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DAMAGagri

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A photograph of a man with dark hair, wearing a red and white checkered shirt with a green and yellow striped collar, speaking into a microphone at a podium. The background is blurred, showing some text and a logo.

“
Those who have
less in life, will have
more in agricultural
services.

- SEC. WILLIAM D. DAR
see story on page 3

”

All for one, Always number one!

VISION

A prime-mover towards a modernized and competitive agriculture sector

MISSION

We provide suitable, timely, and innovative interventions for a sustainable and vibrant agriculture in the Ilocos.

CORE VALUES

Dedication -	Serving with a heart
Resiliency -	Overcoming challenges
Integrity -	Valuing public trust
Vigilance -	Responding to clients' needs
Excellence -	Raising the bar



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THE COVER

Dr. William Dollente Dar, who was appointed DA Secretary on August 6, 2019, in one of his talks with the Ilocos farmers during his three-day visit on August 29-31 shares DA's new programs in support to the downtrend in the price of rice which has ultimately affected the farmers in the country.



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DA SETS PLAN TO COMBAT TWIN CRISES



Sec. Dar alongside Pangasinan Governor Amado I. Espino III, DA-RFO1 Executive Director Lucrecio R. Alviar, Jr. and other officials of LGU Pangasinan during his three-day visit in the Ilocos Region for a forum with farmers and DA stakeholders.

Giving solutions to the twin crises that the agriculture sector is now facing relative to the low price of palay and the occurrence of African Swine Fever (ASF) case in the country, Secretary Dar in his visit to Ilocos Region laid down strategies to help the farmers and hog raisers in the country.

He directed the National Food Authority through Administrator Judy Danzal to start buying palay produced

by farmers who are tilling one hectare and below.

“I directed the administrator na simula ngayong anihan, yong mga mas apektado na mga magsasaka na may isang ektarya pababa, sila ngayon ang bibigyan natin ng focus,” he said.

Pointing on the “Suki system” that was being practiced before in buying and selling NFA rice, Dar said that it must stop in order to accelerate his

vision of increasing the income of farmers.

Likewise, as an immediate response to the dwindling price of rice in the market, he offered the SURE aid loan program in which farmers who are tilling one-hectare and below could avail P15,000 credit with zero interest, and is payable within a period of eight years.

“Yung kukuha ng loan assistance doon sa SURE aid program, lahat ng kanilang produkto na palay ay bibilhin lahat ng NFA,” he added.

Another loan assistance that the DA offers to average farmers the Production Loan Easy Access (PLEA) program. Farmers could get as high as P50,000 loan with six percent interest rate, no collateral, and payable within two years.

Further, DA is also giving working capital loan up to P5M for every associations engaging in agribusiness enterprise with six percent interest rate, no collateral, and just a simple proposal.

“The simple proposal is the one-page only proposal. Kung dati aabutin ng 2-3 months or more bago maaprubahan ang inyong mga loans, ngayon we have simplified the process. The approval of this is within three hours. Tatlong oras, hindi tatlong buwan,” he said.

Asking the support of the Provincial Local Government Units in the region to engage in agribusiness enterprises, Dar encouraged the Provincial Governors of Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur and Pangasinan to buy the palay produced by the farmers especially on these months of September and October which is in time for the



harvesting season.

He likewise encouraged those at the business sector to invest in agriculture to form part in the inclusive agribusiness model which primarily aims to partner with the farmers.

On the swine disease problem, Dar informed the public about the strategies that the DA has been doing to control the spread of the disease.

“We step up the games in many ways.

Right now we have strengthened our quarantine and food safety measures all over the country,” he said.

To ensure that the hogs shipped from one place to another are safe and not a source of contamination, he reminded the shippers to have the complete veterinarian health certificates of the animals being transported and that Veterinarians should check whether animals are healthy or not.

“Kung may sakit ay kailangang kumpiskahin. Kung walang sakit, kakatayin ang baboy at tatatakan ito ng National Meat Inspection Service na trademark,” he emphasized.

The crisis will be handled in tandem with the other stakeholders, including the commercial hog industry leaders, through the DA’s newly created Crises Management Team.//

DA INFO OFFICERS PUSH FOR STRONGER INFO ADVOCACY EFFORTS

Joining hands together in strengthening each region’s info advocacy efforts, the Regional Information Officers and Library staff of the DA Regional Field Offices in the country participated in a four-day seminar workshop on July 2-5, 2019 in San Juan, La Union.

Facilitated by the Agriculture and Fisheries Information Division (AFID), in coordination with the Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Information Section (RAFIS) of the Ilocos Region, the group shared each of their region’s accomplishments and best strategies in implementing various information and communication activities to effectively promote DA’s programs and projects to agri stakeholders.

The AFID/RAFIS serves as the information and communication arm of DA that takes charge in creating strategies necessary to carry-out the mandate, goals and objectives of the DA focusing more on the use of quad media platforms in disseminating agri-related programs and projects.

The information officers have likewise showcased audio visual presentations produced by the RAFIS giving highlights on success stories of people that benefitted from DA’s programs and projects.

Ms. Cheryl Suarez, AFID Chief of the DA-Central Office lauded the efforts of each RAFIS Chief in making possible all those presented communication plans, programs and projects as she emphasized the essence of copying or duplicating the good practices that each region have been doing to create greater impact on info dissemination of agricultural concerns.

Meanwhile, DA-RFO/OIC- Regional Technical Director for Research, Regulatory, Administrative, and Finance, Ms. Gloria C. Parong, former RAFIS Chief, gave an inspirational message to the participants during the activity.

She shared her meaningful journey from being a RAFIS Chief to being given higher position and greater responsibilities at work. She

encouraged the info officers to remain faithful in their works and just be patient. ‘Your good works will have its rewards in due time,’ she said.

With the presence of the designated librarians of the regional offices, lectures on how to manage and maintain an efficient library services were discussed by invited resource person from the National Library, Mr. Edgardo Quiros, Chief of the Information Technology Division, who also gave useful tips in handling books and other IEC materials.

Other information officers from attached bureaus of DA were also invited to share their information and communication strategies to also promote their services for the agri sector and forge partnership with the DA-RAFIS to create greater awareness and wider acceptance of DA’s programs, projects and activities to achieve further development in agriculture especially in the countryside. //



ILOCOS NORTE LOSSES P1.16B TO TYPHOON INENG



Rice areas in the province was the most affected with a total loss amounting to Php 25.1M, followed by the livestock sector with Php 7.5M.

Typhoon Ineng brought a tremendous loss in the province of Ilocos Norte as it registered more than P1.16 billion total damages in agricultural infrastructures, buildings, agri-fisheries, and other facilities in Ilocos Norte.

Ilocos Norte Governor Matthew Joseph Marcos Manotoc revealed this during a short briefing with Senators Imee Marcos and Bong Go together with Department of Agriculture and Department of Social Welfare and Development Secretaries William

Dar and Rolando Bautista during the officials' provincial sorties to assess the situation in Ilocos Norte on August 26.

Based on the damage assessment report discussed by Mr. Marcel Tabije, Head of the Resiliency Office in the Province, Ineng has caused a loss of around P999.6 million in buildings, roads and bridges and other infrastructures while the agriculture sector registered a total loss of P166.8 million including the agri infra loss of 122.6 million.

From among the four major crops in the province, the rice sector was the most affected as it registered a total loss amounting to P25.1 million, followed by the livestock sector with P7.5 million registered losses.

The fisheries sector was also heavily affected by the widespread flooding as it registered a loss of P6.3 million followed by the high value commercial crops and corn sectors amounting to P3.8 million and P1.3 million.

According to Mr. Tabije, there were a total of 9,873 families affected from the flooding involving 167 barangays with 20 totally damaged houses and 46 partially damaged houses.

As of press time, two casualties were reported and two were injured while 276 individuals were isolated.

As a quick response of the Provincial Government, families affected by the calamity were provided with food packs and sleeping kits through the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

In the agriculture and fishery sector, DA, upon the approval of Secretary Dar, has distributed P18.1 million worth of assistance composed of 4,000 bags of hybrid and inbred palay seeds, 200 bags of corn seeds and 1,886 cans of assorted vegetable seeds.

Meanwhile, DA-RFO I Regional Executive Director Lucrecio R. Alviar, Jr. mobilized members of the Regional Disaster Risk Management and Operation Center I (RDRM

OpCen I) to assess and evaluate the degree of damage in the heavily affected municipalities in collaboration with the Provincial Task Force headed by Provincial Agriculturist, Ms. Norma B. Lagmay.

Among the identified municipalities heavily affected by the flooding came from the first

district of the province to include the city of Laoag, and municipalities of Vintar, Pagudpud, Bangui, Burgos, Bacarra, Sarrat, and Pasuquin.

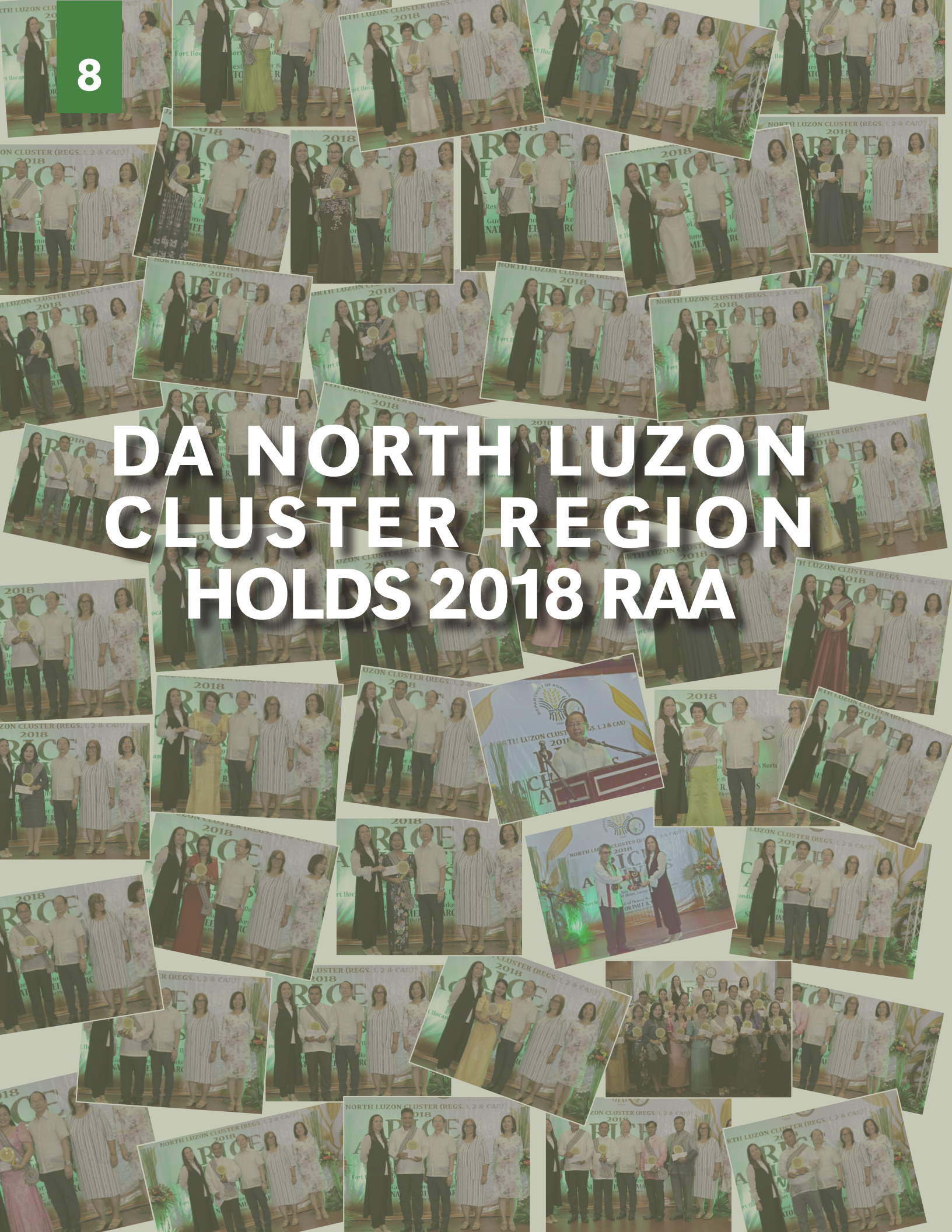
From the second district, the affected municipalities were Paoay, San Nicolas, Solsona, Dingras, and the city of Batac.//


Affected farmers join the Secretary and key officials of LGU Ilocos Norte for a forum during his visit in the province right after the onslaught of Typhoon Ineng.



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DA NORTH LUZON CLUSTER REGION HOLDS 2018 RAA





Recognizing the outstanding performance and significant contributions of the Provincial, Municipal and City Local Government Units including the Agricultural Extension Workers (AEWs), Local Farmer Technicians and the Seed Innovators of Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) in attaining rice food security and sufficiency, the Department of Agriculture North Luzon Cluster successfully conducted the 2018 Rice Achievers Award (RAA) at the Fort Ilocandia Resort, Laoag City, Ilocos Norte on July 25, 2019.

TWO THOUSAND EIGHTEEN

Hosted by the Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office I, the awarding ceremonies was graced by Ilocos Norte Vice-Governor Cecilia Araneta-Marcos as the guest of honor and speaker representing Senator-elect Imee Marcos.

In her message during the awarding ceremonies, Vice-Governor Marcos commended the awardees for doing a great job amid the challenges that the agri-sector is facing today not to mention the effects of climate change, land conversions, dwindling prices of commodities, among others.

She called on the awardees to continue on inspiring the government with their hard work, determination, and resiliency that they have exuded in uplifting the status of Ilocano farmers and committed her constant support in expanding opportunities for all Ilocanos – to have a healthy and

productive community.

Citing the farmers as the Solon's favorite people, Marcos also vowed to provide relevant interventions for Ilocano farmers by allocating assistance such as capability enhancement, production support services including the provision of inputs and farm machinery and equipment as well as research and development initiatives.

Likewise, she also vowed to maintain the strong collaboration with the Local Government Units and the DA to provide an open door policy.

"Anytime, you can go in our offices and we will do our best to support you in every way we can," she added.

Meanwhile, during the awarding ceremonies, a total of 143 AEWs from the three regions have received their plaques of recognition and a cash prize worth P20,000 each.

Seed Innovator awardees were also lauded and were given their

plaques of recognition.

Based on the lists of awardees, the Cagayan Valley Region has awarded 80 AEWs, 20 Local Farmer Technicians and one Seed Innovator while the Cordillera Administrative Region has awarded 18 AEWs and two LFTs.

The Ilocos Region has given awards to 45 AEWs, four LFTs and one Seed Innovator.

Col. Ramon Laudencia from the province of La Union was also given a special award of recognition for his unwavering support to the implementation of DA's programs and projects.

RAA is an annual activity of the Department of Agriculture to recognize the valuable contributions of the LGUs and those extension workers who have worked hard in the attainment of the goals and objectives of the DA - to become rice self-sufficient in the years to come.

//



One of the members the evaluating team spearheaded by the DA-Planning and Monitoring Service interviews one of the beneficiaries of the projects implemented by the DA-RFO1.

DA-RFO I'S PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION IS EFFICIENT, EFFECTIVE

“Generally, the Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office I’s (DA-RFO1) implementation of programs and projects is efficient and effective.”

DA-Planning and Monitoring Service (DA-PMS) Officer, Ms. Julie Anne Felipe reported this during the exit conference of the four-day in-house review and evaluation of DA-RFO1’s programs on July 8-12, 2019.

The in-house evaluation was initiated by the DA-PMS in coordination with the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

Divisions (PMED) of the 16 regions to assess the process and efficiency of implementation of DA’s programs and projects. It also provided a glimpse as to the extent of the benefits the project has given to the recipients.

Conducted in all the 16 DA-RFOs in the region, the Ilocos Region’s schedule was on July 8-12, 2019 with evaluators from the PMED of DA-RFO Cagayan Valley Region, Cordillera Administrative Region, and the CALABARZON Region.

Using survey, key informant

interview, and focus group discussion as among the methods of data collection, a total of 53 respondents from Ilocos Region were interviewed from the 57 randomly selected farmer beneficiaries in the region including eight local government unit representatives.

Focusing on the implementation of the Corn and Livestock Banner Programs in the region, the key informants were composed of 22 livestock farmer beneficiaries and 31 corn beneficiaries.

Findings of the study revealed that

of the 53 respondents, 85% or 45 of them reported to have accessed the specific goods and services provided by the DA while eight of the respondents or 15% of them claimed that they did not receive the goods and services as reported in the Online Data Capture System (ODCS).

Of the 45 respondents who have accessed the goods and services from the Corn and Livestock Program, 93% reported that they utilized the goods and services provided to them. The remaining 7% were not able to use the technologies they learned from the training they have attended due to the absence of the animals and equipment they need in order to pursue their agribusiness activities.

Having utilized the goods and services provided by both the Corn and Livestock programs, the respondents reported that they were able to improve their production, improve the quality of their produce, improve the health of their animals and crops, reduced their input cost, increased their income opportunities and were able to increase their production cycle.

Meanwhile, with the current



system of providing grants to farmers for their farming needs, the study also found out that 81% of the respondents expressed their willingness to avail DA's programs, projects and services through loan taking into consideration the policies and implementing guidelines as to the interest rate and the duration of payment.

Assessing how the DA programs, projects and services are familiar or known to the respondents, the study revealed that most of the respondents are highly aware of the projects especially on the production support services (98%), provision of agricultural equipment and facilities (93%), extension support, education and trainings services (83%);

irrigation network services (76%); and Farm to Market Roads (71%).

However, the Market Development Support Services lagged behind in terms of the awareness of the respondents with only 59%.

Taking all these into consideration, part of the recommendation of the evaluation team is to intensify the information dissemination of the programs and projects especially on market development support services and also on the process of availing this particular support service while feedback mechanism on field validation shall be strengthened since only 65% of the respondents reported that they received feedback. //



ILOCOS FOOD PROCESSORS TAKE SEMINAR ON CGMP

In collaboration with the Department of Trade and Industry's Philippine Trade and Trading Center, local food processors and industrial manufacturers in the region were convened for a seminar on August 14-15 to strengthen the industry's compliance on Administrative Order No. 153 s. 2004 otherwise known as the Revised Guidelines on Current Good Manufacturing Practices (cGMP) in manufacturing, packing, repacking or holding food.

The order was issued by the Department of Health – Bureau of Food and Drugs.

It is an activity organized by the Industry Support Development Section of the Agribusiness Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD) which was attended by 30 local food industry processors in the region who are engaged in duhat

and dragon fruit wine making, native delicacy processing, veggie noodles, mushroom chicharon and chichacorn, cassava foods, among others.

In her message, Ms. Edilyn Goldara, Chief of AMAD's Industry Support Development Section, underscored the importance of the activity to guide the small and medium food processors and manufacturers on how they could ensure the quality of their products and acquire their permit or license from the Foods and Drugs Authority (FDA).

"The pre-requisite of FDA-License to Operate (FDA-LTO) is embodied in the set required in the cGMP. Kaya napakaimportante po ang pag-attend ninyo sa seminar na ito," said Goldara.

Mr. Cezar dela Cruz, a Chemical



Engineer who served as the lecturer of the seminar, on the other hand shared the processes, importance, and requirements of cGMP.

He emphasized that it is necessary to comply with the requirements of GMP not only for the issuance of the LTO. Primarily, it is required in order to provide consumers safe, quality, and hygienic food products while protecting and promoting the health of the manpower in a certain workplace or environment.

To provide the participants with the knowledge and information on how to determine microbes, each participant was asked to get sample specimens from their hands, hair strands, dress, and on the sole of their shoes. Microbial tests were held afterwards. //



Secretary William Dollente Dar shared his directives on research and development for the agri sector during the 15th Agriculture and Fisheries Technology Forum and Product Exhibition, an activity spearheaded by the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) in Quezon City on August 14-16.

First, he directed the Bureau of Agricultural Research and the network (attached bureaus and agencies) to do a research for development paradigm. He called this the “R4D” meaning Research for



DAR ISSUES R&D DIRECTIVES ON BAR'S 15TH AGRI-FISHERY FORUM

Development strategy.

BAR and all other attach bureaus and agencies conducting researches must focus their research activities putting more relevance to the needs of farmers and fisherfolk, including the agribusiness industry.

“Your research outputs must not only be for farmers and fisherfolk but for the agribusiness industry as well,” he said.

“Agribusiness is a major strategy now because we are embracing a value chain approach in the DA. Hindi na lang produksiyon, hindi na lang productivity gaya ng dati, ngayon may kita na,” he explained.

He wants that all plans programs and projects under research should make reference to “Ani at Kita”.

New thinking – meet Ani and Kita

“We envision a food secure Philippines with prosperous farmers and fisherfolk. This is the new thinking. The center of development in agriculture should be the farmers and fisherfolk,” Dar stated.

He further explained that in order to realize this vision, the DA, together

with all its attached bureaus and agencies must know its development framework and anchor their plans, programs and activities with the over-arching goal which is increasing productivity and making farmers and fisherfolk prosperous.

For easy understanding of his idea, he made a metaphor on the terms “Ani” (productivity) and “Kita” (income).

“We gave birth to Ani and Kita,

AGRIBUSINESS IS A MAJOR STRATEGY NOW BECAUSE WE ARE EMBRACING A VALUE CHAIN APPROACH IN THE DA. HINDI NA LANG PRODUKSYON, HINDI NA LANG PRODUCTIVITY GAYA NG DATI, NGAYON MAY KITA NA.

beautiful twins, at lahat tayo (DA workforce) parents nila. So yung productivity at prosperity ay magkakambal. Increasing productivity and making farmers and fisherfolk prosperous means masaganang ani at mataas na kita,” Dar explained.

Research grants

For State Colleges and Universities and other research institutions in the country who are desiring to get grants from BAR, the Secretary also explained that researchers must see to it that they craft their research based on the following: Is it needed by farmers, fisherfolk and the agribusiness industry; Can it be utilized by the agribusiness sector; and Can it be used and technically upscale?

Relating this to the National Technology Forum activity, he suggested that other than just displaying products out of the researches conducted, BAR must also showcase farmers who are actually using the products and technology to really see the impact of these researches.

With this, he issued the next directive to BAR which is to institutionalize a Technology-based Agribusiness Incubation Program. He encouraged BAR to partner with SUCs, the private agribusiness sector and other DA research centers in the regions.

More on the issued R&D directives

Another directive of the Secretary is for BAR to organize an advisory board to do planning, strategic thinking,



OIC-RTD for Research and Regulations Dr. Jovita M. Datuin, who was invited as one of the resource persons for the agri-fishery forum, shares one of her pioneered researches, the JOVIMIN technology - a micronutrient supplement for small ruminants.

and reviewing of proposals before it is funded and approved by the BAR Director for implementation.

He further instructed that 50% of the Advisory Board must come from the private sector which may include successful agribusiness entrepreneurs. He referred to the board as “pool of technical experts.”

**WE MUST IMPROVE THE
DEPARTMENT'S DATA
MANAGEMENT, BUILD IT
UP AND THEN SUSTAIN,
ELEVATE, THEN SUSTAIN.**

Dar also issued a directive for all DA offices and attached bureaus and agencies regarding data management citing that there is no current good data management in

the entire Department. He called on the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) to help in this goal.

“We must improve the Department’s data management, build it up and then sustain, elevate, then sustain,” he said.

As a warning to non-performing assets and corruption in the Department, the Secretary gave a warning of executing a “one strike policy” which means if there’s a valid complaint on someone, he will certainly be “side-lined” and replaced by somebody who can do the job better.

BAR as the R&D arm of DA

BAR Director Nicomedez Eleazar in his welcome message to the participants underscored the relevance of the activity to the realization of the vision and goal of the new DA administration under the Secretary’s leadership.

He said that part of Dar's paradigm to modernize the Philippine Agriculture is "agripreneurship" which entails farming and fishing to be treated as business undertaking.

And so in line with this, BAR as the R&D arm of DA is annually conducting the National Agriculture & Fisheries Technology Forum and Product Exhibition to showcase the technology trends and research generated agricultural products from the different regions and bring them to its intended stakeholders.

Senator Cynthia Villar, the event's guest of honor and speaker, sent her message through her chief-of- staff

lawyer Rhaegee Tamana.

In her written speech read by Tamana, Villar stressed the urgent need to modernize Philippine agriculture and pledged her support to the agenda of Dar to help grow the Philippine agri sector under his stewardship. She also noted the importance of mechanization to make farmers competitive.

Other highlights of the activity include the re-launching of Dar's book titled *The Way Forward: Level Up Philippine Agriculture*; Awarding of BAR's ISO 9001:2015 Certification; and the seminar series and product demonstration by invited resource

speakers which include Dr. Jovita M. Datuin, OIC-RTD for Research and Regulations, who shared the JOVIMIN technology, a micronutrient supplement for small ruminants which has been proven effective by a farmer-cooperator who gave his testimony after Datuin's presentation.

The exhibit area also featured booths showcasing different research generated products of DA-RFOs and the regional field offices of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), including State Universities and Colleges, among others. //

SURE AID IMPLEMENTATION KICKS-OFF WITH BENEFICIARY VALIDATION

Kicking off the implementation of DA's SURE Aid Loan Facility program, the Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office I, through its Field Operations Division in tandem with the Agribusiness Marketing Assistance Division, organized a validation team that shall conduct assessment in identified priority areas in the region to determine the eligible beneficiaries of the program.

The DA's SURE Aid Loan Facility program or the Expanded Survival and Recovery Assistance program aims to provide immediate one-time loan assistance to rice farmers whose incomes were affected by the dropping price of palay within this year 2019.

To apply for the SURE Aid Loan program, the borrower must fill-out the Loan Application Form provided by the ACPC through the validation team. Once validated as eligible borrower and upon the certification and endorsement by the DA-RFO I, the Land Bank of the Philippines representative shall administer his/her loan application where he/she must present one (1) government issued ID with picture and one copy of 1 x 1 ID



OIC-RTD for Operations Erlinda F. Manipon leads the technical briefing and consultation for the SURE Aid program.

picture.

In processing the borrowers' documentary requirements, fees and charges apply for the need of Documentary Stamp Tax (DST) and cost of cash card, if and when it is applicable.

Once the loan application is approved, loan proceeds shall be released by lump sum through the Land Bank Cash Card

or to his/her existing deposit account with Land Bank, if any.

Since this is a credit program, farmer-borrowers are expected to pay within eight years, inclusive of six months grace period payable semi-annually through over the counter in any nearest Land Bank branch or debit from existing deposit account with Land Bank.

In a separate technical briefing and consultation made by the DA-RFO I and the Agricultural Credit Policy Council (ACPC) – the DA's recommendatory body when it comes to credit assistance program to farmers together with the Land Bank of the Philippines, a total of 9,260 farmers from Ilocos region are expected to be part of the program as identified by the Field Operations Service at the DA-Central Office.

Out of the 9,260 farmers, the Province of Pangasinan has the biggest share of allocation of farmer-beneficiaries with 5,529 followed by the province of Ilocos Sur with 2,782 and La Union and Ilocos Norte with 799 and 150 beneficiaries, respectively. //

SAGIP SAKA ACT SOON TO BE EXECUTED

In an attempt to improve and finalize the Sagip Saka Act also known as Republic Act 11321, the Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Service fronted the fourth leg of stakeholders' consultation for Sagip Saka implementing rules and regulations.

Signed on April 17, 2019 by President Rodrigo Duterte, the Sagip Saka Act aims to strengthen and transform the agricultural and fishing communities to reach their full potential, improving the farmers and fisher folk's income and quality of life.

It is an act establishing the farmers and fisherfolk enterprise development program which shall refer to the comprehensive set of objectives, targets, and holistic approach and assistance in promoting the establishment of enterprises involving agricultural and fishery products.

It shall be integrated and be made consistent with the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Plan (AFMP), and the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise Development Plan (MSMEDP).

Moreover, the program shall also make use of science-based technologies such as value chain analysis in the identification and prioritization of agricultural and fishery products that will be supported.

The farmers and fisherfolk



Senator Francis Pangilinan, the principal author and sponsor of the Sagip Saka Act, said that it is a threat to our food security when farmers stop farming.

enterprise development program will be composed of three components.

First, the enterprise identification and assessment. Under this component, a general RSBSA will be established and a commodity value chain will be selected based on the priority agriculture and fishery products of the area.

Second, the provision of technical and financial assistance shall include: a) improvements of production and productivity, including agricultural extension services, skills, development, provision of production inputs, equipment, and facilities, infrastructure for production and post-production activities; b) improvement of producers' and enterprises' access to financing in the form of credit grants as well as crop insurance; c) provision of access

to improved technologies through research and development; and d) provision of business support and development services, particularly in the areas of access to markets, marketing, and networking.

For the third component, it shall include Monitoring and Evaluation to determine the progress and evaluate the business operations of the supported enterprise.

Senator Francis Pangilinan, the principal author and sponsor of the law, said that it is a threat to our food security when farmers stop farming thus encouraging the cooperation and participation of the local and national government agencies to be able to implement the program and probably to roll out the Sagip Saka by December this year.

"The only way we can move

The top three winners of the poster making contest namely: Mr. Neil Dominick Gajiam (3rd Place), Mr. Jedd Ryle D. Rilloraza (1st Place), and Ms. Ana Ysabelle R. Digay (2nd Place).



ELEM STUDENTS COMPETE ON WFD REG'L POSTER-MAKING CONTEST

As part of the annual celebration of the World Food Day (WFD), eighteen pupils across school divisions in the Ilocos region participated in the poster-making contest depicting this year's theme - Our actions are our future: healthy diets for a #ZeroHunger world.

WFD is spearheaded by the Food and Agriculture Organization in tandem with the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Education.

Mr. Jedd Ryle D. Rilloraza of Luna Central School in Luna, La Union emerged as the first place winner.

Rilloraza's artwork was unanimously chosen by the board of judges, chaired by Mr. Ricarte Ico, a seasoned artist and former DepEd employee who has also been a constant partner of DA in the poster making contest activity.

As a winner, Rilloraza brought home a certificate of recognition and a cash prize worth Php 3,000.00. He will represent the region in the upcoming WFD 2019 national on-the-spot poster making contest on October 15, 2019 at the Liwasang Aurora Memorial Circle, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

Other winners are both Grades six pupils, Ms. Ana Ysabelle R. Digay of Saint Joseph Institute Candon in Candon City, Ilocos Sur and Mr. Neil Dominick Gajiam of Manaoag Central School SPED Center in Manaoag, Pangasinan who were named as second and third placers, respectively.

Digay received a P2,000 cash prize while Gajiam received a P1,500 cash prize. Both also received certificates of recognition from DA-RFO1.

This competition was held at the DA-RFO I 5th Floor Conference Room, San Fernando City La Union

agriculture forward is first, we recognize the value and importance of our farmers and fisherfolk and give them the necessary support, and second, ensure that it is the entire community that is embracing our farmers and fisherfolk organizations," added Pangilinan.

Meanwhile, the Department of Agriculture, as the implementing

agency of the Sagip Saka Act shall tap the assistance, expertise, and the resources of the Philippine Coconut Authority, National Dairy Authority, Bureau of Soils and Water Management, Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Agricultural Training Institute, Agricultural

Credit Policy Council, and Bureau of Agricultural Research.

This consultation was attended by representatives from national government agencies, local government units and private sector including farmers and fisherfolk from Luzon A Cluster on September 20, 2019 at the Orchid Garden Hotel, San Fernando City, Pampanga. //

NSCC'S BIO-ORGANIC FERTILIZER FACILITY LAUNCHED; BUY- ANIHAN PROGRAM ANNOUNCED



Sec. Dar spearheads the launching of the Rapid Production Facility for Bio-Organic Fertilizer - a collaborative project of DA, BAR, and NSCC which is expected to enhance the productivity of small farmers practicing organic farming.

In his visit at the Nueva Segovia Consortium of Cooperatives (NSCC) in Caoayan, Ilocos Sur, on September 26, Secretary William Dar spearheaded the launching of the Rapid Production Facility for Bio-Organic Fertilizer and announced another new DA program – the Buy-ANihan.

The Bio-Organic Fertilizer Facility is a collaborative project of the Department of Agriculture (DA), Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR), and the NSCC.

It is an Indian Technology from the Excel Innovation Centre in Mumbai.

In the establishment of the facility, it is expected to enhance the productivity of small farmers in the region who are interested in organic farming and to increase the production rate and volume of quality organic products.

Before its formal launching, Dr. Susanta Kundu – Chief Operating Officer of Excel Innovation Centre gave brief information about the facility.

He said that through the facility, agricultural wastes are converted to make it marketable as granular fertilizer.

“Composting is a perfect recycling activity which turns unsafe organic products into a safe compost. Compost is an important material to maintain soil health,” Kundu said.

As to the new DA program, Dar shared that Buy-ANihan is an additional loan assistance to be administered by the Agricultural Credit Policy Council (ACPC) and

the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP).

“The DA has a new loan assistance program, it is called Buy-ANihan, a funding assistance extended by the government to rice farmers through big cooperatives like NSCC,” Dar said.

“The request loan of NSCC worth 200M was already approved and it must be used to buy the palay produced by the farmers of Ilocos Sur and nearby provinces, who are members of the cooperative,” Dar added.

The awarding of farm machineries and equipment to the NSCC and other farmer associations/cooperatives in Ilocos Sur was also spearheaded the Secretary; DA-RFO1 head, Dir. Lucrecio R. Alviar, Jr.; BFAR head, Dir. Nestor Domenden; Ilocos Sur Governor, Hon. Ryan Luis Singson; Ilocos Sur First District Representative, Hon. Deogracias Victor Savellano; and Caoayan Mayor, Hon. Germilina S. Goulart.

The overall amount of the turned-over projects to the chosen beneficiaries was Php 35,071,000 consisting of combine harvester, four-wheel drive tractor, riding type transplanter, compact rice mill, recirculating mobile dryer, hauling truck, and organic waste

LU FARMERS RECEIVE 102M WORTH AGRI-MACHINERY INTERVENTION

Agricultural machineries worth Php 102M were distributed to farmers' associations and cooperatives of La Union on September 12-13 in Bacnotan, La Union.

Distribution of agricultural machineries is an ongoing strategy of the Department of Agriculture in gearing towards a mechanized Philippine agriculture. It is expected to increase the productivity and income of farmers aside from lessening laborious and backbreaking agricultural activities that generally comes with traditional farming.

Among the machineries distributed to the farmers were 4wd tractor, combine harvester, hand tractor, riding-type transplanter, recirculating dryer, water pump, seed cleaner, pump and engine set, water plastic drums, compact rice mill, etc.

The activity was graced by Regional Executive Director, Lucrecio Alviar, Jr., who urged the farmers to use their machinery to improve their farming life and to address the adverse impact of Rice Tariffication Law.

He also mentioned that a part from the regular farm mechanization program of DA, another Php5-B worth of projects will also be downloaded to PhilMech for the farm mechanization component of the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF).

RCEF is a 10-B worth yearly program that will be funded by the rice tariffs imports imposed to private sector grain importers which will be used to provide further assistance to farmers in the form of agri-machineries, seeds, credit, extension services, among others.//





BANGAR FARMERS GET NOD ON RICE TRANSPLANTER

“Menos-gastos, mas mabilis, mas masinop at talagang napakagaan ang aming pagsasaka sa paggamit nitong rice transplanter.”

Mr. Mauro Matro, 62 of Brgy. Bangaoilan East in Bangar, La Union disclosed when he was asked about his experience using the rice planter machine during the recently held demonstration of the equipment at the 10-hectare rice model farm established by the DA in collaboration with the Local Government Unit of Bangar and the members of the BASO ni Ambo Irrigators Association in Bangar, La Union.

The demonstration of the rice transplanter is among the component of the 10-hectare rice model farm of the DA to showcase the modern farming technologies in rice production, aside from the use of the Rice Crop Manager which

provides the farmer-cooperators' guidance and recommendations in their rice production activities.

“Bukod pa dito, nasisiguro na pantay-pantay ang pagkakatanim ng mga punla dahil maari na naming mai-adjust ang pagitan o layo ng pagtatanim at siyempre ang dami ng punlang aming itatanim,” Matro added.

On the part of his brother, Mr. Bernardo Matro, 57, also a cooperator of the model farm explained the importance of having the transplanter especially in seed sowing.

“Maari kang manood ng tv habang nagpupunla. Hindi na rin kailangang magpabunot ng mga punla at magpalipat-tanim dahil minsanan na lang gagawin ng makinang ito,” Matro said.

Based on a rice production technoguide produced by the DA, common

practice on rice seed sowing is more laborious since it requires farmers to prepare a 40 sq.m. plot which needs to be plowed under and need to add organic fertilizer to make the soil friable for easier pulling of seeds.

“Mas mabilis na ang pagpupunla dahil sa paggamit ng seedling trays,” the brother Matros said.

Comparing the use of the rice transplanter with that of the manual transplanting and direct-seeding, the Matro brothers are one in saying that the use of rice transplanter is better than the other ways of transplanting.

“Sa paglilipat-tanim, mas nakakapagod ang manual-transplanting. Dito sa makina, mas magaan ang pakiramdam matapos ang paglilipat-tanim,” they added.

Another farmer who also appreciates the benefits of the rice transplanter is Mr. Edelito Almazan,



58, also a member of the BASO ni Ambo Irrigators Association, and is one among the 23 farmer-cooperators of the 10-ha Rice Model Farm in Bangar.

“Mas tipid sa punla kaysa sa manomanong pagtatanim. Sa 700 sq. meter na lupa, wala pa sigurong 20 trays na punla ang nagamit,” Almazan said.

Other than this benefit, Mr. Almazan also said that with the 30 centimeters distance of planting, panicle initiation of the plant is more efficient and effective. He also said that fertilizing the plant is more efficient due to the straight-row planting.

With the benefits that the rice transplanter provide to the Bangar farmers, they are more than hopeful that the DA will continue to give these farm machineries and equipment to make their farming life easier and more productive.//



ALVIAR CHAIRS EDSECOM



Showing confidence and support on his leadership as chairman of the Economic Development Sectoral Committee (EDSeCom) of the Regional Development Council (RDC) in Ilocos Region, members of the EDSeCom have unanimously chosen once more Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office I Regional Executive Director Lucrecio R. Alviar, Jr. as chairman during the third quarter EDSeCom meeting held at Puerto del Sol, Bolinao, Pangasinan.

Alviar who led the committee for two years now will continue his leadership for another three years (CY 2019-2022).

EDSeCom is one of the mandatory sectoral committee of the Regional Development Council (RDC) which aims to promote effective coordination and collaboration among key players and stakeholders concerning the agriculture and fishery, trade and industry and tourism subsectors.

Aimed at contributing to job generation, increase in income and poverty reduction, the committee which has a 27-member line agencies, four provincial LGU representatives and eight private sectoral representatives work as evaluators or reviewers of the sectors' programs and projects

by the national government agencies and LGUs in the region, and endorses these to the RDC so that funds shall be appropriated.

Serving as a fundamental requirement to ensure the attainment of the region's vision of becoming the Agribusiness and Tourism Hub in Northern Philippines, the EDSeCom shall assist the RDC in the translation of the national development goals and policies into specific regional sectoral objective.

Co-chaired by a private sector (not yet elected due to absence of a representative during the meeting), the EDSeCom's Vice-Chairperson is the National Economic Development Authority head, Regional Director Nestor G. Rillon.

Meanwhile, aside from the election of EDSeCom Chairman, part of the agenda of the third quarter meeting is the presentation of Department of Tourism's (DOT's) Balingasay Ilog Tourism Project which shall be established in Bolinao, Pangasinan.

Presented by DOT's Regional Director, Mr. Martin Valera, the project is expected to generate more tourists in the area which could create job opportunities for the locals of Bolinao.

Mr. Fyodor Edward N. Muego, staff of the Provincial Government of Pangasinan, presented the Provincial Tourism Development Plan in the province and seed for the Committee's endorsement for the approval of the plan by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan. >>

AMAD PROMOTES HALAL PROGRAM

“Halal is the highest quality assurance for food safety. It is an industry that aims to promote healthy living, organic, food safety, clean and sanitized facilities and equipment, environment – friendly, animal welfare, among others,” Ms. Nihaya Ariraya – Project Development Officer III of Halal Management Program Office (HMPO), who served as the resource speaker emphasized this message as she introduced the Halal Food Industry Development

Program (HFIDP) to the different Stakeholders of the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1 (DA – RFO1).

Ariraya said that HFIDP is now among the banner programs of DA which aims to increase the production and market access of Halal agri-fishery product.

According to her, HFID has eight program components: (1) To establish DA – Halal related policies to develop Halal standards and enabling regulations (2) increase

Halal agri – fishery production, (3) establish or upgrade Halal infrastructure, (4) conduct capability building activities; (5) develop IEC materials and quad media promotions on Halal; (6) establish Halal linkage and networking; (7) market and promote Halal food products; and (8) conduct Halal research and development.

Meanwhile, Ms. Erlinda F. Manipon – OIC Regional Technical Director for Operations said that the activity will help the farmers and producers a lot especially those who are practicing organic agriculture.

“In this activity, we will all learn how to be Halal certified, however, it is not necessary or a requirement that you will apply for a certification in this program. We are just introducing you this program because it applies on Food Safety Act as well,” Manipon added.

The activity was participated by food processors, Municipal/ Provincial Agriculturist and Veterinarians, and farmers from the province of Pangasinan on September 10-11, 2019 at Hotel Elizabeth, Baguio City.//



Participants together with the resource persons poses for posterity after the discussions and forum on Halal Food Industry Development Program.

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Pending the endorsement of the Committee, Department of Trade and Industry Regional Director, Grace Baluyan as seconded by NEDA's Assistant Regional Director, Donald James Gawe suggested for

the refinement of the said plan by including the conduct of SWOT analysis for every tourism circuits or clusters identified by the province. ARD Gawe likewise noted the inclusion of the identification of programs/projects and activities

which shall serve as basis of the inter-local agencies in addressing concerns and implementation mechanism of the program through the preparation of a Provincial Development & Physical Framework Plan. //

DA-RFO I, PHILRICE BRIEF LGU COUNTERPARTS ON RCEF SEED PROGRAM



DA-RFO I Rice Focal Person Ms. Analiza Ramos and R1 RCEF Focal Person Ms. Bethzaida M. Catudan lead the discussions on the processes required to facilitate the inclusion of farmers in the RCEF seed program.

Engaging the frontliners of the local government units in the implementation of the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund's (RCEF) Seed Component Program, the Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office I in collaboration with the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) conducted a series of briefing consultation cum planning workshop relative to its implementing guidelines and requirements.

The RCEF's seed component is one

of the major component being allotted with fund under the P10B fund created from the RA 11203 otherwise known as the Rice Trade Liberalization Law that aims to help improve the competitiveness of Filipino rice farmers and augment their income by increasing their yield and lowering the cost of production with the provision of inbred and certified rice seeds.

In her discussion about the implementing guidelines of the project, Ms. Bethzaida M. Catudan,

the RCEF Focal Person of Region I explained the requirements and qualifications for eligible beneficiaries of the project including its coverage and conditions for the farmers and farmer-organizations to avail of the project.

Covering around 57 provinces in the country with high potential to improve competitiveness based on area planted, yield, cost of production and share of irrigated areas, all of the four provinces in Ilocos Region were included in the project with Pangasinan having involved 35 municipalities and cities that met the 500-hectare area requirement target for the dry season of 2020 and which would be reduced down to 100 hectares in the succeeding years of implementation.

For farmers to become eligible beneficiaries of the project, their names must be listed in the Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA) and must be a member of DA-accredited Farmers Organization or any accrediting government agency recognized by the DA. However, farmers not yet listed in the RSBSA should coordinate with their MAO/CAO to comply with the requirements prior to the scheduled seed distribution.

On the accreditation of farmer organizations, Ms. Analiza Ramos, Rice Focal Person of the DA-RFO I, presented the requirements and protocols.

As part of the requirements, any interested farmers' organization

seeking for accreditation from DA must write a letter of intent, secure valid certificate/registration from any recognized government agency, present their farmers association profile including the list of officers and members with corresponding signature, home and farm location address, and must execute omnibus sworn statement as well as the LGU or C/MAFC endorsement.

To facilitate the submission of the above-mentioned requirements, Ms. Ramos provided the template of all the required forms so that applicants need only to fill-out the said forms to comply with the requirements.

Meanwhile, for the eligible farmers as beneficiary of the project, Ms. Catudan said that they could get free rice seeds with a maximum of four bags for those farmers who have more than 1.5 or more hectares starting this CY 2020 dry season.

Among the inbred varieties that will be given to qualified RCEF beneficiaries include the NSIC Rc 222, NSIC Rc 160, NSIC Rc 216, NSIC Rc 358 and NSIC Rc 400 observing the "first come, first served" basis.

Held on September 3-4, 2019 in Pavilion, Sta. Barbara, Pangasinan and Mariano Marcos Memorial State University Hostel in Batac City, Ilocos Norte, respectively, it was attended by the Municipal and City's Agricultural Officers and Rice Program Coordinators who were among the beneficiaries of the pilot project under RCEF's seed component.//

LIVESTOCK BANNER STRENGTHENS PARTNERSHIP WITH INSPECTORS, COORDINATORS

Strengthening DA-RFO1's partnership with the local government units in the implementation of all livestock-related interventions in the region, around 150 attendees composed of inspectors, coordinators, and veterinarians were updated on the new policies, directions and technologies on livestock industry on August 7-9, 2019.

DA-RFO1, through the Livestock Banner Program, underscored the concerns and updates on its services, programs, and projects that would improve and upgrade the income and productivity of livestock raisers in the region.

Updates on the forage production technology, trainings for veterinarians and livestock coordinators, farm machinery for the livestock sector, national achievers award guideline, genetic improvement of itik Pinas, and maintenance of a high herd status thru biosecurity program were also presented.

Likewise, Dr. Michael Usana, presented the frontline services of the Regional Animal Diagnostic Disease Laboratory

and the process on how to avail the services and programs under RADDL.

Among the services offered by RADDL include rabies test, serological test, swabs, fecalysis, bacterial isolation & antibiotic sensitivity test, necropsy test for live or dead animals, water analysis, blood analysis, and blood parasite.

On the other hand, Dr. Annie Bares, Field Operations Division chief, extended the commends of the director to the livestock Agricultural Extension Workers in the region. She as well reiterated the ten-point agenda of the DA Secretary, Dr. William Dar, and requested the participants to double their efforts because of the anticipated new projects from the new Aggie Chief.

The activity was highlighted by the "Pinakahayop Awarding," wherein special and major awards were given to deserving Livestock Inspectors to recognize their contribution in the implementation of projects and programs of DA. Awardees were assessed based on their performance on the regional and provincial level.//

AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERS UNDERGO SPIS TRAINING

The agricultural engineers from the Regional Agricultural Engineering Division (RAED) of the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1 (DA – RFO1) together with other Agricultural Engineers from selected municipalities in the region underwent a training course on Groundwater Development and Preparation of Design and Cost Estimates for Solar – Powered Irrigation System (SPIS) on July 9-12, 2019 at Regency Hotel, Calasiao, Pangasinan.

The four-day activity aims to enhance the technical capability of engineers from the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1 (DA-RFO1) and Local Government Units (LGU) in the planning and designing of Solar-Powered Irrigation System (SPIS) including the preparation of plans and



RAED staff members including the agricultural engineers from invited municipalities visit one of the Solar-powered Irrigation Systems established in the municipality of Laoac, Pangasinan.

program of works of their proposed project.

Engr. Mark Harry Pastor from RAED informed during the program that SPIS can be availed by qualified beneficiaries and proponents under

the various programs of the DA as full grant. It is a flagship program of the DA through the Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM) under the Small-Scale Irrigation Projects (SSIP).

HVCDP HOLDS FIRST SEM ASSESSMENT

The Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1 through the High Value Crops Development Program conducted their CY 2019 first semester assessment at Pangil Beach Resort, Currimaos, Ilocos Norte and Hotel Trish Mangaldan, Pangasinan on July 11-12 and July 17-18, 2019, respectively to assess the accomplishments of

each provinces during the previous semester.

The activity was attended by the high value crops coordinator from the municipalities in the region together with their provincial coordinators to evaluate the status of programs and projects under the HVCDP and to set targets for the succeeding semester.

Inspired and urged by the directive of the DA-RFO1 Regional Executive Director Lucrecio R. Alviar, Jr. last December 2018 not to just present their accomplishments, audio-visual presentations on the success stories of the high-value crop farmers were also prepared and presented by the provinces.

According to Alviar, the best

He also explained that one of the constraints of the RFOs and LGUs is the limited experience and capability of their technical staff in the preparation of engineering plans and design for SPIS.

“We conducted this training because there are a lot of recipients who are requesting for this, however, we only have limited experience regarding this matter,” Pastor said.

Meanwhile, Engr. Alberto de Guzman – Chief, Water Use and Management Section and Engr. Darwin M. Nevares – Engineer II, Water Resources Development Section of the BSWM served as resource speakers. Discussed were the introduction about SPIS, crop water requirement computation, power requirement estimation, preparation of cost estimates and software used in designing SPIS.

During the discussion, de Guzman said that SPIS is very advantageous especially in rain fed areas with a

minimum service area of ten hectares for rice and with a minimum service area of three hectares for non – rice like corn, vegetables and other high value crops.

However, he said that the proposed site must have sustainable water source (open source and groundwater).

“Another advantage of SPIS is that it does not require any fuel or electric supply to operate. It is not affected by power cuts, low voltage, single phase problems or motor burning due to power coming from neutral line and it can be installed even in remote areas where electricity and diesel is difficult to procure,” he noted.

Further, he shared that such irrigation system also needs maintenance.

“Solar panels are required to be cleaned, particularly in dry areas. Dust and other substances, such as bird droppings, can build up over time and these may cause negative

impact in the amount of electricity generated by a panel,” he said.

For the discussion of the Basic Hydrogeology, Engr. Darwin M. Nevares explained that groundwater has more water than on what we usually see like river, lake, among others.

According to him, three percent of the Earth’s water is inland water and from that it has a composition of 22% groundwater, 77% ice caps and glaciers and the remaining one percent is surface water, atmospheric water, and soil moisture.

“Some think that when it rains the water increases but it is only a myth, Earth’s water does not diminish or increase because it evaporates,” he added.

During the last day of the training, the participants went to Laoac, Pangasinan for a field visitation and to have an actual application on the topics that were discussed by the speakers. //

project implementer and best HVCDP coordinators will be given a corresponding award at the end of the year or during the last semester assessment to recognize their efforts and cooperation with the department.

During the first batch of the assessment, Ms. Maricar Bongais, HVCDP focal person, bared the HV commodities situationer in Ilocos region wherein she highlighted the expansion of the garlic industry

which is also among the mandates of former Agriculture Secretary Manny Piñol.

On the other hand, a representative from the Philippine Statistics Authority (former Bureau of Agricultural Statistics) was in attendance to tackle the performance of selected high-value commodities in Region 1 for CY 2019 production data.

Among other topics discussed were the guidelines on the provision

of AEW incentives, a draft of the Philippine garlic, onion, and mango industry roadmap, and the Gulayan sa Paaralan & Gulayan sa Barangay guidelines.

The assessment served as an avenue for the agency, LGUs and partner agencies to discuss and correct the gaps to avoid conflicts and to improve their services that would benefit their target clientele.

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DA - RFO1 HOSTS AMAS-AMAD 2NDQ ASSESSMENT



AMAS Director Bernadette F. San Juan shares her observations on the presented accomplishments of each AMAD representatives from the whole DA regional offices.

The Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1 - Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD) hosted the Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Services (AMAS)-AMAD Assessment Workshop for the second quarter on July 15-19, 2019 at Java Hotel, Laoag City, Ilocos Norte.

The five-day assessment workshop was attended by 104 participants composed of chiefs and staff members from the AMAS-AMAD of the 16 regions to create awareness and provide updates on the recent directives, programs/projects and activities of DA relative to marketing and agribusiness concerns for farmers.

During the opening program, Ms. Erlinda F. Manipon - Regional Technical Director (RTD) for Operations of the DA-RFO1 said that the DA-RFO1 is grateful that Region I was chosen as

venue for the said event for the first time.

"Ilocos Region has so much to offer, from beautiful tourist spots and delicacies. I hope you'll enjoy your stay here," Manipon said.

"This workshop where we will evaluate our implementation on the programs and projects under AMAD will help us determine what has worked and what did not and from there we can move forward better," she added.

Meanwhile, RED Lucrecio R. Alviar, Jr in his message during the second day said that marketing has always been one of the most pressing issues in the farming business.

"Our big challenge now is to help our farmers. We have to strengthen their capability in establishing market linkages with producers and traders

in the other regions especially in the National Capital Region," Alviar said.

He encouraged all the AMAD Chiefs in every region to learn from each other and look for the most effective strategy to promote the prime commodities of their respective regions.

Dir. Bernadette F. San Juan, AMAS Director, discussed the RA 11321 or known as the Sagip Saka Act and its implementing rules and regulations.

She also presided and gave critiques during the workshop after each guidelines were presented.

On the last day of the workshop, results on the status of disbursement vs. obligation of each region was presented and Region 5 ranked number one from among all other regions having the highest disbursement so far from its allocated fund reflecting an efficient management of funds. //

CORN BANNER PROJECTS REVIEWED WITH LGU COUNTERPARTS

Giving updates on policy directions, technologies, and interventions under the Corn Banner Program, the Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office I conducted a two-day review and planning workshop for the Agricultural Extension Workers (AEWs) of the provinces of Pangasinan and La Union at the Kabaleyan Resort, San Carlos City, Pangasinan.

The two-day activity provided an avenue for the staff members of the DA-Corn Banner Program to discuss pressing issues and concerns relevant to project implementation.

In her message during the opening program, Regional Technical Director for Operations, Ms. Erlinda F. Manipon reminded the AEWs to update and guide their newly elected Local Chief Executives on DA's programs and projects.

She also noted the importance of complementing resources between DA, LGUs, and State Colleges & Universities as well as private companies for collaborative projects

that would further benefit farmers in the region.

"Hindi tayo dapat nagko-compete kundi nagko-complement tayo sa lahat ng ating mga gagawin para sa ikabubuti ng ating mga minamahal na magsasaka," Manipon stressed.

Reminding the LGU extension workers to continue to strive for higher production, she asked the participants to continue on planning and identifying properly the needs of the farmers for more effective implementation of projects under the Corn Banner Program.

Updating the participants about the plan of the national government on digitizing the farmer-beneficiaries in the country in CY 2021 where farmers and their farms will be given identification card and geo-tagged for proper identification, she called the LGU-partners to get ready with their farmers' profile in their locality.

"Through that project, the President would assess how farmers will be given appropriate interventions and there is this plan that farmers may be given a pension," Manipon added.

Meanwhile, providing updates on the interventions for corn farmers this year to include production support services, farm machineries and equipment support, research and development activities, as well as extension, education and training services, Ms. Rhoda Galban, the Regional Corn and Cassava Focal Person discussed these interventions necessary to carry out the activities, programs and projects under the Corn Banner Program.

Ms. Marivic G. Begonia, Chief of the Regional Crop Protection Center (RCPC) also gave some updates on the fall armyworm pests which have been attacking the corn standing crops in Cagayan Valley Region and now been observed in some corn areas in Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur.

Begonia warned the extension workers to be more vigilant in their monitoring and surveillance as the pest may greatly affect the corn production in the region if this would be ignored. //



HVCDP MEETS WITH GPP IMPLEMENTERS

“We look forward to the success of this endeavor and we look forward to healthy students in the public schools.”

Regional Technical Director for Operations Erlinda F. Manipon stressed this during the pre-implementation meeting for the CY 2019 Gulayan sa Paaralan Program (GPP).

With the initiative of the staff members of the High Value Crop Development Program, the implementers of the program from other government agencies were gathered at the DA RFO I 3rd floor conference room on August 2, 2019.

GPP is a program fronted by the Department of Agriculture in partnership with the Department of Education to reintroduce and promote agriculture and good health and nutrition among public elementary and secondary schools nationwide through vegetable

gardening. It likewise promotes self-help food production activities and values among children in public schools.

The program also aims to showcase the small-scale food production model in schools for households to replicate. Moreover, the gardens that will be established upon the implementation of the GPP will serve as a food basket of the school to augment the school-based feeding program (SBFP) of the DepEd.

“We hope that this program, in collaboration with you will be of great help doon sa adhikain natin na maging healthy ang ating mga estudyante because kung healthy sila ay more productive sila at more alert,” said Manipon.

Prior to the presentation of the new implementing guidelines of GPP, Ms. Maricris Rimas of DepEd presented their accomplishment report during the previous implementation of the program. Based on the SBFP SY 2018-2019 nutritional status, from



the 30.11% severely wasted and 69.89% wasted children, 83.35% became normal after 120 feeding days, denoting that school gardening can combat malnutrition.

DA, as the lead agency will provide interventions to DepEd which includes assorted open-pollinated variety (OPV) seeds, garden tools like rake, shovel, spading fork, watering can, garden hoe, organic fertilizer, and bio-intensive gardening (BIG) training.

Meanwhile, to give recognition to the best implementer of the GPP, there will be a Search for Outstanding Implementers at the regional and schools' division level. The best implementer will be given a cash incentive by the LGU. The DA and DepEd officials together with the LGUs will be conducting monitoring and evaluation to participating School Division offices.

During the meeting, criteria for selection of the best implementers was presented by Ms. Maricar Bongais, HVCDP focal person, wherein she mentioned that regional evaluation will be from November to December 2019. Division winners are required to submit soft and hard copies of a scrapbook to DA on November 6, 2019, which will include their documentation from land preparation to the feeding program.//

ADORNA REMAINS AS RAFC CHAIRMAN



Mr. Vincent A. Adorna remained in his position as the Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Council (RAFC) Chairman in Ilocos Region for CY 2019-2022.

Adorna garnered 52 votes from among the 85 qualified voters from the different Agriculture and Fisheries Council (AFC) members on July 31, 2019 during the RAFC election cum regular meeting held at the 3rd floor conference room, Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1 (DA – RFO1), San Fernando City, La Union.

The election was presided by the chairman of the AFC Electoral Board, Mr. Dante Obillo, supported by member Mr. Mario Guttierrez and Ms. Giezl R. Polca, representative of the Department of Interior and Local Government Unit (DILG) through a ballot for the position of chairman, while other officials voted through a standing voting.

The new elected officers of RAFC Region 1 are as follows: Chairperson

– Mr. Vincent A. Adorna; Vice – Chairperson – Magdaleno Andres; Secretary – Alberto Maningding; Treasurer – Benjamin Campaño; Internal Auditor – Bonifacio Fagela; and Press Relations Officer (PRO) – Rogelio Ceredon.

Meanwhile, during the meeting, Ms. Flor de Luz Magpili, coordinator for the Provincial Agrikultura: Kaagapay ng Bayang Pinoy (AKBAY) presented the AKBAY program roll-over project status in Region 1 for CY 2018.

Based on the report, Magpili shared that they distributed Php850,000.00 worth of project for the 85 total beneficiaries from the municipalities of Sto. Tomas, Pugo, and Bagulin in La Union.

These projects were: fish processing, eggplant production, swine fattening, goat production, okra production, string beans production, and soft broom making.

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