kalsada, ang mga service, at mga kinakargahan ng agriculture products, siguro, makakatipid na sila sa gastos at saka sa oras. Ang pamasahang dyan sa tricycle, P30 hanggang sa bayan. Pagka gumanda na ang kalsada, siguro, mga P15 hanggang P10 puwede na kasi hindi na masisira ang mga sasakyan. Aabutin na lang ng 10 minutes pag single nga, mga 5 minutes aabutin nyan ang bayan pag maganda na ang kalsada," related Jesus o. Cervantes Jr., barangay captain of Brgy. Ananong. Joseph S. Ronquillo, barangay captain of Brgy.

Ogbong, agreed saying "Pag nagawa ito, siguro, mapapaalwan o magiging madali ang kanilang pag-mobilize ng kanilang mga produkto at magkakaroon tayo ng maayos na ekonomiya. Yan po ang magiging balik nyan."

A total of 3,093 population or 420 farmer households will benefit from the Concreting of Junction Ogbong to Mabini Farm to Market Road. The I-BUILD subproject is funded under the first tranche of the DA-PRDP's 450 million dollar-worth additional financing from the World Bank, which amounts to 170 million dollars.

Losa and PRDP RPCO V I-BUILD Head Engr. Teodoro Eleda led the groundbreaking ceremony along with Cua. Municipal Assessor Engr. Ceferino Berces Jr., represented Mayor Emeterio Tarin during the activity. Also present during the occasion were Vice Mayor Cesar Cervantes, Municipal Agriculturist Gerardo Tumala, the Provincial Project Management Implementation Office headed by Engr. Elsie Reyes and Provincial Administrator Lemuel Surtida. Pre-construction conference for the said I-BUILD subproject will be conducted on January 19 to 20, 2022.

DA Bicol sends...(from page 3)



DA Employees Association (DAEA) Bicol Officers turned over various assistance to DA RFO 8 Regional Executive Director Angel Enriquez.



DA Employees Association (DAEA) Bicol Officers led by DAEA President Lovella Guarin (4th from left) turned over various assistance to DA RFO 7 OIC Regional Executive Director Joel Elumba (4th from right) and DAEA 7 President Fabio Enriquez (2nd from right).

Experiment Station in Leyte. Engr. Jimmy Palma, Station Superintendent said that it will benefit the employees of Malihog and Sogod Research Outreach Stations in Southern Leyte.

In a Facebook post, RED Enriquez thanked DA RFO 5 and DAEA for the assistance.

In Cebu City, the DA Bicol Employees Association also turned over the same kind of assistance to DA RFO



Alex Atian (4th from right) turned over rice seeds to DA RFO 8.

7 OIC Regional Executive Director Joel Elumba and DA 7 employees Association President Dr. Fabio Enriquez.

Eastern Visayas was severely devastated by Super Typhoon Odette on December 16, 2021 after Odette made two landfalls in Southern Leyte before barreling through Central Visayas.

(Lovella P. Guarin)

DA Bicol to allocate...(from page 1)

Kababayang Katutubo (4K) Program covering 5099.4 hectares of ancestral lands. *"Garó marhay ining programa ta matatawan kaming mga agta nin atensyon,"* Hamer said.

The 4K program is a national comprehensive program intended to empower and develop the IP communities with ancestral domains through delivery of immediate and long-term solutions and interventions to address their problems on livelihood and poverty. It also aims to transform and develop ancestral lands into food production areas.

During the conduct of the FPIC from January 18-20, 2022, the IPs of barangays Banuyo and San Antonio Sapa, Pilar; and Pangpang, Donsol in Sorsogon; and barangays Gatbo, San Jose Oras, Hanawan, Sta. Cruz and Del Rosario in Ocampo, Camarines Sur all

agreed and signed their consent to accept agricultural assistance and farm inputs to improve their livelihood and income. *"Dai pwede haboan an grasya nin Diyos kaya, gabos kami minaoyon sa programang ini,"* Gatbo Tribal Chieftain Lydia A. Sierra said in behalf of her community.

According to 4K Program Assistant Focal Person Engr. Danicris Orcio, for this year 2022 DA Bicol will allocate P3,015,400.00 pesos for the five barangays of Ocampo, Camarines Sur; and P2,533,400.00 pesos for the three barangays in Pilar and Donsol, Sorsogon. Each tribal community will receive a set of garden tools, seven kilograms of assorted vegetable seeds, 20 bags of organic fertilizer, 512 cuttings of sweet potato, 150 budded calamansi seedlings,

150 rambutan seedlings, 10 kgs of ginger seed pieces, 191 hens, 38 roosters, four boxes of antibiotics, 15 packs of dewormer, three boxes of vitamins, a carabao, two gilts, eight bags grower feeds, five bags of lactating feeds, trainings on high value crops, livestock and poultry production, and establishment of community garden. Moreover, each province will be allocated with two units of greenhouses. A multi-cultivator will be provided in one of the barangays in Sorsogon.

Since the implementation of the program in 2020, there are already 18 IP associations in the Bicol Region that were assisted and provided with interventions from the DA with a total of 18,634 beneficiaries served. Orcio added that the project proposals of these associations were immediately

approved with the additional funding of P6.5M pesos downloaded last October 2021.

Camarines Sur 4K Provincial IP Coordinator Engr. Santiago Belmonte urged the IPs to value and use efficiently the assistance from the government especially the DA. The National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) will assist and link them to other government agencies to address their issues and needs.

The 4K Program is being implemented in the provinces of Albay, Camarines Sur, Camarines Norte and Sorsogon and is anchored on the Republic Act No. 8371 or the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of 1997 recognizes, protects and promotes the rights of indigenous cultural communities and indigenous peoples.

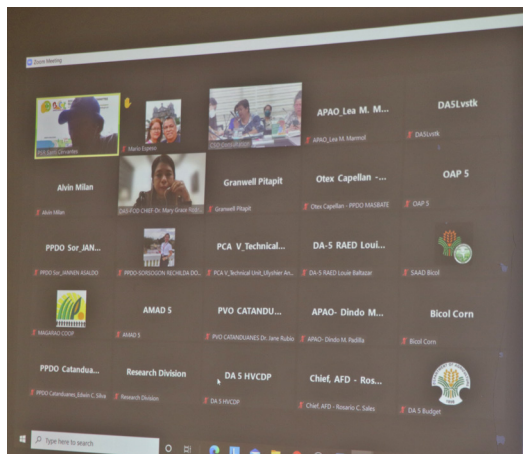
DA Bicol consults CSOs on FY 2023 plans and budget

Some 70 multi-sector stakeholders composed of farmer leaders, Regional Agricultural and Fishery Council (RAFC) sectoral chairpersons, private sector representatives, provincial LGU partners, SUCs, and partner agencies participated in the Civil Society Organization (CSOs) Consultation on DA Bicol's FY 2023 plans and budget proposal. Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla said that the annual CSO consultation was

budget under the General Appropriations Act for 2022. Earl Vincent Vegas, Rice

Organic Agriculture budget were presented by Maria Cristina Campita; the Plant and Animal Regulation Services and HALAL program were presented by Rosita Imperial, Chief of Regulatory Division; Research and Development

Systems Policies based on the Food Security Development Framework were taken into consideration to sustainably feed a growing population in the "new normal." These policies include increasing food sufficiency level of basic



a means to institutionalize citizens' participation in the crafting of DA's budget to empower them through fiscal transparency, accountability and participation. Aloha Gigi I. Bañaria, Chief of the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Division (PMED) presented the proposed P7.2 billion budget of DA Bicol for FY 2023. P3.4 billion was proposed for Tier 1 and P3.7 billion for Tier 2. Bañaria added that DA Bicol has P2.7 billion approved

and Corn regional focal person presented the Rice, Corn and Cassava proposed budget. Dr. Mary Grace DP. Rodriguez, chief of the Field Operations Division presented the High Value Crops Development Program, Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) and 4Ks proposed budgets. Dr. Marissa M. Guillermo presented the Livestock and Poultry program budget. The Market Development Services and

budget was presented by R&D Chief Corazon Orbon; Laboratory Services by Lorenzo Alvina, Chief of the Integrated Laboratories Division; and Agri-Fishery Engineering Services and FMR by Engr. Gilbert Salcedo, OIC of RAED.

Mary Ann Cuya, chief of the PMED Planning and Programming Section presented the FY 2023 thrusts and priorities and bases in the crafting of the 2023 budget proposal. She said that Food

food and other commodities; focusing on the production-to-consumption value chain; empowering the marginalized sector and supporting diverse distribution efforts with good logistics; addressing hunger and malnutrition and elevating biosecurity measures.

Chief Statistical Specialist Danilo V. Lucena of PSA presented the agricultural sector performance of Bicol for FY 2019-2021.

(Lovella P. Guarin)

DA RFO 5 spearheads PAFES...(from page 4)

Provincial Local Government Units (PLGUs), DA-CHUDS, Catanduanes State University (CatSU), Provincial Agriculture and Fishery Council (PAFC) and other private sectors and private voluntary organizations, and Rural-based organizations (RROs) tapped by the DA RFO 5 in Catanduanes. Provincial Agriculturist, Nelia B. Teves who represented Governor Joseph Cua thanked the DA Bicol for initiating the orientation. *"This is the opportune time to forge strong partnership between the government, private sector, institution, and the academe, the Catanduanes State University in order for us to have a progressive and more holistic extensions and approaches. This is in order for us to have sustainable agriculture and fisheries development with the goal of having food-secured Philippines, empowered farmers and fisherfolks so that our clients may be able to carve their own destiny."*

The unification of the seven partner-agencies of PAFES specifically the DA-RFOs/ DA-BFAR ROs/ DA-ATI/ Provincial Local Government

Units (PLGUs), Municipal and City Local Government Units, State Universities and Colleges (SUCS), Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Extension Networks (RAFEN), Private Sector and Private

all agricultural plans and programs as well as orchestrate the activities of various stakeholders.

The upcoming series of meetings will be conducted by the PLGU Catanduanes in

Aside from the holistic development that the PAFES offers, it also aims to further enhance the capability of the LGUs to implement and integrate multiple agriculture and fishery initiatives with



Voluntary Organizations, and Rural-based Organizations will fortify and mobilize the full execution of PAFES towards more sustainable agriculture and fisheries development.

The PLGU Catanduanes will serve as an extension hub that consolidates

preparation for the kick-off of the PAFES on July, 2022. *"We are into crafting an integrated plan. And yan yung ating mga references, so I hope and I pray that this will be a very fruitful collaborative effort,"* said RTD Luz Marcelino in her closing remarks.

the provinces as the center for operations given the devolution for agricultural personnel and services at the local government level.

(Ma. Edelyn Bongalos, BP2)

Photos by: Ma. Edelyn Bongalos

Bicol palay and corn...(from page 1)

DA Bicol Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla said that the 2021 palay output is the second all-time high in Bicol since 2011. The region attained the highest production in 2018 at 1,350,438.32 metric tons. Tornilla attributed the significant rice and corn sector performance to the hard work and resiliency of the Bicolano farmers and industry players, and the timely delivery of interventions particularly in clustered areas. There are 20 cluster areas in rice while 60 cluster areas in corn in Bicol as of this writing.

The average yield per hectare of palay also increased by 4.20% from 3.74 metric tons in 2020 to 3.89 metric tons in 2021. Camarines Norte registered the highest increase in yield by 10.59% at 4.88 metric tons/Ha.

All other provinces except Catanduanes also registered an increase in yield: Camarines Sur by 4.93% (at 3.94 metric tons / Ha); Albay by 4.45% (at 4.19 metric tons /Ha); Sorsogon by 1.47% (at 4.39 metric tons /Ha); Masbate by 0.70% at 2.83 metric tons /Ha. Catanduanes yield in rice contracted by -8.24% at 2.78 metric tons /Ha.

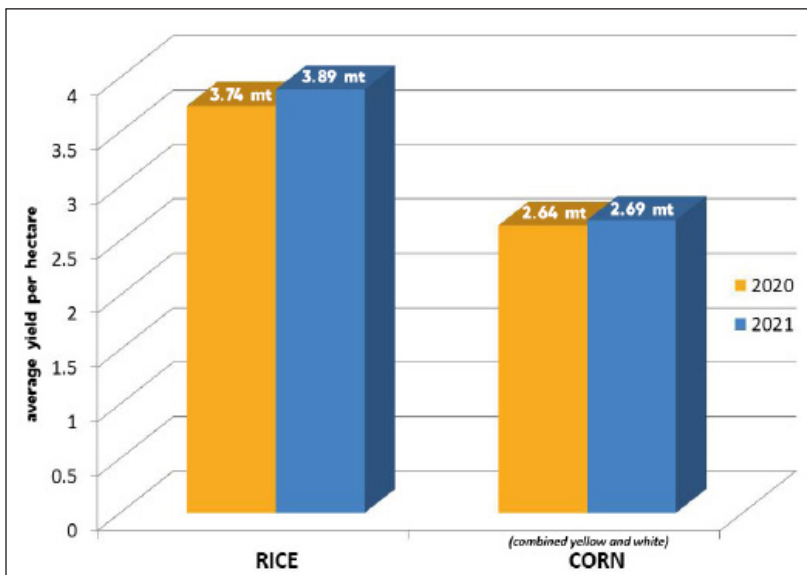
Earl Vincent Vegas, the current Rice and Corn Program focal person said that the increase in yield could be attributed to the

20,000 hectares additional area planted to hybrid rice. Camarines Sur has the highest area harvested to rice at 172,208 hectares which also increased by 0.11%. Vegas also said that for 2021, the National Rice Program distributed a total of 126,962 bags of rice seeds consisting of 93,039 bags commercial hybrid rice;

5,193 bags public hybrid, and 28,730 bags certified rice seeds.

The Rice Program also distributed fertilizer discount vouchers to hybrid clustered areas and inbred clustered areas, although the distribution is still ongoing to complete the targeted 98,233 bags in hybrid cluster areas and 27,063 bags in inbred cluster areas.

Corn Production Performance Yellow corn output was 220,170.50 metric tons in 2021, while white corn output was 75,577.78 metric tons. For 2021 also, the area harvested to corn increased by 1.82%, from 106,984.99 hectares in 2020 to 108,929.87 hectares in 2021. Camarines Sur has the widest area planted to corn (47,838 hectares),



followed by Masbate (38,722 hectares), Albay (20,699 hectares), and Cam. Norte with 1,029 hectares corn area. The average yield in combined yellow and white corn also increased by 1.96% from 2.64 metric tons per hectare in 2020 to 2.69 metric tons in 2021.

For 2021, the Corn Program distributed 41,930 kilograms of various corn seeds (OPV, glutinous, hybrid and genetically modified hybrid yellow) including 10,050 kgs of station-produced certified corn seeds (white corn flint and glutinous variety).

Sources: PSA, DA 5 Rice and Corn Program

Bicol women stakeholders honored during Women's Day

by: Emily B. Bordado

To mark the celebration of the International Women's Day on March 8 this year, the Department of Agriculture Bicol honored its women clients engaged in agriculture, through a simple but meaningful and fun-filled activity held at the Sonrisa Nature Farm and Learning Center in Magarao, Camarines Sur.

About 100 rural women most of them awardees and achievers in the DA-sponsored search for Outstanding Rural Women and some are successful agri-entrepreneurs or with thriving enterprise gathered for the event spearheaded by the office of the DA – Bicol Gender and Development (GAD) Focal Point System headed by Aloha Gigi Bañaria. Some participants also brought their fresh and processed products for sale during the one-day activity.

DA Undersecretary for High Value Crops and

totaling to over P3.4 million. The latest recipients of the Agri-Pinay cheques were: Norma Bautista, Emilia Borabo and Angelita Cerillo all from Tigaon Camarines Sur; Pureza Perez from Lupi, Helen Azuela from Bula; Maria Girlie Averilla and Razel Paaño Saludes both from Pamplona and Marie Conrada Delmar-Vargas from Virac, Catanduanes. Usec. Laviña urged the Bicol women not to let their guards down as she acknowledged that *"women empowerment seems to be the bulwark and hallmark of the Bicolanas and second nature to them."* She pointed out that *"there is still so much to be done and called on everyone to celebrate the gains but also to be proactive in preventing backsliding from what we have achieved in the gender equality and women empowerment"*. She also reminded everyone to go back to prayer and accompany

Women in 2021 shared why she decided to shift from the practice of her profession in the Hotel & Restaurant Management business in metropolis to farming in her hometown in Catanduanes and how she managed to recover when she incurred big losses after three successive typhoons.

Maria Daisy G. Geolin, a social worker by profession but now the chairperson of Bikolanas Agriculture Cooperative also narrated her story how their coop started

As an added information to the participants, the Acting Provincial Election Supervisor of the COMELEC, Atty. Neil



B. Canicula discussed the topic: Women and Politics.

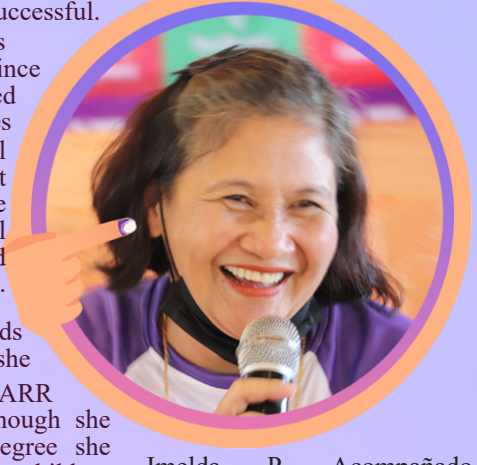
Agri-Pakawati. The occasion was also graced by DA Regional Technical Director for Operations, Luz R. Marcelino, Aloha Gigi Bañaria, GAD-Focal person and chief of the Planning Monitoring and Evaluation Division, Bernadette B. de los Santos, Chairperson of the DA-Bicol Agriculture Dialogue and Information Network Group (ADING) Integrity Circle, Emily B. Bordado, Chief of the Regional Agriculture & Fisheries Section and



selling dried gabi leaves but has expanded to other business undertakings and instead of being discouraged by the adverse effects of Covid-19, they shifted to on-line selling which proved very successful.

Fe Carranza, who is afflicted with polio since she was a child shared her personal struggles but through these all she did not give up but maintained a positive outlook, cheerful disposition and strong faith in God.

She has been bestowed some awards and recognition and she now manages FABCARR Food Products. Although she did not finish a degree she made sure all her children obtained degree.



Imelda P. Acompañado, president of the DA Lady Employees Association.



Rural Credit and currently chairperson of the DA-GAD Focal Point System Evelyn G. Laviña graced the occasion and led the awarding of the Agri-Pinay cheques worth over P345 thousand to the new batch (eight) rural women engaged in micro and small agri-enterprises such as vegetable production, corn production and rice production.

To date, 58 Bicol rural women have received the Agri-Pinay financial assistance

it with positive action.

One of the highlights of the activity was a talk show "Urulay Babae" where distinguished women in agriculture share their stories of their journey – their struggles and victories.

The DAY-LONG activity was capped by games or **Cristina L. Torreda**, National Grand Winner in the Search for Outstanding Rural



Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) gaining ground within the DA system

PILI, CAMARINES SUR - "Did we really make change work for women?" Department of Agriculture (DA) Bicol Regional Technical Director for Operations Luz R. Marcelino posed this question to about 90 women employees of the DA and its attached agencies in the region who attended the Inter-Agency Women Employees' Day celebration held on March 10, 2022 in Pili, Camarines Sur. Marcelino stated that the answer should be a resounding "YES!" *"If you take a look at the interventions and attributions coming from the banner programs, masasabi kong 39 percent of our clients served are women based on the data in 2021. We have served about 82,682 women-clientelles from the various regular banner programs. This would only show the countless efforts given by DA RFO V to GAD,"* she said. She also acknowledged DA RFO V's achievements for the GREAT Women Project and in the annual Search for Outstanding Rural Women.

The DA-Bicol Gender and Development (GAD) Focal Point System led by Regional Focal Person Aloha Gigi I. Bañaria spearheaded the Inter-Agency Women Employees' Day activity which aims to create and facilitate platforms to discuss good practices, gaps, challenges, and commitments in pursuing gender and development, strengthen the implementation of the Magna Carta of Women, and inspire and empower women employees as agents of change in promoting gender equality and women empowerment (GEWE).

According to Bañaria, the event is also a fitting tribute to the women employees of DA-Bicol and its attached agencies this Women's Month who in one way or another, have contributed to the success of

the DA's rural women clientele. She mentioned that DA-Bicol GAD is one of the top-performing regions nationwide in terms of GAD program implementation with 32 percent accomplishment in 2021, which was translated into economic empowerment of Bicolanas engaged in the agri-fishery sector.

This year marks the culmination of the six-year theme "WE Make Change Work for Women." WE stands for Women's Empowerment; Make Change Work = MCW = Magna Carta of Women; CHANGE or Compassionate and Harmonized Actions and Networks for Gender Equality; and We/us or 'kami/tayo' in Filipino. The sub-theme for the 2022 Women's Month celebration is "Agenda ng Kababaihan, Tungo sa Kaunlaran." In her message, Undersecretary for High Value Crops and Rural Credit and the DAGAD Focal Point System Chairperson Evelyn G. Laviña recognized DA-Bicol's unequaled achievements in terms of women empowerment and gender equality mainstreaming saying *"This Women's Month especially today, during this crisis, the Bicolanas among our countrywomen take center stage once more, standing up for their rights, challenging stereotypes, breaking barriers and serving as pioneers of change. This year, we recognize the Bicol women's valuable role in our society and proves that inclusive and sustainable development is only possible when gender equality becomes obtainable."*

The Inter-Agency Women Employees' Day celebration kicked off with a Zumba dubbed as "ZumBabae" at the DA Regional Field Office Compound. It also featured a female talk show with four of DA-Bicol's empowered women as guests namely DA RFO

V Chief of the Regulatory Division and Caretaker of the Office of the Regional Technical Director for Research and Regulations Rosita M. Imperial, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) V Marine Fisheries Resource Management Section Chief Nonie P. Enolva, Aquaculturist 1 and the first transwoman permanent employee of BFAR V, Erick "Rhikka Boom" Ballaran, and DA RFO V Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Information Section Chief, Resident Ombudsman, and Values Restoration Officer Emilia B. Bordado. They shared their respective success stories, lessons learned and experiences related to GEWE in the workplace and identified other gender gaps and issues that need to be addressed as well as proposed solutions to sustain the agency's gender and development gains. *"Ngonian, masasabi ko na gender redistributive ang samuyang opisina—women-friendly na (Now, I could say that our office is already gender redistributive—it is women-friendly),"* Enolva said, as she related how BFAR invested on a GAD walk enabling women to cross a canal going to their fish pond, which signified gender parity between male and female employees in their work environment. Ballaran affirmed Enolva's observation saying that BFAR embraced her for her work performance regardless of her gender identity. Imperial, on the other hand, discussed how DA-Bicol, during her term as High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP) Coordinator, was able to mainstream GEWE in the agency's programs and projects to its rural women-beneficiaries by developing small-farm equipment and machinery in collaboration

with the Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (PhilMech). Bordado, for her part, accentuated the need to anchor GEWE on values saying, *"Ang empowerment ng mga kababaihan ay hindi lang sila maging financially stable or sustainable. Dapat palakasin pa rin ang values system lalong-lalo na tayong mga kababaihan, 'yan ang ating major role sa ating mga anak and the future generation na dapat ang moral fiber ng ating mga anak ay malakas."*

DA-Bicol also invited Atty. Karina Katerin I. Bertes, Attorney III of the Civil Service Commission Region V Anti-Red Tape Unit, to update its women employees on the amendment to the sexual harassment provisions in the 2017 Revised Rules on Administrative Cases in the Civil Service stipulated in CSC Resolution No. 2100064 dated January 20, 2021.

Moreover, DA-Bicol GAD recognized some of the agency's women leaders including RTD Marcelino, Bañaria, DA Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) Regional Training Center Director Elsa A. Parot, and Rosita C. De Lumen for their support to the GAD Focal Point System activities. The activity was capped with a Nature Walk and Harvest Festival at the DA RFO V Organic Agriculture Research and Development Center wherein DA Lady Employees Association (DALEA) President Imelda P. Acompañado encouraged the women participants to share the experiences and insights they have gained with their fellow women employees to further promote and strengthen GEWE in the workplace.

(Annielyn L. Balezza)



This Public Element Gulayan sa Paar

by Lovella P. Guarin

Two years into the COVID-19 pandemic, some public Elementary School grounds in the Bicol Region have turned into productive vegetable hubs. This is particularly true in Banga Elementary School in Ragay, Camarines Sur. The physical absence of the kids in schools has not become a hindrance in maintaining the Gulayan sa Paaralan (GPP) garden as they were sustained by the strong alliance and concerted efforts of the school heads, teachers, parents, barangay councils and Sanggunian Kabataan. The Local Government Units (LGU) and the Department of Agriculture – High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP) also continuously support these schools.

In Banga Elementary School, the Gulayan sa Paaralan was implemented in the Yungib Integrated Farm inside the school premises. The Yungib Integrated Farm has received PhilGAP certification from the Department of Agriculture – Bureau of Plant Industry on November 20, 2021 for their commodities – lettuce, pechay, corn, upo, eggplant, string beans and squash. Furthermore, the Integrated Farm obtained a Business Permit registration from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

Edgar E. Sarit, Principal of Banga ES said that their school through the Gulayan sa Paaralan aims to help every learner's family to have source of healthy food which are not laced with synthetic fertilizer. The principal is an Organic Agriculture advocate and at the same time Division Evaluator of GPP. "Naging advocacy ko na ang GPP dahil napaka laki ng tulong nito sa mga

komunidad. Although (GPP) was institutionalized in the Department of Education (DepEd) in 2012. Banga ES started to establish GPP in 2016. Previously, ornamental plants were predominant in this school and it was very hard to transform it into a food production area. But gradually, the teachers, the parents and school children embraced my advocacy. The DA and LGU also supported us and provided us interventions by way of farm implements such as wheel barrow, garden tools, plastic mulch, and assorted vegetable seeds from the DA –HVCDP under its Gulayan sa Paaralan project," the Principal added. "Trainings and continued monitoring by the Municipal Agriculture Office also helped us a lot. Our school is also compliant with Good Agricultural Practices and we are very thankful to the DA Regional Office for the recent PhilGAP certification we have received," he said.

Sarit also said that the school children replicated the GPP in their households and were amazed of the good impact of having "plantita and plantitos" in their homes.

Daisy Verata, former GPP coordinator of same school said that as one of the strategies in eliciting support from the students before the pandemic, she incorporated the GPP in the subject Edukasyong Pantahanan at Pangkabuhayan (EPP) which has four components: 1) Information Communication and Technology, 2) Agri-fishery and Arts, 3) Home Economics, and 4) Industrial Arts.

Cristy M. Penaflorida, the current GPP coordinator said that they used recycled

Elementary School sustains Paaralan amidst pandemic

ibang paaralan, matutularan nila ang Banga ES, kaya ikinararangal ng barangay ang GPP sa Yungib Integrated Farm kung saan ang Punong Guro, mga guro, magulang, kabataan, ay nagkaisa sa pagtataguyod ng GPP.”

materials as pots like sacks, tires and plastic bottles as the school does not have funds for the materials needed in the GPP. But the sales from the produce in the school gardens helped finance some materials such as seedling trays, paints and other landscaping materials.

Rowell D. Derain, SK President of Bgy. Banga Caves said that he together with seven other SK officers, established the Millennial Guardians Association on August 2021. At present, it has over 80 members composed of youths and parents. “Tulong tulong po kami sa pagtatanim sa vacant lot na pinahiram sa amin ni Principal Edgar Sarit. Hinikayat din po namin ang mga kabataan na magtanim para hindi lang po sila puro sa gadgets naka focus. We started planting cash crops sa mga vacant lots ng school using the vegetable seeds from Municipal

“Ang magandang tulong ng Gulayan sa Paaralan sa mga kabataan ay natuto sila sa pagtatanim at sa

nang dahil sa Gulayan sa Paaralan,” Derain stressed.

Even the barangay captain

Banga Elem. School was 1st place in the Southern Zone Search for GPP Best Implementer in CY 2019-20 conducted by the DepEd



pagkain ng masustansiyang mga gulay. Nagsilbi ding

and barangay kagawad were impressed with the feats of

Region V, Schools Division of Camarines Sur, Ragay District Southern Zone.



Agriculture Office,” he added.

The harvested vegetables were sold to the community and the sales went to the coffers of the association.

bonding time namin ang pagmaintain ng garden plots, pag-bubungkal ng lupa, at pag-aani. Napaka-ganda po ng aming nabuong asosasyon

the Banga ES. Barangay Kagawad Carmelita P. De Villa, chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture said “kung makikita ng

Liza Marie Paet, the High Value Crops Development Program Coordinator and Organic Agriculture Program focal person of Ragay, Camarines Sur said that GPP is very helpful especially to nearby households because the prices of vegetables at Yungib Integrated Farm are much lower than that of public markets more so, if the vegetables came from other regions/municipalities. “Our goal is to have more GAP certified farms in Ragay to promote food security. In GAP, farmers are taught on responsible usage and handling of inorganic or chemical fertilizers and pesticides which promotes good health for the farmers and the consumers as well as environmental safety,” Paet added.

The *therapeutic, tonic and economic* benefits of gardening

by Emily B. Bordado

“Gardening is the greatest tonic and therapy a human being can have”, so said famous Hollywood actress and fashion icon, Audrey Hepburn. Having subsisted on food ration and experienced food deprivation which resulted to her frequent illness during the Nazi invasion of Europe, Hepburn also suffered depression and malnutrition during that time. But after the war, as life returned to normal, she found the quiet joys of planting and regarded gardening

pandemic where lockdowns and quarantine measures forced people to stay at home. Home yard gardening all of a sudden became a widespread preoccupation of many people both in rural and urban areas. Plantita/plantito became a byword. This refers to a plant lover or nurturer whether for personal interest or hobby or for business or commercial purpose.

While plants have long been used for food or culinary purposes they are also used for medicinal purposes. Moreover, plants are also good for our mental health as they give us a sense of calmness and serenity. They add color and give us a sense of personality in our surroundings and their presence can live up our working and living space.

Plants also emit phytoncides which are anti-microbial compounds which protect the plants and is also said to be good for the health of us humans as they can boost our immune system and reduce our stress from our daily grind. Having plants at home can help improve the air quality as they release oxygen into the air while taking up carbon dioxide.

Today, gardening is not just a hobby but also a very promising and rewarding business undertaking.

Manuel de Vera, owner of the MASETAS garden located at barangay Lidong in Sto. Domingo

Albay has made gardening and landscaping his full-time business. A Fine Arts graduate major in Interior Design, he is also gifted with a lot of creative and artistic talents. He first showcased his talents and creativity during special occasions and events in his parish and town when he was always tapped to do the floral designs and arrangements of the St. Dominic de Guzman church altar the floats of the religious images or “pasos” and the backdrop or stage decoration of the town plaza during fiestas and Christmas celebration.



to be one of life's greatest gifts which led her to express one of her most famous quote: **“To plant a garden is believe in tomorrow”.**

Indeed, gardening has some tonic and therapeutic effects as again proven during the COVID-19



Even before the plantitas and plantitos became a trend, Manuel or “Manny” has already set up his own commercial ornamental plants and garden accessories at its original site in Barangay San Isidro at the outskirts of the town proper. For over 15 years now, he has been into buying and selling plants and has been engaged in

landscaping, flower arrangement and design business. Aptly named Masetas, which is a variation of the Spanish word macetas which means flower pots. Later he transferred his garden to a bigger and more strategic area.

His myriad collection of plants include rare, imported, local and indigenous ornamental plants, herbs, spices, palms, fruit-bearing trees and even vegetable seedlings. Weekly, the garden earns an average of P 20, 000 from walk-in clients. According to Manny, He also gets orders from other provinces like Catanduanes,

shop for ornamental and edible plants, supplies such as stones, pebbles, soil, fertilizers, plastic bags and garden accessories pots, accessories and decors including statues and figurines. It also produces pots and vases. *"But landscaping is more profitable and gives more room for creativity,"* says Manny. When he does a landscape job, he does not follow one pattern or design but makes every landscape design fit the personality or character of the owner or inhabitants of the home and the contour or condition of the area. *"Hindi pwedeng gagayahin ko lang ang dati ko nang ginawa para sa iba o may ipapagaya lang sa akin,"* he explained. *"Hindi rin nangangahulugan na kapag pinagsama ang lahat ng magaganda or expensive ay maganda na ang resulta. Dapat may focal point and each plant should complement each other."* He has three regular workers who assist him in maintaining the garden and one working on the cement and clay pots and other garden accessories. He has four more on-call laborers whenever he has a landscaping job. Gardening, landscaping and creating something beautiful and useful has been Manuel's passion and provides him a stable income and gives him fulfillment.

Meanwhile, 72-year old Alice Adan of Calabanga has been a plant lover ever since. With the growing number of plant enthusiasts or plantitas and plantitos she started selling some of her plants during market days (Wednesday and Saturday) in the public market and derives an income ranging from P 3,00 to P 5,000 weekly by selling ornamentals, vegetables and fruit bearing seedlings. She uses the money to buy her medicines and other needs.

Another elderly lady Maria Theresa Bustamante 65 years old also from the same town also sells ornamental plants during market days. Gardening and taking care of plants has some therapeutic effect. *"Bukod sa may pinagkakaabalahan*

Masbate and Sorsogon.

He says rare plants are expensive but they are faddish—that is, their demand is just fleeting or short-lived. After a while new plant varieties will be more in demand. So he invests more on the more common but enduring, all-season and sustainable plants.

Masetas is now a one-stop



ako may income pa ako at parang napalawig ang buhay ko".

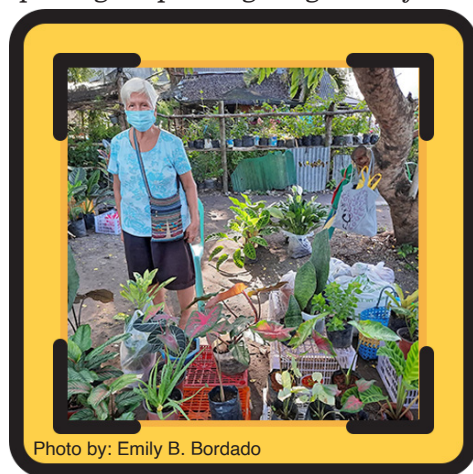


Photo by: Emily B. Bordado



Photo by: Emily B. Bordado

Indeed, *"Gardening is a medicine that does not need a prescription... and has no limit on dosage."*

First woman RAFC chairperson assumes post



SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR – Bernadette “Bidi Bidi” de los Santos, farmer, entrepreneur, artist and owner of La Huerta Del Rosario farm in Baao, Camarines Sur assumed as the new Chairperson of the Regional Agricultural and Fishery Council (RAFC) in Bicol on March 16, 2022. She was appointed by Agriculture Secretary William Dar together with the new RAFC Chairpersons of other regions of the country pursuant to the approved Omnibus Guidelines of Agricultural and Fishery Councils.

De los Santos expressed her gratitude for the trust and confidence bestowed on her by her RAFC peers and by Secretary Dar, saying that being the first and only woman to hold the highest post in RAFC Bicol makes her more determined to exemplify what an empowered woman is. “I follow in a line of remarkable leaders. When I joined RAFC in 2007, it was under Sir Dave Canet.

I remember being in the ceremony just like this when Mr. Alfredo Rillo and more recently with Mr. Jimmy Cordero, who was still incumbent when he passed on just last week. Just like today, they must have pondered what the year ahead would hold at the helm of this busy and dynamic council. Each made important and lasting contributions to our common enterprise in upholding the deepest values and highest aspirations of the farmers and fisherfolks of our region, Bicol, and of our country,” she said.

Delos Santos received DA's National Most Outstanding Rural Woman Award in 2008. Her farm, which she turned as an Agritourism destination and a learning site for Agri students was the first GAP certified farm in the region. “My farm, and myself adapted new practices and engaged in other entrepreneurial activities but I never veered away from my first love, that

of being a farmer. And it is my being that, that will steer the course of my leadership of this council, it is that, that will enable me to have the heart to listen and resolve issues that affect the plight of our farmers and fisherfolks,” she added. “I have deep respect and admiration for the able, dedicated and courageous men and women who serve this agency, the Department of Agriculture. Day in and day out, often in the face of self-sacrifice, I have seen and been with you through the years. As the new Chair, I will embrace your dedication and hear the appeals of our farmers and fisherfolks,” she added.

De los Santos officially assumed office on March 16, 2022, and she was welcomed by DA RFO 5 officials, RTD Luz R. Marcelino; Aloha G. Bañaria, RAFC Executive Officer and Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Chief and other division chiefs; RAFC officials and sectoral committee chairs through a simple luncheon program at PMED office. She was also welcomed virtually by PCAF Manila officials and staff as well as provincial and municipal AFC chairpersons and coordinators. She will serve the council within 1 year and for a maximum of 3 consecutive years.

The RAFC Bicol has endorsed two other nominees to the RAFC Chair post, namely; the multi-awarded Agta Tabangnon Chieftain Rebecca Purisima and Engr. Raul Careras, a national Gawad Saka outstanding sugarcane farmer in 2003 and PENSUMIL Development Council President. He served as acting RAFC Chair following former Jose “Jimmy” Cordero’s passing. The RAFC is composed of volunteer representatives from various sectors serving as frontline mechanisms for private sector participation in the development processes in agriculture and fisheries. The RAFC officials and members also act as consultative, integrative, and monitoring bodies for regional and local agri-fishery initiatives.

(Lovella P. Guarin)

Firemen train on Mushroom Cultivation and Production

More than 20 members of the 3rd Battalion Land Specialized Operations Brigade trained on Mushroom Cultivation and Production on February 10-11 at the BFP SRF Training ground, Kawa Kawa, Ligao City. Said training was sponsored by the Department of Agriculture Bicol through the Research Division. According to Pedro Oliver, Senior Research Specialist and Regional Mushroom Project Focal Person who served as resource person, the DA does not only cater to farmers but to stakeholders such as the Philippine National Police (PNP), Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) in compliance with a directive to partner with potent allies in alleviating poverty. The firemen were delighted to learn the simple techniques of mushroom production from basic modules to hands-on training.

In his message, Supt. Glenn Rodriguez, BFP Battalion Commander underscored the importance of Food Security that is why they needed this kind of training as an added income. Aside from responding to rescues and emergencies, their team has to engage in simple livelihood during spare time to

provide added income for their families. “If you were born poor, it was not your fault, but if you die poor, it is your fault.” He quipped. This means that aside from being employed, there are many opportunities to make a living like venturing to mushroom production.

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Photo by: Blesilda A. Nuñez

The participants had also a taste of mushroom recipes such as mushroom chicharon, mushroom ice cream and mushroom medley during the actual cooking demo which sparked their interest to engage in mushroom farming. “Galing kami sa pamilyang farming

oriented, kaya bukod sa palay at gulay, meron na naman kaming natutunan na bagong teknolohiya sa pagmumushroom,” said Dominique De Leon who is one of the participants. “Lalo akong nagayon interesado na mag mushroom ngayon lalo na sa pagnenegosyo nito,” he added. Also present were Gino Morillo and

Cheryl Ann Requiza both Agricultural Extension Workers of LGU Ligao City who pledged to provide whatever needed assistance and support to those who will venture into mushroom cultivation, production and marketing.

(Blesilda A. Nuñez)



4Ks

Kabuhayan at Kaunlaran
ng Kababayang Katutubo

DA Bicol assists NCIP, LGU for freshwater aquaculture of Manide Tribe

SAN AGUSTIN, Pili, Camarines Sur—*"The location for the establishment of fishpond for Tilapia culture is possible and viable because of the presence of freshwater,"* said provincial Fisheries Livelihood Development Technologist Helbert Mabesa during the Site Validation and Ocular Inspection on Proposed site for Pond Construction for Tilapia Culture. The activity was conducted by the Department of Agriculture-Bicol, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), and the agriculture and engineering departments of LGU-Labo on February 8, 2022.

The activity was based on the request of the Manide Tribe of Barangay Malaya, Labo, Camarines Sur during the conduct of the Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) activity conducted on January 27, 2022.

The FPIC is the first step to identify and address the needs of the IP community under the Kabuhayan at Kaunlaran ng Kababayang Katutubo (4K) Program. This special program of DA will enhance provision of agricultural and fisheries interventions to the IP community. *"May malapit na sapa po doon sa lupang ninuno namin at maigi po na magkaroon*

kami ng fishpond kung saan mag-aalaga kami ng Tilapia bilang dagdag-hanapbuhay at pagkain naming mga Manide," said Tribal Chieftain Alejandro Andaya. Upon inspection, provincial Fisheries Livelihood Development Technician Jheyson Duge said that approximately 675-square-meter fishpond can be constructed in their area and that more than 2,000 tilapia

4Ks Program Assistant Regional Focal Person Engr. Danicris Orcio disclosed that the Manide Tribe will take charge of the labor while the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) will provide technical assistance and tilapia fingerlings. Manide Tribe member Susan Andaya is looking forward to the establishment of the fishpond but hopes for a good road access. *"Mas madali ko ng madadala ang aking*



fingerlings can be cultured there. But prior to the establishment of fishpond, Mabesa added that the community should undergo a special training on fishpond management and freshwater aquaculture on Tilapia Production.

mga tanim na kamote, saging at kangus (cassava) sa bayan kung maayos ang daan at dahil sa fishpond, makakabenta na din ako ng isda," she said.

(Jayson M. Gonzales)

Photo by: Jayson M. Gonzales

IP beneficiaries receive layer chickens for their communal poultry livelihood

SAN AGUSTIN, Pili, Camarines Sur—Seventeen indigenous people (IP) communities in Albay, Camarines Sur, Camarines Norte and Sorsogon are now ready to start their communal

at Kaunlaran ng Kababayang Katutubo (4Ks) Program from February 23-24, 2022.

Prior to the distribution of the chickens,

the IP communities already constructed their communal chicken house as counterpart to the project and received a P 370,530.00-worth of farm inputs including laminated sacks, chicken layer feeds and chicken nets. The IP communities which received the RTL chickens were the IPs in Joroan and Mayong, Tiwi, Albay; Osmeña, Jose Panganiban, Camarines Norte; Iraya, Buhi, Camarines Sur; Tinawagan, Tiagon, Camarines Sur; San Pedro, Iriga City; barangays Sibaguan, Minadongjol, in Sagñay, Camarines Sur; barangays Sta.



poultry production with the arrival of ready-to-lay (RTL) chickens from the Department of Agriculture (DA) Bicol through the Kabuhayan

Atulayan, Patitinan, Kilomaon, Bongalon Sur; barangays Sta.

Donsol, Sorsogon; and barangays San Jose and San Rafael, Bulusan, Sorsogon.

In a message by 4K Program Regional Focal Person Dr. Mary Grace DP Rodriguez said that the beneficiaries were trained on livestock and poultry production; and organic agriculture production to develop the skills of the IPs in taking care of their animals especially layer chickens. The 4K program is a national comprehensive program intended to empower and develop the IP communities with ancestral domains. This is in coordination with the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and the local government. The present head of the Federation of Chieftains in Tiwi, Albay and Tribal Chieftain Erlinda Cerenio of Sitio Antom, Misibis, Tiwi, Albay said that the Ready-To-Lay White Leghorn chickens will be another source of income of her community.

"Ining mga manok dagdag sa samong produksyon nin luya, doma, abaca, asin pagataman nin mga hayop na siguradong makakatabang samo sa pagbuhay asin dagdag-hanapbuhay. Inotob talaga kan DA an saindang promesa kan Marso 2021 na matao sinda nin mga arog kaining mga tabang (These chickens add to our regular production of ginger, root crops, abaca and livestock production. Indeed, DA Bicol fulfilled its promise last March 2021 that they will provide us with this assistance)," Cerenio quipped with a smile.

(Jayson M. Gonzales)

with photo from 4K Program staff

Emerging benefits of PRDP's sub projects assessed via Rapid Appraisal

Improved traveling condition, reduced travel time and increased traffic count, as noted in a spot interview with Daryl Chang, coconut farmer from Brgy. Mariposa in Aroroy, Masbate were among the initial findings of the Rapid Appraisal of Emerging Benefits (RAEB) conducted by the Department of Agriculture Philippine Rural Development Project (DA-PRDP) on the P242.56 million-worth Concreting of San Agustin to Tigbao Farm-to-Market Road in Aroroy, Masbate. The evaluation initiative, spearheaded by DA-PRDP Project Support Office South Luzon Monitoring and Evaluation Unit in collaboration with its counterparts at the Regional Project Coordination Office M&E, Economics, and Social and Environmental Safeguards (SES) units, Rural Infrastructure Development (I-BUILD) component and



officials, farmers, traders, Project-Affected Persons (PAPs), and households along the five barangays traversing the road influence area namely: Brgy. San Agustin, Brgy. Don Pablo Dela Rosa,

The RAEB team presented the initial findings, other observations, and recommendations to LGU-Aroroy Municipal Agriculturist and concurrently the Municipal Project Management and

Implementation Unit (MPMIU) Head Engr. Arvin Ostia during the exit meeting. "Nakita po natin aktuwal na 'yung operation and maintenance na plano ng PRDP na nakalagay sa Implementation Management Agreement ay kailangan na ipatupad upang ma-maintain ang safety ng daan doon sa ating mga biyahero. Nalaman ko po na

ng negosyo sa kanilang barangay dahil mayroon nang sasakyan at market ang kanilang produkto. Ang plano namin, pagandahin pa, kung meron nang kalsada, susunod na ang kuryente," Ostia said. He mentioned that the MPMIU-Aroroy will present the findings to the Sangguniang Bayan in March 2022 for possible sponsorship of ordinances to regulate the activities in the FMR and to seek funding for the subproject's operation and maintenance in preparation for the construction of their proposed phase 2 FMR subproject. "Napakaganda ng sistema ng RAEB dahil parang ina-upgrade 'yung idea namin lalong-lalo na ako bilang Municipal Agriculturist. 'Yung lahat ng nalalaman ko dito sa RAEB, sa PRDP, puwede naming ma-i-share 'yung idea namin sa ibang project namin," he added. Mayor Arturo Virtucio agreed saying "Sa ibang project hindi namin naranasan ito. Sa PRDP, ito pala 'yun. Pero maganda ito kasi sa aking parte na ang gusto ko ang transparent governance, gusto ko yan, dahil wala akong dapat pag-ilagan dahil natapos yung project ayon doon sa lahat ng guidelines na ibinigay sa amin. Magandang practice!"

(Annielyn L. Baleza)

with reports from Arvin San Juan, PRDP PSO South Luzon M&E Unit



the Information, Advocacy, Communication and Education (InfoACE) unit was held on February 7 to 11, 2022. To gather pieces of evidence about the attainment of the projected benefits indicated in the feasibility study and assess the current and future sustainability efforts of the LGU and other stakeholders, the RAEB team conducted series of key informant interviews, focus group discussions, household surveys, and spot interviews to gather information from pre-identified LGU and barangay

Brgy. Tigbao, Brgy. Mariposa and Brgy. Matalangtalang.

According to PRDP PSO South Luzon M&E Specialist Arvin San Juan, other emerging benefits of the 15-kilometer FMR as observed by the RAEB team are improved marketing practices, reduced transport losses, and reduced output and input hauling cost. Moreover, the concrete FMR also resulted to socio-economic benefits like better access to government services, increased economic activities, and appraised value of land.

'yung project ng PRDP na phase 1 from San Agustin to Tigbao Farm-to-Market Road malaki na ang pagkakaiba. Nalaman po natin sa mga nainterview natin kahapon na napakalakiking bagay at maraming bagay ang naitulong na sa kanila with regard sa kanilang pang-araw-araw na pangangailangan, hanap-buhay, at social activities. Na-inspire ako sa mga sagot ng mga tao, nakakataba ng puso na marinig 'yung kanilang pasasalamat na nabago ang buhay nila at na-encourage sila na magtanim, magkaroon

Director of Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency visits SAAD sites in Sorsogon



SAAD
Special Area for Agricultural Development



SORSOGON PROVINCE – Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) Philippines Country Director Fahri Burak Aydogdu visited the beneficiaries of the Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) in Sorsogon province on February 21-22, 2022. This is to evaluate SAAD sites for possible funding support or direct intervention from the Turkish agency, following SAAD Director Myer G. Mula's meeting with the TIKA director.

In Donsol, Sorsogon, Director Aydogdu met with one of the prospective beneficiaries – the Tres Marias Drive Association (TMD) composed of 28 vegetable growers. The TMD has a total of 4.6 hectare land planted to vegetables which they sell either fresh or processed. Among the processed products of the TMD are turmeric or “salabat”, polvoron, pickled vegetable and sweetened vegetable candies (molido).

Director Aydogdu was joined by Dr. Mary Grace DP. Rodriguez, SAAD Bicol Action Officer. Dr. Rodriguez said that the SAAD Bicol RPMO has submitted to

Director Mula proposals for the construction of a Community-based Vegetable Processing Facility and the procurement of hauling trucks to be stationed at the RDPTC in Sorsogon. The said projects will benefit 31 organized groups in Sorsogon whose members ranged from 30 to 35 vegetable growers.

In Pilar, Sorsogon, the Director visited the Agta Tabangnon communities, prospective beneficiaries of

the proposed fishpen and fish pond projects submitted by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources to SAAD.

Director Aydogdu said that TIKA Philippines has collaborated with SAAD in the past and has already provided interventions to selected beneficiaries of SAAD program in other regions of the Philippines in 2019 and 2020 but has temporarily stopped during the pandemic

due to travel restrictions. “Through SAAD we can easily reach people and we are glad to be able to help them,” Dir. Aydogdu added. He was particularly impressed with the significant number of beneficiaries who will benefit from the projects if realized.

Director Aydogdu has seen the vegetable production areas of the SAAD beneficiaries which are very far from the market centers. Having a large winged truck for the main roads, as well as a smaller hauling truck for the inner or far flung areas could be a great boost to their enterprises.

The SAAD implementers in Sorsogon also lament the lack of hauling trucks that they can use in the delivery of inputs to the beneficiaries particularly in the very remote areas. At present, they are borrowing trucks from the Local Government Units and oftentimes have to wait for days for the trucks to be available.

Dr. Rodriguez thanked Director Aydogdu for visiting Bicol to personally evaluate the SAAD sites. “We are really thankful to the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency for giving time to study and consider our proposal,” Dr. Rodriguez added.

(Lovella P. Guarin)



DA, FCAs sign MOA for INSPIRE Swine Production



SAN AGUSTIN, PILI CAMARINES SUR. The signing of Memorandum of Agreement for INSPIRE program between the Department of Agriculture Bicol and intended beneficiaries was held recently at the Field Operations Division Building this municipality. INSPIRE stands for Integrated National Swine Production Initiatives for Recovery and Expansion.

One component of the program is the Swine Clustering which aims to institute biosecurity and disease control measures through a strong collaboration between and among the Department of Agriculture, its relevant agencies, with concerned Local Government Units (LGU), and stakeholders. A total of Ps. 236,500,000.00 will be allocated and transferred by

the DA RFO- 5 to qualified Farmer Cooperatives and Association (FCA) regionwide. The fund will be divided among 43 clusters with P5.5 million allocation for each cluster namely: Albay-10 ; Camarines Norte-8 ; Camarines Sur-15 ; Catanduanes 1; Sorsogon- 9 clusters. This will aid in the successful implementation of the project entitled "Community -based Swine production through Clustering and Consolidation under the INSPIRE program.

The project aims to increase local swine inventory of pork supply through production of heads finishers and provide additional source of food and income to the farmer members.

Regional Executive Director Rodel Tornilla led the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement together with Dr. Mary Grace Rodriguez, chief of Field Operations Division. Director Tornilla tagged the partner/ collaborators as Big and small brothers and sisters to help hog raisers produce quality and

serve as inspiration to those who are willing to participate.

Dir. Tornilla announced that the said project will also provide funds for the construction of modern facilities with climate- controlled system and biosecurity and provision/purchase of feeds and piglets. "Kailangan natin mag re-stock para bumalik sa dati and supply at presyo ng baboy," he said . He thanked the involved parties for their support and participation . Farmer Cooperatives and Associations were: Quipia Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Cooperative; Labo Multi-Purpose Cooperative (LMPC);



adequate hogs since the supply of swine has declined resulting to high price of pork products due to the occurrence of the African Swine Fever and the pandemic. Their role as big and small brothers and sisters will

Camarines Sur Multi-Purpose Cooperative (CSMPC); Pinoy lingap Damayan Multipurpose Cooperative (PLDC); Talisaynon Multi-Purpose Cooperative.

(Blesilda A. Nuñez)

Over 84K Bicol rice farmers receive P5,000 RFFA

SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR - A total of 84,053 rice farmers in Bicol have already received P5,000 cash assistance under the DA – Rice Farmers Financial Assistance (RFFA) as of this writing. In Albay, 27,078 rice farmers received the cash assistance;

7,446 farmers in Camarines Norte; 9,484 in Camarines Sur; 5,432 in Catanduanes; 16, 881 in Masbate;

and 17,732 in Sorsogon. This accounts for 95% of the total target of 88,118 smallholder rice

farmers cultivating two hectares or less and are registered in the Registry System for Basic

Division (AMAD) for cancellation and replacement with eligible beneficiaries.

(Lovella P. Guarin)



Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA) in Bicol. The names of beneficiaries found to be ineligible to claim the cash assistance like those who are already working abroad or deceased have been submitted to DA Central Office by the DA Bicol – Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance



Published quarterly by the: Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Information Section (RAFIS) Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office No. 5

Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office No. 5 San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Information Section (RAFIS) 5

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