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BAGONG PILIPINAS SERBISYO FAIR NATIONAL LAUNCH

CAMARINES SUR POLYTECHNIC COLLEGE
NABUA, CAMARINES SUR
23 SEPTEMBER 2023

**DA served 10,345
beneficiaries as Pres.
Marcos launches Bagong
Pilipinas in Camarines Sur**

By Lovella P. Guarin

NABUA, CAMARINES SUR - President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. led the launch of Bagong Pilipinas Serbisyo Fair at the Camarines Sur Polytechnic Colleges here on September 23, 2023.

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**NFA-Council raises buying price
of palay for P19 to P23 for dry
and P16 to 19 for fresh**

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UMASENSO EDITORIAL STAFF

LOVELLA P. GUARIN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

JAYSON M. GONZALES
ANNIELYN L. BALEZA
MICHELLE ANGELA G. ALFIGURA
WRITERS

EDUARDO D. COLLANTES JR.
IT/PHOTOGRAPHER

VINCENT EMIL A. PASUMBAL
IT/ENCODER, CIRCULATION

RAMON C. ADVERSARIO JR.
HERMITO ANTONIO T. PRIVALDOS
ZANDRA G. ABOGADO
PHOTOGRAPHERS

ROGER A. BANDOJO
LAYOUT ARTIST

MARITES C. DILLA
LIAISON, CIRCULATION

LITA V. ESTRELLA
CIRCULATION

CONTRIBUTOR:
PAULINE TRIXIA D. BORJA
(SAAD Bicol Information Officer)

ADVISERS

RODEL P. TORNILLA, MABE
Regional Executive Director

LUZ R. MARCELINO **EDGAR R. MADRID, DPM**
Regional Technical Director for Operations Regional Technical Director for Research and Regulations

EDITORIAL

Let us help ease the burden on our RICE

Rice is a highly political commodity being the staple food of the Filipinos. Save for some who are on a 'no white rice diet', most of us could not live a day staying active until 5pm without eating a cup or two of rice throughout the day.

The public, particularly the rice consumers were therefore flabbergasted when in the last week of August this year the consuming public saw the continuous soaring of the market prices of rice. Some even reached as high as P60.00 per kilo in Metro Manila and even in some provinces.

Thus, President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr., in response to the recommendations of DA and DTI as well as of the major rice stakeholders, issued Executive Order No. 39 prescribing a price ceiling of P41.00 /kilo for Regular Milled Rice and P45.00/kilo for Well-Milled Rice.

Thanks to the rice retailers who immediately obeyed the EO, our kababayans particularly the marginal sectors, were able to access quality rice in a lower price. Some retailers who have earlier bought their stocks at higher prices were not intimidated by the EO, but the DA Bantay Presyo Team's issuance of Non-compliance Certificate prompted them to follow the price ceiling.

Furthermore, to help stabilize the farmgate price of palay, the National Food Authority (NFA) Council led by President Marcos raised the price range for palay buying price from P19.00 to P23.00 for dry palay and from P16.00 to P19.00 for the fresh palay starting September 18, 2023.

We don't know until when this EO 39 will last as only President Marcos upon recommendation of the Price Coordinating Council or the DA and DTI, can lift the said EO.

The DA for its part, has been doing gigantic steps to increase rice production through the provision of free high yielding rice seeds, fertilizer as well as cash subsidies and machineries to rice farmers.

It is now up to us consumers to be intelligent in our decisions so as not to be so much affected with the fluctuating prices of rice in the market.

This October, as we celebrate World Food Day, let us be mindful of our food wastes in our households and community and let us take steps to reduce it. Learn to let go of "unli-rice", kumuha lang ng kanin na kayang ubusin. Turn to other sources of carbohydrates such as corn, sweet potato and other rootcrops, nuts, other grains.

Easing every household's demand on rice will help its supply cope with the ever growing demand for it. This give and take efforts of the government and the consuming public will help rice prices to remain stable and affordable for the ordinary Filipino consumer.

DA Bicol gets ISO 9001:2015 certificate of registration

By Lovella P. Guarin

SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR - The Department of Agriculture Regional Office in Bicol recently received the Registration Certificate with certificate number 23/17996 for ISO 9001:2015 compliance.

ISO stands for International Organization for Standardization.

The said ISO registration certificate cited that the management system of the DA Bicol has been assessed by A Cube Tic Limited and registered against the requirements of ISO 9001:2015 on June 27, 2023. The registration is valid until June 26, 2026.

A total of 104 procedures and 103 work instructions of all operating units of DA Bicol were included in the ISO certification. The awarding ceremony was held in Manila on August 10, 2023.

AJA Sertifikasi Indonesia President Lilian Kallman; Czharina Buaquena, Certification Manager and Engr. Margel Jajurie, Principal Consultant awarded the ISO certificate. It was received by the DA Bicol ISO Team headed by ISO facilitator Rosario C. Sales.

The certifying body is a member of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA). It will be recalled that DA Bicol passed the ISO Quality Management System on-site Audit conducted by the 3rd party certifying body PT AJA Sertifikasi Indonesia in April this year.



MR. RODEL P. TORNILLA
Regional Executive Director
Department of Agriculture
Regional Field Office No.5
San Agustin, Pili, Camarines Sur

Dear Director Tornilla,

Greetings from the Provincial Local Government Unit of Sorsogon!

Foremost is extending to you our sincerest gratitude for supporting our "Kabuhayan" Program which is under the 7K Flagship Program of my administration. The "Kabuhayan" Program is actually the first among my 7K economic agenda which is about improving income of marginalized Sorsoganons that translates particularly to food. To do this, our Province's capacity to produce the staple food must be improved; and what is a better way to achieve it than enhancing farm productivity. And so, we are most grateful to your office for allocating our Province fifteen thousand bags (15,000) of Urea which are part of China's donation to the Philippines; the highest number of bags allotted compared to other Provinces in Bicol Region. This act of generosity has always had significant impact on how our Plans, Programs and Activities (PPAs) to our farmers progress. As such, allow me to commend you in fully supporting us with our fertilizers' request; and I am quite confident that our collaborative undertaking will flourish making way for a better institutional arrangement between our agencies.

Again, thank you and warmest regards.

Very truly yours,

(Sgd.) **EDWIN "Boboy" B. HAMOR**
Governor

— Thank You Letter —

DA Bicol intensifies monitoring compliance of rice retailers to EO 39

By Lovella P. Guarin

SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR – The Department of Agriculture in Bicol has intensified the monitoring of rice prices in the major markets in the six Bicol provinces following the issuance of Executive Order No. 39 mandating the price ceilings on rice.

From the previous weekly price monitoring, the Bicol Bantay Presyo Task Force is now conducting daily price monitoring.

Rice retailers in the Naga City public market in Camarines Sur were the first to comply with the P41.00/kilo price ceiling for Regular Milled Rice (RMR) and P45.00 /kilo ceiling on Well-Milled Rice (WMR) even during the first day of implementation on Sept. 5 while other provinces followed in the succeeding days.

DA Bicol Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla strengthened the existing Bantay Presyo Team of DA Bicol and deputized the Agricultural Program Coordinating Officers

(APCOs) of the six provinces as part of the Bantay Presyo monitoring team together with the technical staff of the Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division.

Tornilla also met with the representatives of the regional and provincial offices of the National Food Authority (NFA), the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) to harmonize the efforts of the said agencies. The National Food Authority, which is the expert in differentiating the regular from the well-milled rice was also included in the Bantay Presyo Task Force.

Tornilla said that the Task Force is set to continue monitoring even on Saturdays and Sundays and will issue a Notice of Violation (NOV) to rice retailers found to be non-compliant with the price cap.

Earlier, the Department of Social Welfare and Development released the guidelines for the provision of a P15,000 Sustainable Livelihood Program Economic Relief Subsidy (SLP ERS) to the affected rice retailers.

To boost the supply of rice within the price ceilings in the region, the DA Bicol will provide logistical support to the 30 Farmers Cooperatives and Associations (FCA) recipients of Rice Processing Centers to help strengthen their palay buying and rice retailing activities.

Tornilla said that there are sufficient rice stocks in Bicol as the region was 112% rice sufficient last year (PSA Report) and based on the data from the Philippine Rice Information System satellite data, palay harvest this September in Camarines Sur alone is estimated to reach 76,000 MT and 53,000 MT in October.

As of this writing, the average price of fresh palay in Camarines Sur ranges from P17.00 to P21.50 and P21.00 to P24.00 for dry palay.



NFA-Council raises buying price of palay for P19 to P23 for dry and P16 to 19 for fresh

The National Food Authority (NFA) Council led by President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. raised the price range for palay buying price from P19.00 to P23.00 for dry palay and from P16.00 to P19.00 for the fresh palay starting September 18, 2023.

Itinakda ng National Food Authority (NFA) Council ang buying price para sa “dry” na palay sa PHP 19.00 hanggang PHP 23.00 kada kilo, at sa PHP 16.00 hanggang PHP 19.00 naman kada kilo ang “wet” palay.

Ayon kay Pangulong Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., napagdesisyonan ito para masiguro ang maayos na hanapbuhay para sa mga magsasaka habang ginagawa ring abot-kaya ang bigas para sa mga mamimili.

Rice retailers in Bicol start getting P15,000 SLP ERS

By Lovella P. Guarin



NAGA CITY – Through the combined efforts of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), the distribution of P15,000 Sustainable Livelihood Program Economic Relief Subsidy (SLP ERS) to rice retailers in Bicol commenced today.

In Naga City, the distribution was held at the Robinsons Place in Triangulo. A total of 67 micro rice retailers are targeted to be provided with cash assistance totaling P1,005,000.00.

Present during the distribution in Naga City were DSWD Assistant Regional Director Melchor L. Sanano; DA Bicol -

Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance (AMAD) chief Adelina A Losa; DTI Camarines Sur provincial director Jay Percival S. Ablan; and DILG Cam. Sur Provincial Director Julius Rodel Cal-Ortiz.

The same distribution is happening today in Sorsogon City and Legazpi City. In Legazpi City, some 154 micro rice retailers will receive a total of P2,310,000.00, while in Sorsogon City, 179 micro rice retailers are target recipients of a total P2,685,000.00.

The distribution of SLP ERS will continue tomorrow for the provinces of Camarines Norte, Catanduanes, and Masbate.

DA Bicol pledges support to 2022 Census of Agriculture and Fisheries

LEGAZPI CITY – The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) Region 5 recently conducted a press launch to mark the start of the 2022 Census of Agriculture and Fisheries. The press launch was held at Kanzo Restaurant in this city on September 1, 2024.

According to Cynthia Perdiz, Regional Director of PSA in Bicol, 1,322 barangays are targeted as respondents in Bicol. For Albay – 241 barangays; Camarines Norte – 110 barangays; Camarines Sur – 351 barangays; Catanduanes – 149 barangays; Masbate – 231 barangays and Sorsogon – 240 barangays. For the country, over 16,000 barangays are targeted where all households were chosen as respondents.

Director Perdiz added that PSA collaborated with the DA in formulating the questions and selection of words used in the questionnaires.

Meanwhile, Dan Lucena, Chief Statistical Specialist of PSA presented the methodology for the census which included 1) computer-aided personal interview using tablet; 2) paper and pen; 3) telephone interview; and self-administered questionnaire.

The contents of the CAF 2022 included an inventory of the country's agri-fishery resources; basic information on the kind of crops planted, the area planted, area harvested, emerging crops, farm practices, kind and number of livestock, inventory of species; housing, and presence of contract growers.

NEDA Region 5 Assistant Regional Director Cynthia Edna Berces in her message of support acknowledged the challenges of the agri-fishery sector. She highlighted the strategies laid down in the Bicol Regional Development Plan 2023-2028 specifically chapter 7 on Modernizing Agriculture and Agribusiness. These include strengthening the capacities for research and development to promote innovation; expanding participation in value-adding agri-fishery products, and integrating disaster risks in agri-fishery plans, programs and projects.

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(L-R) Ruben Peyra of BFAR5; Dan Luceña of PSA 5; Cynthia Perdiz, PSA 5 Regional Director; Cynthia Edna Berces, ARD of NEDA 5; and Lovella Guarin, DA 5 Spokesperson.

2023 Outstanding Rural Woman of Bicol hits the jackpot in hybrid corn production

By Lovella P. Guarin



SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR – A 62-year old farmer and chieftain of Agta Tabangnon Tribe in San Vicente, Buhi, Camarines Sur is this year's regional winner in the Search for Outstanding Rural Woman or Katangi-tanging Kababaihan sa Kanayunan in Bicol.

Vilma Coronel received the P50,000 cash award on September 13, 2023 during the simple awarding ceremony held at the PMED Audio Visual Room at DA Compound.

Coronel cultivates a 2.9-hectare integrated farm where she grows rice, corn, vegetables and coconut. She also processes coconut husk into different products like ropes and plant holders. But the major income earner on her farm is her hybrid corn. Just recently, she harvested 220 sacks of dried hybrid corn (at 50 kilos per sack) from her 1.3-hectare corn area which she sold at P18.00 per kilo in a local comprada. Hence, she earned a gross sales of P198,000.00. Based on her harvest, her average yield is 8.46 MT/hectare which is a far cry from the 2022 regional average yield of 3.92 MT/Ha.

She was teary-eyed during the awarding as she admitted that it was her first time to be recognized for an award. "Bilang leader po ako ng tribo, ngayon lang ako nakaranas ng ganitong patimpalak, May karapatan din po pala kami bilang tribo. Dae ko po talaga malilingawan an tabang kan DA dahil halos gabos po na pangangaipo nyamo, hali po igdi sa DA region 5 saka sa LGU ng Buhi. Dae po matatawaran an tabang nindo samo. Lalo na pag may mga kalamidad, yaon po tulos an pag responde ninda," she said.

She thanked DA Bicol Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla, GAD focal person Aloha Gigi Banaria and other DA staff for the support extended to her.

Meanwhile, the 1st runner-up was Mercy M. Bajado of Bula, Cam. Sur. She received P30,000. The 2nd runner up was Judith Tolledo of Gigmoto, Catanduanes. Tolledo received P20,000. She was accompanied by Mayor Vicente Tayam of Gigmoto. Gilda B. Rafer of San Vicente, Cam. Norte and Maria Luz Barcelon of Daraga Albay received P5,000 consolation prizes plus garden tools.

Coronel is Bicol Region's contender to the National Search for Outstanding Rural Women and she was one of the seven contenders who qualified for the national competition. Aloha Gigi I. Banaria, GAD focal person, said that the search for Outstanding Rural Woman is an annual undertaking to recognize the efforts and contributions of rural women in nation building. She added that another awarding ceremony will be held in Sonrisa Farm in Magarao, Cam. Sur on October 12, 2023.

Mayor Vicente Tayam of Gigmoto thanked the DA. "Natawan importansya an kahigusan kan mga kababaihan, lalo na ang mga IPs. Sana padagos pa an arog kaining programa....Kan mga naka-aging aldaw may nag-abot samuya pirang trucks nin abono kaya an bilog na paraoma kan Gigmoto, maugmahon. Willing kaming mag receive kan gabos na programa kan DA," added Mayor Tayam.

The awarding was graced by Regional Technical Director for Operations Luz R. Marcelino; 2017 Outstanding Rural Woman and RAFC Sectoral Committee Chairperson on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Rebecca S. Purisima; members of DA 5 GAD focal system including representatives from BFAR, ATI, and PhilFIDA. (Photos by Eduardo Collantes, Jr. and Hermito Privaldos)



Over a hundred thousand Bicolanos participated in the 2-day caravan cum festival of services where over 40 government agencies brought their programs and social services. President Marcos was welcomed by the leaders of the host province: Camarines Sur Governor Luigi Villafuerte, 5th district Representative Miguel Luis Villafuerte and 2nd district Rep. Luis Raymund Villafuerte.

"Ang Bagong Pilipinas Serbisyo Fair ay isa lamang sa mga unang hakbangin ng pamahalaan upang magkaroon ng bagong pag-asa at bagong simula para sa Pilipinas. Tinipon namin ang iba't-ibang ahensya ng pamahalaan upang sama-samang maghatid ng mga benepisyong magpapagaan sa inyong kalagayan. Alam po namin na marami tayong iniindang hirap sa panahong ito kung kaya't sana ay makatulong ito sainyo nang lubos," Pres. Marcos said.

President Marcos turned over various interventions of the different government agencies to various beneficiary associations and individuals.

From the Department of Agriculture RFO 5 banner programs, he turned over 5 units hauling trucks worth P9.3M; 5 units 4-Wheel Drive Tractor worth P15.2M; and 1 unit lifting machine worth P2.4M. Also from DA 5, five packages of Community Based Swine Production (INSPIRE) for Cam. Sur worth P50M and three packages for Albay worth P30M were turned over to eight farmers associations.

President Marcos also awarded three P300,000-worth checks as financial grant assistance to the three regional winners of the Young Farmers Challenge (YFC). Meanwhile, P1,120,000 financial grant was also given to 14 YFC – Upscale regional qualifiers.

In another venue, at the Nabua National High School, 3,155 farmers received 1 bag of hybrid rice seed and also 1 bag of Urea fertilizer from China and 684 farmers were given fertilizer subsidy through discount vouchers totaling over P1.5 M. DA Senior Undersecretary Domingo F. Panganiban and DA Bicol Regional Executive Director Rodel Tornilla led the distribution.

Some of the DA 5 line agencies also turned over big projects: PhilRice distributed inbred rice seeds worth P7,696,520.00; Philmech turned over 6 units combine harvester worth P13.1M



and 28 units 4-wheel drive tractor worth P61.6M; the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resource (BFAR) turned over 2 units marine fish cage complete package with fingerlings and feeds worth P2M to 2 fisherfolk's associations and 10 units boat with engine worth P732,000 to 10 individual fishers; the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) turned over 20,047 hybrid coconut seedlings worth over P2M, 1 set Coco Sap Products Shared Processing Facility worth P14M and P305,000-worth checks as incentives to coconut farmers; and the National Dairy Authority (NDA) turned over 17 dairy cattle worth P2.5 M.

The DA Bicol banner programs and its attached agencies turned over P568 M worth of interventions to 10,345 Bicolanos during the 2-day serbisyo fair.

At the DA booth in CSPC, 650 RSBSA-registered walk in clients were validated, 700 were provided with IEC materials and approximately 5,000 clients were provided with vegetable seeds and grafted mango, cacao, coffee, pili, and calamansi planting materials.

Some 68 exhibitors participated in the Kadiwa ng Pangulo and garnered P1,575,539.48 sales during the 2-day caravan. The DA-Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD) sponsored 29 farmers cooperatives and Rural Improvement Clubs that earned P930,132.00 sales; five fisherfolk associations were invited by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) and earned P33,938; 18 exhibitors were sponsored by the Department of Trade and Industry with P422,029.48 sales; and 15 exhibitors by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) earned P64,400.00 sales. The National Food Authority also sold 5,000 kilos NFA rice at P25.00 per kilo with P125,000 total sales.

P325,927 worth of agri products were bought by Rep. Migz Villafuerte which were given to the service providers' personnel as incentive during the closing of the caravan on Sunday.

President Marcos also proceeded to the University of Saint Anthony in Iriga City, Cam. Sur where he led the distribution of 25 kilos rice worth P2.5M to 2,000 indigent families and indigenous peoples of Camarines Sur.

The president and concurrent secretary of the Department of Agriculture (DA) was accompanied by his cabinet members: Secretary Bienvenido Laguesma of DOLE; Secretary Alfredo Pascual of DTI; Sec. Benjamin Abalos, Jr. of DILG; Sec. Jaime Bautista of Dept. of Transportation; BIR Commissioner Romeo Lumagui, Jr.; and PNP Chief Benjamin Acorda, Jr. (Photos by RAFIS 5)





DA Bicol rolls out distribution of P10.87M-worth fertilizer discount vouchers to rice farmers in Masbate

By Annielyn L. Baleza

The Department of Agriculture Bicol has rolled out the distribution of fertilizer discount vouchers (FDVs) worth a total of P10.87 million-worth for 3,446 rice farmers from 10 municipalities and one city in the Province of Masbate. About 54 rice farmers from the Municipality of Milagros, Masbate attended the Ceremonial Distribution and Claiming of Fertilizer Discount Vouchers Support to Rice Farmers for the 2023 wet season cropping held at the Masbate Center for Livestock Development Masbate Breeding Center in Brgy. Asid, Masbate City on September 7, 2023.

Each farmer-beneficiary received a fertilizer voucher valued at P4,000 per hectare of actual area planted with inbred or hybrid rice or the equivalent value for a fraction of a hectare. Among the claimable fertilizer grades registered under the Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority (FPA) are complete, urea, ammonium sulfate, ammonium phosphate, and muriate of potash.

Under the Distribution of National Rice Program-Fertilizer Assistance for Rice Farmers Starting 2023 Cropping Seasons, farmer-beneficiaries may claim fertilizer through FDVs that they can present to DA-accredited merchants within the region.

According to Memorandum Circular No. 14 series of 2023, the program aims to augment the fertilizer applied by farmers for rice production in targeted areas by providing fertilizer support via voucher. Only RSBSA-registered farmers whose names are encoded in the Farmers and Fisherfolk Registry System (FFRS) are qualified to benefit from the program. Priority beneficiaries of the program are rice farmers who received high quality seeds from DA, those who planted using their self-procured seeds, and those who intend to plant for the covered cropping season.

Farmers cultivating more than 5 hectares in rice-clustered areas are allowed to receive an equivalent support based on the voucher value while fertilizer support for those in non-clustered rice areas are only limited for up to 5 hectares.

Agricultural Program Coordinating Officer (APCO) for Masbate Wilfredo Nelmida led the ceremonial distribution of FDVs to the farmer-beneficiaries. Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA) Provincial Coordinator Joan Manangat,

LGU-Milagros Rice Coordinator Irene Royo, and Agricultural Technicians Engr. Jovel G. Corlet and Vanessa Almario from the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist in Masbate also graced the event. LGU-Milagros AT Thea Navarro and Rubelyn Villa and APCO staff Denmark Donggon and Ruby Morados were also present during the activity.

The implementation of FDV program is funded under DA's General Appropriations Act 2023 for the 2023 cropping seasons. As of September 13, 2023 DA Bicol has generated a total of 116,568 FDVs worth P420.07 million for the 2023 wet season cropping. These will benefit 111,761 rice farmers with a total farm area of 105,019 hectares. Meanwhile, a total of 51,047 FDVs worth a total of P183.60 million were already claimed by 49,289 farmers.

The DA is using the Interventions Management Platform (IMP), an enhanced version of the Voucher Management Platform featuring reports module and internal dashboard, in implementing the said program.

Distribution of FDVs in other provinces in Bicol will continue until September 14 while waiting for the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) approval of the agency's request for exemption from election-related ban on the release of public funds. *(DA RAFIS V with reports from Ladylyn Nebrea, DA RFO V Rice Program, Ruby Morados, DA APCO Masbate, and Karl Anthony Baylon)*



12 farmer Assn ink MOA with DA, PCA for CFIDP in Cam. Norte

By Lovella P. Guarin

DAET, CAMARINES NORTE – The Department of Agriculture High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP) led the launching and MOA signing for the Coconut-based Cacao and Coffee Enterprise Development Project under CFIDP Year 2 implementation in Camarines Norte.

The Coconut Farmers and Industry Development Plan (CFIDP) developed by the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) was approved by former President Rodrigo Duterte on June 2, 2022. The CFIDP is being funded under the P75-billion Coconut Farmers and Industry Trust Fund created after Pres. Duterte signed RA 11524 or the Act creating the Coconut Farmers and Industry Trust Fund, on Feb. 6, 2021.

Some 24 coconut farmers from the different municipalities of Camarines Norte participated in the three-in-one activity.

The launch and MOA signing was held at Baluzo Farm in Daet, Camarines Norte on September 5, 2023. The MOA signing was followed by a training and actual demonstration on cacao management practices.

Dr. Mary Grace DP. Rodriguez said that the DA-HVCDP will provide packages of interventions funded under the CFIDP consisted of 500 pieces grafted cacao per hectare per farmer complemented with fertilizer and pruning shear. The beneficiaries of the project will be 26 individual farmers coming from 12 farmers associations accredited by the PCA. For Capalonga, Cam. Norte – 3 farmers associations; Labo – 5; San Vicente – 2; Daet – 1; Basud – 2; San Lorenzo Ruiz – 3; Vinzons – 2 farmers associations.

“Sana po ay ating pagyamanin at alagaan ang anumang intervention mula sa DA at sana din po ay magpa lista sa RSBSA at umanib sa mga associations na accredited ng DA dahil

napa-priority po ang mga accredited associations,” added Dr. Rodriguez.

PCA Camarines Norte Provincial Manager Basiliso Ababa represented PCA Regional Manager Mateo Zipagan. He said that the PCA has an allocation of P5 billion per year for the implementation of the CFIDP in the country taking into account the ff: 1) Development of hybrid coconut seed farms and nursery for planting and replanting by PCA, DOST and PCAARRD; 2) Training of farmers and their families; 3) Research, marketing and promotion under DTI; 4) Crop insurance by PCIC; 5) Farm improvements through diversification and /or intercropping with livestock, dairy, poultry, coffee, cacao production by the NDA, DA – HVCDP, and DA-BAI; 6) Shared facilities for processing by PHILMECH for the coconut farmers cooperatives and LGUs for coconut farmers organizations. 7) Credit programs through DBP and LBP; 8) Infrastructure Development by the DPWH in coconut producing LGUs using coco coir and coconut bio-engineering solutions in controlling soil erosion and road construction; 9) Scholarship for farmers and their families by CHED; 10) Health and medical program for farmers and their families.

Nestor Guarana, Jr, Plant Science instructor of Central Bicol State University of Agriculture served as resource speaker together with Rosendo Carullo, HVCDP Nursery staff. Meanwhile, Reymark Balce, owner of Bean and Bean in Cam. Norte discussed the market potentials, demand and required quality of cacao beans during the training.

Also present were Ailyn Rafer, Agricultural Program Coordinating Officer of Camarines Norte; Municipal Agriculturists Eddie Canamero of San Lorenzo Ruiz, and Agricultural Extension Workers of Vinzons, Basud and Labo; Maricris Reforba, Assistant HVCDP Coordinator; DA HVCDP Provincial Coordinator of CFIDP in Camarines Norte – Edton Ecleo, and for Albay – Dexter Paz; Raffy Belardo, Planning Officer of PLGU Cam. Norte and Marilyn Puato, Provincial HVCDP Coordinator. *(Photo by Eduardo Collantes, Jr and Ramon Adversario, Jr.)*



DA Bicol advocates organic lifestyle, calls for increased budget for OA at 14th Bicol Organic Agriculture Congress

By Annielyn L. Baleza



NOAB Luzon Small Farmer Rep Dr. Victorio Fernando D. Nacpil

"Organic agriculture (OA) should be a lifestyle! Wag maging organic rider, 'yung nakikisakay-sakay lang. Dapat maging believer po kayo. Believer is a two-coined word—BEING and LIVING. You are an organic and you are living organic. You are on the right track pag nasa organic ka."

This was underscored by National Organic Agriculture Board Luzon Small Farmer Representative Dr. Victorio Fernando D. Nacpil during the 14th Bicol Organic Agriculture Congress held at the Central Bicol State University of Agriculture Compound in Brgy. San Jose, Pili, Camarines Sur on August 30-31, 2023.

About 200 delegates composed of OA advocates and practitioners, local government units, Department of Agriculture Bicol officials, National and Regional Organic Agriculture Program (N/ROAP) coordinators, CBSUA, and other OA stakeholders participated in the two-day Congress. With the theme, "Kabuhayang OA, Kinabukasang Okay," the activity aimed to promote, propagate,

and develop the OA industry in Bicol. Nacpil graced the event together with Lea Deriquito, Chief of NOAP Advocacy and Policy Division, who represented NOAP Director Bernadette San Juan. Also present were DA RFO V Regional Executive Director Rodel Tornilla, DA RFO V Regional Technical Director for Operations Luz Marcelino, DA RFO V Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division Chief and Regional OA Focal Person Adelina Losa, CBSUA President Alberto N. Naperi, DA RFO V Regulatory Division Chief Rosita Imperial and Agricultural Training Institute Regional Training Center V OIC Assistant Center Director Emmanuel Orogo.

Highlights of the activity were the awarding of certificates to the seven farmer cooperatives and associations (FCAs) who qualified for the FY 2023 OA Livelihood Project (OALP) worth a total of P20.5 million.

DA Bicol also recognized and awarded the scholarship grants to 10 OA youth scholars under the ATI's Youth Scholarship Grant on Organic Farming program. Each of them will receive P5,000-worth of stipend for nine months, start-up support or scholarship grant worth P150,000, and mentoring for the implementation of their business plan.

The Certificate of Accreditation as Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) Organic Certifying Body was also conferred to Pecuaría Development Cooperative during the event.

In his message, Tornilla commended the PDC for being the first PGS organic certifying body in the region.

"I commend the PDC for being one of the pillars of organic agriculture and staunch advocate of sustainable agriculture in Bicol... With the accreditation of Pecuaría Development Cooperative as PGS-certifying body, more organic farms will be able to apply for organic certification," he said.





The officers of the Pecuaría Development Cooperative received the Certificate of accreditation as Participatory Guarantee.

Meanwhile, in a message delivered by Deriquito, San Juan commended the regions including Bicol for attaining several milestones towards the institutionalization of OA in the country such as the development of inputs and technologies for OA and adoption of ordinances allocating funds to support OA activities and programs. She also regarded organic agriculture as an insurance of the future. This is by ensuring farmers' production and income amid the rising cost of synthetic fertilizer through organic fertilizer production and securing the health both of the farmers and consumers through non-exposure to harmful chemicals.

Chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture Senator Cynthia A. Villar lauded the DA N/ROAB's achievements. She enumerated her efforts to support the program particularly the enactment of the Republic Act 11511, amending RA 10068 or the

Organic Agriculture Act of 2010, whom she principally authored and sponsored, that institutionalized the PGS as an alternative organic certification scheme.

To further advance the OA program implementation in the region, Losa presented the Regional OA Plan and Status while Provincial OA Focal Persons discussed their respective OA plans. According to the ROAB, Bicol has a proposed budget worth P39.74 million for OA.

The International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) defines OA as a "production system that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems, and people." OA is one of the six banner programs of the DA. Bicol already has 46,064.46 hectares of agricultural land devoted to OA and 82 organic farmer groups.



DA Bicol pledges...

FROM PAGE 5

Lovella P. Guarin, RAFIS Chief represented DA Bicol Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla. "Through the years, the Philippine Statistics Authority has been the authority when it comes to data. Statistical data is an invaluable input in analyzing trends, patterns and changes in different fields affecting the agri-fishery sector. The Department of Agriculture is ready to extend our utmost support and assistance to the Philippine Statistics Authority to carry out its commitment to empower the agri-fishery sectors with accurate information and actionable insights. I enjoined everyone, every Bicolano household to actively

participate and cooperate in this census and to give only your truthful and complete answers to the census questions," she said.

"Ruben Peyra of BFAR Region V represented Regional Director Ariel Pioquinto.

The census of agriculture and fisheries is a nationwide statistical undertaking to determine the structural characteristics of agri-fishery sectors, provide insights into various crops farming, livestock, poultry, culturing worms and insects, and fishing operations and collect information on the available facilities in the barangays. The enumeration period started on September 4, 2023. (Photo by Raymond Adversario)

DA Bicol continuously helps pineapple farmers of Cam. Norte

By Lovella P. Guarin

SAN AGUSTIN, PILI, CAMARINES SUR – Touted as the sweetest pineapple in the Philippines, Formosa Queen pineapple production in Camarines Norte province is a thriving industry benefitting some 2,359 RSBSA listed pineapple growers. The RSBSA data of DA Bicol as of September 2023 showed that most of the pineapple growers are in Basud (755 farmers), San Lorenzo Ruiz (638), San Vicente (392) and Labo (286).

The harvest season for 2023 started in July and the pineapple growers benefitted from the current high farmgate price of P13.00 to P14.00 per piece for fresh fruits weighing 500 grams to 1,000 grams. The fresh fruits were bought by a number of traders from Camarines Norte and some from Metro Manila through a straight buying scheme or “all in” except for the batterballs which were not included in the scheme.

In Basud, Camarines Norte, this is not a problem as the Caayunan Multipurpose Cooperative buys batterball at P2.00 to P3.00 per piece as the coop processes these fruits into pineapple juice, jam and marmalades.

According to Harry James Felomino, Municipal Agriculturist of Basud, “out of 30,000 pineapple fruits harvested in one hectare, only 2,000 become batterball. There is also a shortage of batterball at this time in Basud as the demand of the Caayunan coop for batterballs is not being met.”

Based on the Planting and Production Report on High Value Crops Development Program submitted by Provincial Agriculturist Almirante Abad to DA Bicol Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla, the municipality of Basud has the biggest area harvested to pineapple in the month of July 2023 with 129.70 MT harvest from the 9.3 hectares. The record also shows that 39 hectares were planted in June 2023 in Basud and scheduled for harvest in September 2024.

Another municipality with pineapple plantations is Jose Panganiban with 29.73 MT produced from 3 hectares area planted. Talisay recorded 51 MT pineapple harvested from 3 hectares out of the 8.5 hectares total area planted.

Ideally, a soil analysis is recommended before planting to determine the lacking nutrients in an area. But only a few avail of the free soil testing at the Regional Soils Laboratory, based on the latter’s records.

The DA Bicol through the conduct of numerous researches on enhancing yield and productivity, has come up with a fertilizer recommendation to achieve optimum productivity of Formosa. One month after planting, each hill should be applied with 10 grams Ammonium phosphate (16-20-0), 5 grams Muriate of Potash (0-0-60). Three months after planting, apply 5 grams urea (46-0-0). Repeat application of urea five months after planting then repeat application of Muriate of Potash. Lastly, apply 5 grams of urea 7 months after planting. Cutting on the fertilizer requirement and frequency of application will result in smaller fruits or “batterball.”

This has been addressed by the DA Bicol through the conduct of different research to help farmers produce bigger fruits using a scientific approach and following the fertilizer recommendation. Aside from research and technical assistance to pineapple farmers, the DA Bicol has continued to pour various interventions to develop the pineapple industry in Camarines Norte. For CY 2023, the HVCDP provided 50,000 kilograms organic fertilizer to five (5) cluster associations; 200 plastic crates; 25 pallets; and one package of technology on pest and disease management. These cluster associations are in the towns of Basud, San Vicente, Talisay, San Lorenzo Ruiz and Labo.

“More projects are in the pipeline for next year such as the P5.96 M interventions for the pineapple clusters consisting of 2 units mini 4 wheel drive tractor (for Basud and San Vicente), 1 unit hauling truck (for San Vicente), 10 units grass cutter, 75 plastic crates, 100 liters foliar fertilizer, and 40 kg soil conditioner,” according to Dr. Mary Grace DP. Rodriguez, Regional HVCDP Coordinator of DA Bicol.

The Labo Progressive Multipurpose Cooperative (LPMPC) with 8,372 members considered the biggest farmers cooperative in Camarines Norte engaged in pineapple processing is a recipient of P19.9 M Pineapple Trading and Processing Project funded under the I-REAP component of the DA-Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) which was completed in 2021.



A mere hobby turned into an enjoyable and viable enterprise

By Lovella P. Guarin

Container gardening used to be a mere hobby for this pretty and spirited young lady of Bacon District in Sorsogon City. But her hobby blossomed into a profitable and sustainable enterprise, as she found a group with whom she shared the same vision.

Nea D. Corral used to be employed in a food chain and later on in a driving academy but when her father was diagnosed with colon cancer, she resigned from her work and took care of her father. Little did she know that the course of her life would have a 360-degree turn.

She started with 10 vegetable seeds given by the Department of Agriculture RFO 5. The urban agriculture program of Sorsogon City LGU also inspired her further to try vegetable growing in plastic containers and other waste materials such as used car tires and softdrink bottles.

"Masaya pala magtanim. Habang tumatagal at nakikita ko na namumunga na ang mga tanim ko, mas lalo akong nag-eejoy. At ang gaganda nila, sing ganda ko!," she said in jest.

Nea is now a certified farmer, agri-preneur and vlogger with 10,000 followers.

She is the President of Bacon Agriculture Association (BASS), with 28 members coming from barangays San Jose and San Roque both in Bacon District. "Nang naging association kami, lumawak yung natataniman namin, hindi na lang yun mga backyard namin. Nakakuha kami ng 3-hectares communal area na rented namin hanggang ngayon at P15,000 per year," she quipped.

In 2021, Nea's group put up a community pantry where their surplus vegetables, and even the fresh harvests, were given for free instead of selling them. As more people lined up for the free vegetables they offered in the community pantry, they became more inspired to plant more and thus looked for more idle lands to plant more short gestating crops.

Luckily, another group, the Bacon Believers Agriculture Coop where Nea is a Board of Director was impressed with their efforts and decided to join their group. The Bacon Believers Agri Coop has 6,000 square meter communal vegetable garden also planted with different kinds of lowland vegetables such as eggplant, string beans, pechay and cucumber. One of the prime movers of the coop is Pastor Eduardo Doloso. Pastor Ed got his inspiration from his father whose lifelong profession was farming.

In April 2023 the two associations together with the beneficiaries of the Special Area for Agricultural Development (SAAD) started participating in SM Sunday Market in Sorsogon. With the group's hardwork and strategy, they were able to sustain the volume needed in the weekly market day. Every market day, they were able to earn from P3,500 up to P5,000 sales. The total sales of all the associations and SAAD beneficiaries every Sunday ranged from P25,000 to P50,000.

They were also among the 56 exhibitors during the launching of the Kadiwa ng Pangulo in Sorsogon City on July 17, 2023.

Included in the package are 3-unit juice-extracting machines which enabled the coop to process 1,860 pineapple fruits (batterball) per day and produce 10,490 pouches of pineapple juice per day. The coop's monthly requirement is 37,200 pieces of batterball per month which is being bought at P4.50 per piece (if delivered to the coop).

The LPMPC has been processing pineapple juice drinks out of fresh Queen pineapple, specifically batterball which is usually not taken by the pineapple traders. The market of the LPMPC products carrying the brand "Queench" is the existing local market, backed up by a Provincial Ordinance to patronize local products in public & private schools, commercial establishments, LGUs, hotels and restaurants in Camarines Norte. Queench juice is also being sold in some coops in Camarines Sur.

Earlier this year the coop also closed a deal with the DepEd for its feeding program, thus, the coop has been able to buy more pineapples from the farmers.

But like any other business, the coop also suffered some setbacks two months ago when the pouch which is being imported from Korea stopped arriving. However, according to John Isuela, Operations Manager of the LPMPC, the pouches are already at the Bureau of Customs in Manila as of this writing. Isuela said that the coop would soon resume buying batterballs once the imported pouches arrived.





DA Bicol joins the International Day of Indigenous People caravan

By Lovella P. Guarin

IRIGA CITY – August 9 is celebrated as International Day of the World's Indigenous People to celebrate their achievements and contributions to the world.

As a fitting tribute to the indigenous peoples (IP), the Department of Agriculture Bicol joined the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) together with the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and other government entities in a one-day caravan dubbed as *Serbisyo para sa mga Katutubo: Pantawid Pamilya Indigenous Peoples' Celebration cum Information and Service Caravan*. The event which was spearheaded by the DSWD and NCIP was attended by the chieftains and members of the different IP tribes of Iriga City.

Mayor Wilfredo Rex C. Oliva of Iriga City presented the programs of the LGU concerning the IPs including "kasalan sa mga tribo" where the LGU is giving one sack of rice and P1,000 cash to the newlywed couples. Mayor Oliva added that the City adheres to the principle that "those who have less in life shall have more from the LGU."

Meanwhile, Asuncion De Leon from the NCIP regional office discussed the ancestral domain delineation and titling services. She said that there are 467 million IPs worldwide. In the Philippines, there are 17 million indigenous people or katutubo, and 222 ethnic groups including Agta and Manide of Bicol.

"Twenty-nine years after the first Indigenous People's Day was celebrated, tayo ay patuloy pa ring naglalakbay, itinatangyod at

kinikilala ang suporta ng mga katutubo," De Leon added. She reminded all entities that are planning to deliver interventions to the IPs to secure a Free, Prior Informed Consent first (FPIC) as mandated by IP Rights Act Law 8371 and NCIP AO 3 series of 2020.

Danicris Orcio, IP Desk Officer of DA Bicol discussed the programs of the DA particularly the *Kabuhayan at Kaunlaran ng Kababayang Katutubo* or 4K Program. "Layunin ng 4K na paunlarin ang Ancestral Agricultural Lands ng ICC/IP upang maging produktibo at mapagkakitaan; bumuo sa kanila ng napapanatiling mga negosyo sa agrikultura, mapataas ang kita at mai-angat ang kanilang kabuhayan." Katulong ng DA sa pagpapatupad ng 4K ang NCIP at mga Municipal Agriculture Office," Orcio said.

Dr. Mary Grace Rodriguez, focal person of 4K in Bicol said that the program started in Bicol in 2021. As of this writing, there are 34 beneficiaries of 4K in Bicol. Five IP communities in Albay; two in Camarines Norte; 16 in Cam. Sur; two in Camarines Norte; nine in Sorsogon.

The DA Bicol team composed of 4K Program and RAFIS distributed IEC materials and vegetable seeds to the participants. Also present were Florentino Ubalde, Permanent Representative to DSWD Regional Advisory Council; and Marcial Bustarga, APCO of Cam. Sur (*RAFIS 5 / photo credit Eduardo Collantes, Jr.*)

PGS Core Groups in Bicol get certified by BAFS

By Lovella Guarin

MAGARAO, CAM. SUR – Ten members of Bicol's pioneer Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) core groups namely Pecuaría Development (PDC) Cooperative in Bula, Camarines Sur and Camarines Norte Federation of Cooperatives (CANOFECO) in Vinzons, Camarines Norte were the first recipients of Participatory Organic Certificates (POC) from DA-Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Standards (BAFS).

From the Pecuaría Development Cooperative (PDC), the five recipients of POC are Franco Pesebre; Archie Tabarangao; Anniebeth Berina; Aldrin Cortez and Jayson Baliber. They were accompanied by PDC General Manager Alejandro Mora Jr. and PDC Chairman Jolly Atole Ludem Molina.

Meanwhile, the members of the Camarines Norte Federation of Cooperatives who received the POCs are Adrian Abordo; Concepcion Palma; Jovie Espanol; Felicísima Velasco and Abel Llander. The awarding was witnessed by the CANOPECO CEO Norma F. Dasco together with Merwin I. Celadez and Jan Lidley D. Velasco, also of CANOPECO.

The POC is a pre-requisite for the accreditation of the group to PGS as Organic Certifying Body.

The IFOAM Organics defined Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) as locally focused quality assurance systems used in certifying producers based on active participation of stakeholders and are built on a foundation of trust, social networks and knowledge exchange.

Adelina A. Losa, Chief of the AMAD and focal person of Organic Agriculture Program said that POC also serves as an official endorsement and proof that the core groups underwent inspections and have shown compliance with the current Philippine Standards for Organic Agriculture.

The awarding of Participatory Guarantee Certificate was held at the Sonrisa Farm on July 11, 2023 during the 2023 Mid-year Assessment and Planning Workshop of the National Organic Agriculture Program.

Pecuaría Development Coop passes BAFS' PGS accreditation audit

By Lovella Guarin

BULA, CAMARINES SUR - The Pecuaría Development Cooperative (PDC) recently passed the audit conducted by the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Standards (BAFS). The PDC is the first PGS Organic Certifying Body in Bicol.

The BAFS, one of the bureaus of the Department of Agriculture, recently conducted an office and witness audit to verify the compliance of the PDC. The audit which was held on August 15-18, 2023 was witnessed by the teams from Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division and Regulatory Division.

The audit aims to verify the PDC's compliance with the amended Organic Agriculture Act of 2010 (RA 11511) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations including the Participatory Organic Certification Scheme.

The BAFS assessment team was composed of Vicente D. Limsan, Jr, Team Leader; Clarisse Jill R. Guevarra, member and Joeve S. Calleja, observer.



The team assessed the effectiveness of the Manual of Operations and Internal Standards; the competence of the peer reviews in conducting farm inspection; as well as documented information.

Adelina A. Losa, Organic Agriculture focal person of DA Bicol said that the awarding of the PGS Certificate to PDC will be held during the 14th Bicol Organic Agriculture Congress (BOAC) to be held at the Central Bicol State University of Agriculture on August 30, 2023.

Another coop, the Camarines Norte Federation of Cooperatives (CANOFECO) in Vinzons, Camarines Norte will also undergo the same audit on August 29 to Sept. 2, 2023 in connection with their PGS accreditation as an organic certifying body.

Construction of 17 DA PRDP-funded infra subprojects to benefit 121,014 population in Masbate underway

By Annielyn L. Baleza

Rolando C. Jepiga of Brgy. San Isidro Uson, Masbate used to work as a rice and corn farmer. However, with the rising cost of production inputs like seeds and fertilizers plus the high-priced hauling and fare rates that reach up to P500, Jepiga made the decision to temporarily give up farming in favor of working as a laborer as an alternative source of income.

"Five years na akong tumigil sa pagsasaka dahil mahirap ang daanan. Kapag okay na ang daanan, babalik na ako sa pag-araro (I temporarily gave up farming due to problems with transportation. But after this is concreted, I will resume in cultivating my farm)," he said.

With the ongoing implementation of the 10.26-kilometer Concreting of Del Carmen to San Ramon FMR With Bridge, Jepiga may return to his original occupation in less than a year. He is among the 121,014 population beneficiaries of the 17 ongoing infrastructure development (I-BUILD) subprojects in the Province of Masbate, funded under the Department of Agriculture Philippine Rural Development Project (DA PRDP) second additional financing.

Five of said I-BUILD subprojects were personally inspected by DA PRDP Project Support Office (PSO) South Luzon Project Director Milo D. Delos Reyes and the technical team from PSO South Luzon and Regional Project Coordination Office (RPCO) Bicol headed by Deputy Project Director Adelina A. Losa on July 18-20, 2023. These include the 11.16-kilometer Concreting of Dao to Bungcanaway Farm-to-Market Road (FMR) With Bridge in Balud now with 39.94 percent physical progress; the 8.10-kilometer Concreting of San Carlos to Magsalangui FMR in Milagros with 97.06 percent physical progress; and the 9.06-kilometer Concreting of San Antonio to San Carlos FMR With Bridge in Uson and Milagros with 63.31 percent physical progress.

The DA PRDP team also evaluated the implementation of the 14.14-kilometer Concreting of Del Carmen to Malatawan Farm to Market Road in Uson, Masbate which now has 92.16 percent physical accomplishment; the 15.79-kilometer Concreting of Segment (A) Palobandera to Dalipe and Segment (B) Calumpang to Iraya Farm-to-Market Road in Cawayan, Masbate with 75.04 percent physical accomplishment; and the 10.26-kilometer Concreting of Del Carmen to San Ramon FMR With Bridge in Uson with 71.69 percent physical accomplishment.

According to Delos Reyes, the series of site inspection conducted aimed to ensure the quality of the DA PRDP-funded subprojects' implementation in the province. During the Exit Conference, he lauded the DA PRDP team and its partners from the Provincial Project Management and Implementation Unit (PPMIU) and contractors' initial works on-site.

"Nakita namin 'yung quality ng trabaho. My impression is kumbaga, kung iri-rate ko 'yung trabaho ng mga kontratista dito ng 1-10, siguro 11, kasi unang-una nagsakripisyo kayo. Hindi ninyo inalintana 'yung peace and order problem and I know na matatapos ninyo on time itong mga projects na naka-assign sainyo (We have observed the quality of your work. My impression is that, on a scale of 1 to 10, I would give your contractors' work an 11 because, first of all, you made a sacrifice. The issue with maintaining peace and order didn't bother you. And I am certain that you will complete the subprojects you have been given on schedule)," he said.

Nestor A. Refil, a farmer from Sitio Tambubo in Brgy. San Andres Balud, related the emerging benefits of the ongoing construction of the Concreting of Dao to Bungcanaway Farm-to-Market Road (FMR) With Bridge.

"Dati inaabot ng kalahating oras mula Sitio Tambubo papuntang Brgy. Dao, ngayon mga 15 minutes na lang. Dati panaginip lang ito noon, pangarap. Ngayon, andito na, natupad na. Maraming salamat sa PRDP sa ginawa nila sa mga taga-dito (Previously, going to

Brgy. Dao from Sitio Tambubo required 30 minutes travel. Now, it takes just 15 minutes. Before, this was just a dream. It is here now. Thank you so much to PRDP for bringing about change in our community)," he said.

As of July 25, 2023, Masbate has 17 ongoing I-BUILD SPs spanning 175.81 kilometers including 123 linear meters of bridges worth a total of P3.68 billion. These SPs are funded under the DA PRDP's second additional financing. Six of said subprojects namely the Concreting of Calpi to Cawayan FMR in Claveria; Concreting of Del Carmen to Malatawan FMR in Uson; Concreting of Puro to Camayabsan FMR in Placer; Concreting of Segment (A) Palobandera to Dalipe and Segment (B) Calumpang to Iraya Farm-to-Market Road in Cawayan, Masbate; Concreting of San Carlos to Magsalangui FMR in Milagros; and the Concreting of San Agustin to Macabug FMR With Bridge in Aroroy, Masbate are set for completion this year while the rest are targeted for accomplishment in 2024. (PRDP RPCO V InfoACE Unit)





Sorsogon farmers from SAAD Phase 1 set to receive cash assistance from DSWD-SLP

By Pauline Trixia D. Borja

SORSOGON – Having shown exemplary performance among farmers' associations (FAs) supported by the Department of Agriculture – Special Area for Agricultural Development (DA-SAAD) Program in Sorsogon, 45 members from seven (7) SAAD Phase 1 FAs are set to receive Php 900,000.00 cash assistance from the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

Selected individuals are members of Embarcadero Agri-Itik Farmers Association, Green Thumb Catanagan Farmers Association, Bacolod Women Organic Farmers Association, EMTUCABI Rice Farmers Association, and Taboc Organic Farmers Association from Juban; Naspi Agricultural Workers Association (NAWA), and Brgy. Pineda Productive Farmers Association from Pilar; and Gimagaan Indigenous People Farmers Association from Donsol. These FAs are in the list of SAAD Phase 1 beneficiaries endorsed by SAAD Bicol Region to the Local Government Units (LGUs) of Sorsogon.

This year, with the DSWD's National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) or Listahanan and Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) listing of target beneficiaries, these individuals are among the households interviewed and collected with household composition, education, and housing conditions. The farmers' data are then assessed, validated, and run through the agency's database to ensure that only those who deserve to be included on the list are there, that no one is

mistakenly left off, and that services are administered fairly and equitably.

Prior to SAAD Phase 1 conclusion, SAAD and DSWD's SLP has joint effort under the direction of the Enhanced Partnership Against Hunger and Poverty (EPAHP) Program, an inter-agency task force ensuring the whole-of-government approach to eradicating hunger and achieving food security created by the virtue of Executed Order No. 101. As part of the partnership, DSWD-SLP Field Office collaborated with DA-SAAD Program in Bicol in selecting potential individuals to benefit from the cash assistance with the latter's primary objective of enhancing their quality of life by providing capital funds and capability training aligned with marketing, thereby enhancing their potential as entrepreneurs. This last quarter of FY 2023, each of the individual members will receive Php 20,000 cash assistance.

Naspi Agricultural Workers' Association (NAWA) member, Ms. Maribel Lopez extended her gratitude to both parties. "Dahil po sa SAAD, natawan ako nin saro pang oportunidad na mapili sa matatawanan kan DSWD na cash assistance na magsisirbing kapital para sa sakuyang magiging negosyo. Dakulaong bagay po ini para sakuya para pandagdag hanap-buhay para sa sakuyang pamilya," said Ms. Lopez

(Because of SAAD, I was given an opportunity to receive assistance from DSWD, which will serve as capital for my enterprise. This additional livelihood assistance is truly a big help for me and my family.)

Moreover, as part of the social preparation component of the SLP project, the DSWD in partnership with the Department of Trade Industry (DTI) will be conducting a Microenterprise Development, Organizational and Leadership Training on September to prepare and guide the participants in improving their socio-economic condition by executing and producing sustainable enterprises in the future.

Writer: Pauline Trixia D. Borja, SAAD Bicol Information Officer
Sources: Mary Rose Detera, SAAD Associate Project Officer
Photos: SAAD Program Sorsogon





DA Bicol to select top three YFC Upscale regional winners

By Annielyn L. Baleza

Fifteen contestants vying for the Young Farmers Challenge Upscale Regional Level pitched their business proposals to the Department of Agriculture (DA) Bicol YFC panel of evaluators during the YFC Upscale Screening and Selection held at the DA Regional Field Office Compound in Pili, Camarines Sur on September 13-14, 2023.

Among the YFC Upscale Regional Competition finalists were Allan Cinco of Masbate City (PalanDOY Integrated Farm); Monalisa Balon of Daet, Camarines Norte (J&M Chicken Farm); Ma. Sheila Silguera of Milagros, Masbate (Mash Integrated Farm); Angelica Porto of Ticao, Camarines Sur (Porto Kitchen); Jeremy Rubio of Mandaon, Masbate (Jhem Integrated Farm); Rey Mallorca of Daraga, Albay (Farm to Table: Young Farmers Backyard Piggery, Meatshop and Processed Meat Products); and Michelle Magsino of Labo, Camarines Norte (Chellycious Food Products).

Other finalists were: Sunshine Balang of Sipocot, Camarines Sur (RS Native Pig Farm); Arjay Borbe of Tinambac, Camarines Sur (Kaniguan Pet Park); Joshua Ros of Ligao City, Albay (BlackJ); Ressa Ann Sibulo of San Fernando, Camarines Sur (Ann's Mushroom Farm); Roberto Diesta of Guinobatan, Albay (The Honey Pot); Roy Cardino of Legazpi City, Albay (Boboy's Itlog Pugo); Carine Virtus of Bula, Camarines Sur (Animatik Integrated Farm); and Rochelle Parica of Iriga City (Hydroparix Integrated Farm).

Each contestant presented their proposed agri-fishery enterprise based on prescribed format focusing on product offers, resources needed, investment requirement, sales, return of investment and payback period. Their proposed business plans were evaluated in terms of their creativity and business innovation, enterprise

performance, social responsibility, business viability, and business sustainability.

DA Bicol Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division Chief and YFC Focal Person Adelina Losa as well as Department of Trade and Industry Trade Industry Development Specialists German Celeres and Arianne Joy Encinas served as panel of evaluators. Meanwhile, DA Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP) Bicol Business Development Officer Glenn Balana, DA PRDP Bicol Enterprise Development and Marketing Specialist Victoria Eugene S. Florece, and DA Bicol Livestock and Poultry Program Technical Staff Dr. Jomar Azada acted as technical consultants.

The DA Bicol YFC team will announce the top three regional awardees of the YFC on September 18, 2023. The three regional awardees will get P300,000-worth of financial grant to serve as their additional capital. The top 1 awardee will compete at the national level competition, get a chance to win P500,000 additional capital, and receive a YFC Upscale Mentoring Assistance, a customized mentorship to be conducted by a panel of coaches composed of agribusiness practitioners, academe, start-up enterprises experts, and DA technical staff in order to improve their business pitch deck, business plan, and enterprise implementation. YFC Upscale is one of the three components of the YFC Program designed to assist the YFC program awardees to scale-up their existing agri-fishery enterprise operation by providing them with additional capital in the form of competitive financial grant assistance. Previous YFC awardees aspiring to improve their current agribusiness operations participated in the contest. *(DA RAFIS V with reports from Janard Manlangit and Julie Ann P. Santos, DA AMAD V) Photo Credits: Zandra G. Abogado and Annielyn L. Baleza*



Newly elected RAFC officers, sectoral committees and PAFC Chairpersons take oath

The newly elected Regional Agricultural and Fishery Council (RAFC) Executive Committee Officers, sectoral committees as well as Provincial AFC chairpersons took their oath of office at the PMED Audio Visual Room on August 22, 2023.

Melinda T. Quinonez, Chief of the Partnership Development Section of Philippine Council for Agriculture and Forestry (PCAF) personally led the blended oath taking ceremony participated in by over 90 elected officials.

Bernadette B. de los Santos was re-elected as Chairperson; Benedicto Palmares – Vice Chairperson; Rebecca S. Purisima – Secretary; Annielen L. Panerio – Treasurer; Claudia Honrado – Auditor; and Raul Carreras – PRO.

RAFC Execom Officer	
BERNADETTE B. DE LOS SANTOS	Chairperson
BENEDICTO PALMARES	Vice-Chairperson
Rebecca S. Purisima	Secretary
Annielen L. Panerio	Treasurer
Claudia Honrado	Auditor
Raul T. Carreras	PRO

RAFC Sectoral Chairperson	
Annielen L. Panerio	Chairperson, Rice and other Food Staple
Joseph O. Sarmiento	Chairperson, Poultry and Livestock
Imelda R. Belda	Chairperson, Fisheries and Aquaculture
Joeriz P. Olbes	Chairperson, Fruits and Vegetables
Manuel P. Alagaban, Sr.	Chairperson, Corn and Feed Crops
Rebecca S. Purisima	Chairperson, Gender Equality & Social Inclusion
Engr. Raul T. Carreras	Chairperson, Agriculture and Fishery Mechanization
Marlon B. Medes	Chairperson, Coconut
Claudia Honrado	Chairperson, Cacao
Roberto N. Diesta	Chairperson, Youth in Agriculture and Fishery
Benedicto A. Palmares	Chairperson, Fiber Crops & PAFC Cam Norte Chairperson
Bernadette B. delos Santos	Chairperson, Climate Change Environment and Natural Resources

PAFC & ICCAFC Chairpersons	
Mr. Efren Fragata	Chairperson, PAFC Cam. Sur
Mr. Rene De los Reyes	Chairperson, PAFC Albay
Mr. Noe Ocbian	Chairperson, PAFC Sorsogon
Ms. Anita A. Tasarra	Chairperson, PAFC Catanduanes
Mr. Neil Anthony Aban	Chairperson, PAFC Masbate
Mr. Alfredo Gatongay	Chairperson, ICCAFC Naga

The new Regional, Provincial and ICCAFCI officers elected last July ____, 2023 will hold office for three years from 2023 to 2026.

Mayon evacuees...

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women of NFA, DSWD and other government institutions who are working doubly hard, I am assured that the delivery of basic services to the public will be served outstandingly,” Panganiban added.

Also present during the turn over were DA Bicol Regional Executive Director Rodel P. Tornilla; Albay Governor Edcel Greco Lagman; Camalig Mayor Carlos Irwin Baldo; Sto. Domingo Mayor Jun Aguas; Roger Navarro, Special Assistant to NFA Administrator; NFA Regional Director Osmundo Guinto, Jr.; Director Michael Christopher Mathay of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Disaster Response Group; Albay Provincial Agriculturist (PA) Cheryl Rebata.

Also present were some of the evacuees who received their one sack rice after the short program.





Mayon evacuees to benefitted from 300 MT milled rice donated by Japanese government

By Lovella P. Guarin

CAMALIG, ALBAY – Japan’s Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries recently donated 300 metric tons or 10,000 bags of milled rice to the Philippine government under the Tier 3 Program of the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR).

Department of Agriculture Senior Undersecretary Domingo F. Panganiban personally graced the turnover ceremony held at the AFB Ville in Cabangan, Camalig, Albay on August 17, 2023.

Senior Usec. Panganiban said that about 10,000 families at the numerous evacuation centers in Albay will benefit from the donation as each family will be given one sack of 30-kilogram milled rice.

The said families are on their 70th day at the different evacuation centers due to the restive activity of the Mayon Volcano that started in June.

Panganiban thanked the Japanese Government and the APTERR headed by Choomjet Karnjanakesorn, General Manager of the APTERR Secretariat together with Nihei Daisuke, Minister of Economic Affairs, Embassy of Japan in the Philippines for their support in facilitating the rice donation.

“This donation also symbolizes the exchange of hope and support from our dependable partners in the ASEAN region. A testament to the unbreakable bond that binds our countries together as a global community in times of adversity,” Undersecretary Panganiban added.

“The responsibilities designated to the National Food Authority (NFA), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and Local Government Units (LGUS) in distributing the donated rice is not easy but with the presence of the dedicated men and

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Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Information Section (RAFIS)

✉ darafid5@yahoo.com

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