

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



This quarter's cover features one of the participating farmers during the 50-hectare Corn Model Farm Field Day in Brgy. Bocboc, San Carlos City, Pangasinan on February 7. This is an annual event of the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1 in partnership with local government units to guide farmers in discovering new farming practices that are applicable to their area for better produce and higher yield.



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF | Vida V. Cacal

WRITERS | Eva C. Agustin

Roley Ann L. Pagal Shenna B. Baga

Joan D. Dapidap

LAY-OUT AND DESIGN | Joan D. Dapidap

PHOTOGRAPHERS | Severino G. Cartas Danilo R. Flores

Khristian Glenn A. Garcia

Vilma D. Frigillana

CIRCULATION Oscar L. Padua DRIVER

ADVISER

Lucrecio R. Alviar, Jr.







Rafis Ilocos Region



rafis.ilocos@gmail.com/ da_rafid1@yahoo.com

Damag Agri is the official publication of the Department of Agriculture - Regional Field Office I. It is published and circulated quarterly through the Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Information Section.

For article contributions, you may email us at rafis.ilocos@gmail.com or da_rafid1@yahoo. com. You may also visit our Facebook page at RAFIS ILOCOS REGION.

DA-RFO 1 Key Officials

Lucrecio R. Alviar, Jr., CESO III Regional Executive Director

Jovita M. Datuin, Ph.D. OIC - RTD for Research and Regulatory

Erlinda F. Manipon OIC - RTD for Operations

Gloria C. Parong Chief of Staff - Office of the Regional Executive Director

Anne Q. Bares, DVM Chief, Field Operations Division

Cathy Pastor OIC, Research and Development Division

Doris Joy C. Garcia Chief, Planning, Monitoring and **Evaluation Division**

Wilhelmina P. Castañeda Chief, Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division

Consuelo N. Belarmino Chief, Integrated Laboratories Division

Florentino A. Adame, DVM Chief, Regulatory Division

Joel G. Maconocido OIC, Administrative and Finance Division

Dennis I. Tactac, RPAE Head, Regional Agricultural Engineering Division

Constancia R. Diaz, DVM Head, Pangasinan Research and Experiment Center

Wilma A. Ibea Head, Ilocos Norte Research and Experiment Center





CONTENTS

4

'RTL is the best reform ever in the history of Philippine agriculture' – Sec. Dar

6

Indemnity cash released for ASF affected hog raisers

7

DA Ilocos delivers compensation for ASF affected hog raisers

8

DA, LBP turn-over Php 2.002M cash aid to Pinili farmers

10

IN farmers receive RFFA cash grant

12

DAR leads INAFES MOA signing, RFFA distribution; announces new ACPC loan program

16

DA-AMAD conducts credit forum with stakeholders

18

NK6414Bt/GT, AH ULTRA 357 top hybrid varieties in corn derby

20

DA conducts 50 - hec model farm field day

22

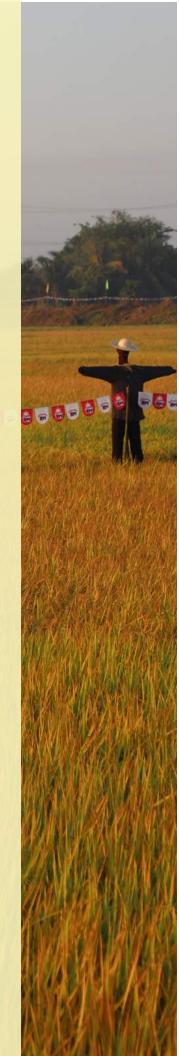
PSABE Ilocos Chapter conducts reg'l convention

24

Techno forum with farmers held

26

DA chief aims for more agri, fishery exports









'RTL is the best reform ever in the history of Philippine agriculture' - Sec. Dar

Agriculture Secretary William D. Dar in his message enthused this, referring to the outcomes of the Rice Tariffication Law (RTL) during its first year anniversary celebration at the Urdaneta City Cultural Sports Center in Urdaneta City, Pangasinan on March 5, 2020 with around 2,500 farmers and various agri-fishery stakeholders in attendance.

RTL is a new policy signed by President Rodrigo Duterte on Feb. 14, 2019 which amends the two-decade-old Agricultural Tariffication Act of 1996 and replaces the quantitative restrictions on rice imports with tariff. Set with twin goals of providing available and affordable foods for the Filipinos while strengthening the Filipino farmers to make them more competitive with the neighboring Asian countries, the RTL's brainchild is Senate Committee Chair on Agriculture, Cynthia Villar.

Dar in his message mentioned in a capsule the benefits and outcomes of the RTL a year after it was implemented.

Among the outcomes that the RTL has made is the promotion of free-trade and fair competition in the market as there was an influx of different kinds of rice in the market with different prices ranging from as low as P27 to as high as P36 a kilo, giving more options for the consumers to choose the variety that they prefer.

Among the benefits that the RTL has provided to the Philippine economy according to Sec. Dar is the non-contribution of rice commodity in the high inflation rate and the increasing inventory of rice supply, securing the country for its demand for rice for about 4-5 months that would coincide with the harvest season for the months

of March-April.

Giving updates as to how the RTL through the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) was used to liberalize rice farmers in their rice production activities, Dar also mentioned how the P10B fund under RCEF shall be utilized for the next five years, in which excess of the P10B tariff collected shall be used to fund crop insurance and land titling.

"Gusto naming kayong maging competitive sa ibat-ibang areas. Pababain natin ang cost of production para maging competitive kayo dahil gusto namin na kayo ay maging panalo," Dar said.

Contrary to the previous claims of the detractors of RTL that the country has lost P68B, Dar explained that farmers have not lose anything since the government have provided the necessary assistance through the provision of SURE-AID and Rice Farmers Financial Assistance (RFFA) to the farmers, not to mention the free seeds, trainings and farm machineries to be distributed this March.

Sharing the initiatives made by the National Food Authority (NFA) which enhances, accelerates and levels-up its buying strategy on palay, as well as the Local Government Units and the big cooperatives who were able to partner in the LBPs loan program intended to purchase palay from the farmers, Sec. Dar also shared his plans of partnering with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in its cash assistance program to the 4P beneficiaries by the provision of rice subsidy instead, in tandem with the NFA.

Making all these plans possible, Sec. Dar vowed to improve and upgrade the RSBSA or the Registry of Basic Sectors in Agriculture's list from time to time to ensure the veracity and validity of the list of farmers who would be provided with agri-fishery interventions.

Seeing the benefit of crop diversification as another strategy to prepare farmers from being competitive, Dar mentioned the release of P1-3B fund to start helping rice farmers into venturing high value crops production.

He also called on the farmers' cooperative and association members to consolidate and team up together to strengthen and increase their leverage especially in coordinating with the DA and its attached agencies so that they could demand the necessary services and interventions they would need to improve their farming activities.

Of the 147 rice-producing municipalities in the country, with Pangasinan as a major producing province, Dar revealed that around P1.9B shall be provided to the province from the DA that forms part the P492 million from RCEF, P436 million from the RFFA and P965 million for centralized operations.

Meanwhile, as part of the first year anniversary celebration, Dar also led the National Rice Harvest conducted in Brgy. Lelemaan, Manaoag, Pangasinan which showcased the various technologies in rice production and harvesting using the mechanized farming.

With the theme, "Sa Rice Tariffication Law, lahat tayo panalo," the first year anniversary of RTL was also graced by no less than Senator Cynthia Villar who vowed to support for the renewal of the law once it lapses on its target date of six year implementation. #

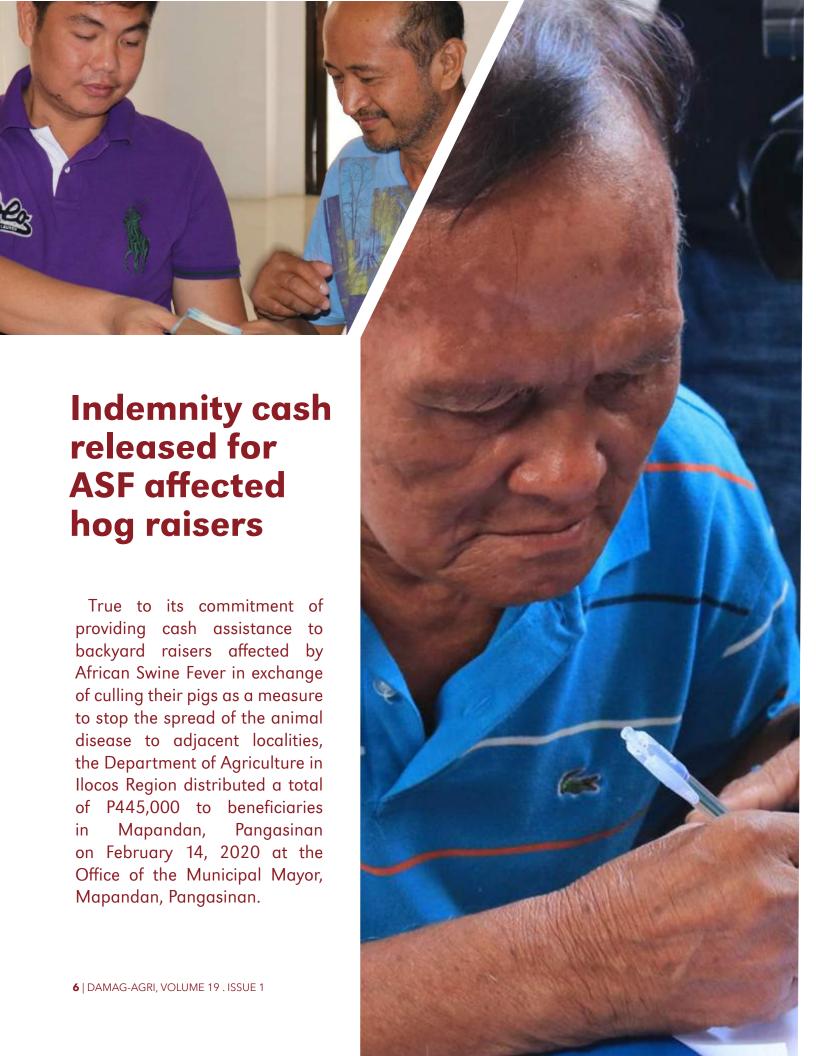












21 backyard raisers led by Ms. Marietta Torralba, received from DA P5, 000 each of the 82 heads of hogs surrendered during the culling activity of the DA through the Regulatory Division sometime in September, 2019.

Mapandan Mayor, Anthony Penuliar, in his message during the cash distribution activity expressed his gratitude to the DA for helping ease the anxiety being felt by his constituents during the culling activity.

"Malaking kabawasan ang pagbibigay ng ayudang ito sa naramdamang hinagpis ng aking mga kababayan sa pagbaon ng kanilang mga baboy noong panahong pinilit nating kunin noong kasagsagsan ng ating problema sa ASF," Penuliar said.

Torralba on her part expressed also gratitude to the DA for the aid she has received amounting to P60,000 as this would provide her and her family a capital to start-up a new livelihood activity to augment her income.

Meanwhile, giving updates on the status of the town in so far as ASF is concerned, Penuliar expressed high hopes that the disease is already contained in the municipality as there were no more reported incidence of ASF as of date.

Mapandan, Pangasinan is the first recipient of the cash assistance given by DA in Ilocos Region after having recorded the first case of ASF in the region.#



DA Ilocos delivers compensation for ASF affected hog raisers

To assist hog raisers affected with African swine fever, DA RFO I released a total of P1,310,000 indemnification fund to 39 affected backyard hog raisers in Pangasinan on March 11, 2020.

20 hog raisers from Dagupan City and 19 from Binmaley received their cash assistance amounting to 5,000 per hog regardless of age and weight as compensation for the dead and culled pigs.

To cover the losses, only a maximum of 20 heads per individual is paid by the government.

Dr. Florentino Adame, Regulatory division Chief told recipients to cooperate with the agency by not raising hogs while there is ASF outbreak in the country. As a substitute to pigs, he cited that rabbit can be a safe alternative to pork meat as eyed by DA chief thereby encouraging everyone to raise rabbits since they can give birth up to five times a year with an average of eight offspring.

He also mentioned the 0% interest credit facilities under ACPC that could help farmers establish their source of income. #

DA, LBP turn-over P2.002M cash aid to Pinili farmers

The Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office I (DA-RFO I) in partnership with the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) turned-over P2.002 million worth of cash assistance to 404 farmers in Pinili, Ilocos Norte through the DA's Rice Farmers Financial Assistance (RFFA) Program.

Held at Pinili Amphitheater, Pinili, Ilocos Norte on January 28, 2020, the cash assistance distribution was initiated by DA-RFO I Executive Director, Lucrecio R. Alviar, Jr. together with Provincial Government Officials headed by Ilocos Norte Governor Matthew Marcos Manotoc and Vice Governor Cecilia Araneta Marcos.

The distribution of cash cards amounting to P5,000 each of the farmer-beneficiary is among the immediate interventions that DA and LBP is doing to mitigate the initial impact of the Rice Tariffication Law to the local farmers.

In Ilocos Region, a total of 107,122 farmers shall be benefitted by the RFFA, with Ilocos Norte having an allocation of 19,927 farmer-beneficiaries. In the distribution in Pinili, a total of 206 farmers would still be waiting for the second batch schedule of distribution.

In his message during the event, Alviar took the chance of informing the various interventions that the DA is doing to modernize the agriculture sector aligning towards the attainment of DA Sec. William Dar's new thinking in agriculture.

He mentioned the P10 billion allocation every year for DA through RCEF which will be given within the period of six years subdivided into P5B for machinery projects, P3B for seeds development, propagation and promotion as well as P1B each for credit, training, and extension.

Pinili Mayor, Rommel Labasan in his message expressed his gratitude to the DA officialdom for bringing this project in his town while reminding his farmer-constituents to embrace these programs and projects for the improvement of their livelihood and income.

"Nagpapasalamat kami dahil nandiyan po kayo na laging tumitingin sa kapakanan ng aming mga minamahal na magsasaka. Kaya sana, sa ating mga magsasaka, tangkilikin natin ang mga proyektong ito para sa ikabubuti at ikauunlad ng ating buhay," Labasan said.

Manotoc also expressed in his message gratitude to the DA and LBP for providing this immediate intervention to the Ilokano farmers. He recognized the partnership that these government institutions are doing for the good and welfare of his farmer constituents in Ilocos Norte.

"With the convergence and synergy of all, we will be able to take care of the needs of our farmers," he said.

Meanwhile, informing the participants about other credit window facilities that the DA and LBP are offering to the farmers, Ms. Zenaida Edra, LBP representative also informed about the Agricultural Competitiveness Enhancement Fund as well as the SIKAT-SAKA Programs to provide farmers additional production capitals.#















After successfully piloting the Rice Farmers Financial Assistance (RFFA) Program first in the province of Pangasinan in 2019, the Department of Agriculture along with the Landbank of the Philippines (LBP) continues its implementation, this time in Lacag City, Ilocos Norte on January 13.

RFFA is a cash assistance grant, not a loan program, for rice farmers to ease the initial impact of the Rice Tariffication Law on their incomes.

With the target of 19, 927 farmer beneficiaries in Ilocos Norte, initial 2,000 beneficiaries from the municipalities of Solsona, Badoc, Bacarra and Laoag City received their cash grant worth 5,000 pesos each.

Of the 2,000 initial recipients, 1,041 are from Lagage City, 485 farmers from Badoc, 263 farmers from Bacarra and 211 farmer-beneficiaries from Solsona. Other beneficiaries from remaining municipalities in Ilocos Norte will also be given their cash assistance at a given schedule from DA and Land Bank.

Qualified beneficiaries for the program are those with 0.5 to 2 hectares rice farm area.

The ceremonial launching was led by DA-RFO 1 Regional Executive Director Lucrecio R. Alviar, Jr., RTD for Operations Erlinda F. Manipon, First Vice-President Ma. Belma T. Turla of North Luzon Branches Group of Landbank, Ilocos Norte Vice-Governor Cecilia Araneta Marcos, and other LGU officials.

RFFA, aside from the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (RCEF) and the Expanded Survival and Recovery Assistance loan programs, targets to help the 600,000 small rice farmers in the country. //

DAR LEADS INAFES MOA SIGNING, RFFA DISTRIBUTION;

Department of Agriculture Secretary William D. Dar led the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signing of the Ilocos Norte Agriculture and Fisheries Extension Program (INAFES) and the distribution of Rice Farmers Financial Assistance (RFFA) cash cards to farmers on February 28, 2020 at the Centennial Area, Laoag City, Ilocos Norte.



WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT THIS INITIATIVE WILL ACCELERATE
AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES MODERNIZATION IN THE PROVINCE AND
THE WHOLE COUNTRY AND BRING PROSPERITY AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH
TO OUR SMALLHOLDER FARMERS AND FISHERFOLK - MANOTOC

ANNOUNCES NEW ACPC LOAN PROGRAM

INAFES is a program of the Provincial Government of Ilocos Norte showcasing an innovative model to strengthen research-extension-farmer/fisherfolk linkages by sharing science-based knowledge and technologies from various institutions with farming and fishing families, rural communities and agriculture based enterprise.

According to Ilocos Norte Governor Mathew Joseph Marcos Manotoc, the INAFES major programs include the development of agro-enterprise and location specific technologies, capacity building, information and knowledge sharing, social mobilization and institutional strengthening that will be

managed by the Province in collaboration with the DA, Local Government Units (LGU), Mariano Marcos State University (MMSU) and other partner agencies.

"We are confident that this initiative will accelerate agriculture and fisheries modernization in the Province and the whole country and bring prosperity and inclusive growth to our smallholder farmers and fisherfolk," Manotoc said.

Meanwhile, Sec. Dar announced during the program the new loan program of the Agricultural Credit Policy Council (ACPC) which is the Kapital Access for Young Agripreneurs (KAYA). It is a loan program for the millennials/youth aged 18-30 years





...KAYA LOAN PROGRAM IS ONE WAY TO ENCOURAGE AND ATTRACT OUR CHILDREN AND THE MILLENNIALS TO CONTINUE THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY, THERE IS 1 BILLION ALLOCATED FUND FOR THIS PROGRAM AND IT WAS ALREADY GIVEN TO ACPC AND OUR CONDUIT PARTNERS - DAR

old who have interest in agripreneurship. They can loan up to Php300,000.00 - Php500,000.00 which offers 0% interest and payable for five (5) years to finance working capital for startup or existing agri-based projects of young entrepreneurs and agrifishery graduates

"This KAYA loan program is one way to encourage and attract our children and the millennials to continue the agriculture industry, there is 1 Billion allocated fund for this program and it was already given to ACPC and our conduit partners," Dar said.

Another loan program is the Agri Negosyo Loan Program for the small and micro agri-fishery enterprises to finance income generating agri-fishery activities and for working capital. Micro and small enterprises include sole proprietors, corporations, associations and cooperatives whose owners are marginalized farmers/fisherfolk.

Said program features on-lending and direct lending schemes to be implemented by the Government and Financial Institutions (GFIs) that offers Php300,000 – Php15M, 0% interest with up to 3.5% per annum service fee payable for 5 years.

Meanwhile, Sen. Imee R. Marcos was also present during the program and showed her support to the agriculture sector. She endorsed the INAFES to DA during her term as Governor of Ilocos Norte.

Along with the program is the distribution of the RFFA to 19,927 farmer beneficiaries in the province who were affected by the price drop in the farm gate price of palay. Said program is not a loan program but an unconditional cash transfers to farmers.

After the event, Dar also met with farmer groups in Pagudpud, llocos Norte for a dialogue. #







conducted a Credit Forum with the various stakeholders in Region I at the DA-Regional Field Office I 5th Floor Conference Room, San Fernando City, La Union.

DA-AMAD conducts credit forum with stakeholders

Aimed at providing updates and better understanding on the procedures, protocols and requirements in availing of the credit programs offered by the DA, representatives from the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP), Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) and the Agricultural Credit Policy Council (ACPC) thoroughly discussed the

guidelines of the various DA credit facility programs offered to farmers and fisherfolk in the region.

Among the credit programs discussed include the Agricultural Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (ACEF) and the Expanded Rice Credit Assistance – Rice Credit Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (ERCA-RCEF), which provides farmers, collateral-free, easy access and with minimum interest rates credit-window in order to finance their agri-related activities and enterprises.

Meanwhile, giving updates on the status of loans under the Production Loan Easy Access (PLEA), the Survival and Recovery (SURE), and the E-SURE financial assistance program; each of the lending center's representatives including the ACPC from the four provinces in the region

presented the amount provided and the number of beneficiaries under the said programs.

Ms. Florie Mae Lucas, ACPC's Focal Person for Pangasinan and La Union informed that under the PLEA-SURE program, a total of P65.4 million was loaned-out last year benefiting a total of 1,833 medium and small farmers and fisherfolk.

For the SURE Aid assistance program, DA through Land Bank was able to grant an amount of P50M loan for the farmers and fisherfolk in the region with llocos Norte having the biggest amount granted with P18,829,000, followed by Pangasinan with P15,790,000.00. llocos Sur farmers with P10,980,000 and 4,401,000 for La Union.

As to the repayment rate for the

PLEA-SURE program, Ms. Lucas informed the group that there was no repayment yet from the borrowers since their loans will be only maturing in March 2020. Nonetheless, "previous repayment schedule indicated a 96.1% repayment rate in the region with only 3.1% pass due," Ms. Lucas said.

To further strengthen linkages, the DA-RFO I through AMAD has organized the Regional, Provincial Loan Facilitation Team (RP/LOFTs) led by Ms. Ma. Christine de Leon, the Regional Agri-Credit Desk Officer in the region.

The RPLOFTs was organized to provide the needed technical assistance support to farmers and fishers on credit awareness, loan acquisition, utilization and repayment.#



NK6414Bt/GT, AH ULTRA 357 top hybrid varieties in corn derby

The activity aims to showcase the best hybrid corn seeds and technologies of the five participating private seed companies with their 12 varieties, namely: Bioseed (H102G, B9909G, H101G or B558G), Deklab/Bayer Crop Science (9132S, 9919S), Syngenta (NK6410Bt/GT, NK8840 Bt/GT, NK6414Bt/GT), Asian Hybrid (AH ULTRA 357, AH J505), and Pioneer (P4097YHR, P3530YHR).

There were two different technologies used. These were Site Specific Nutrient Management (SSNM), a plant-based approach that provides principles that can be used everywhere in which farmers give their crop the right amount of essential nutrients and the Company Control Area where the company provides their practice into farming.

NK6414Bt/GT and AH ULTRA 357 hybrid corn varieties were the top among the 12 varieties presented during the Corn Derby held at Brgy. Bongtolan, Vigan City, Ilocos Sur on February 7, 2020.



NK6414Bt/GT variety of the Syngenta company has a result yield of 9.16MT/ha at 14% MC with a 196.08 (%) Return on Investment (ROI) tops in the Company Control Area technology, while AH ULTRA 357 under Asian Hybrid gained number one with the use of the SSNM with 7.85MT/ha with 207.52 (%) ROI.

Meanwhile during the program, Ms. Erlinda F. Manipon – OIC Regional Technical Director for Operations underscored the importance of conducting Corn Derby Field Day, where she said that it is one way of introducing to the farmers the technologies in farming.

"This event is very important for the farmers because in here they will discover that there is really a technology to be used in farming, far different from their farming practice," Manipon said.

"However, the result of this derby is not conclusive because there is a possibility that the result will vary if it was planted in another area," she added.

The Corn Derby was spearheaded by the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1 Corn Banner Program headed by Ms. Rhoda Galban, Regional Corn Focal Person, to help and encourage farmers to go into yellow corn farming because of its advantages of having higher yield and income.#



DA conducts 50-ha corn model farm field day





Using NK8840 corn seed variety, a preferred variety of the farmers in the area. techno-demo project the aims to showcase new corn production technologies like the use of fertilizer and nutrient management technology including the promotion on the use of full farm machineries and equipment from land preparation, planting, harrowing, harvesting up to drying and storage.

Established in a 50-hectare farm lot, the project was managed and cultivated by the members of the Sta. Rosa and Apaya Farmers Association, supervised by the assigned Agricultural Technologists in the area and in collaboration with the Provincial and Regional Corn Programs.

In the result of the crop cut activity presented during the Field Day, of the 50 plants cut with ten representative ears, an 8.92 metric tons/ha. is projected as yield of the techno-demo at 14% moisture content, way beyond higher

than the 7 tons/ha. target yield of the techno-demo.

As revealed in the cost and return analysis of the techno-demo, there was a comparative advantage of mechanized farming on that of a manual farming system especially on the cost of production. Ms. Shiela Opelac, the Corn Coordinator of Laoag City in her report showed that a farmer could use around P59,000 for every hectare of corn production when using mechanized farming much lower than that of manual farming where he/she could invest more than P62,000.

The report also revealed that a farmer could gain higher when his farm is fully mechanized as he could be able to profit at least P62,000, much higher as compared when he/she uses the manual farming system where he/she could only gain a net income of more than P57,000.

Meanwhile, Ms. Josefina Bueno, representing DA-RFO I Regional Executive Director Lucrecio Alviar, Jr. in her message lauded the efforts of the Corn Banner Program and the Provincial and City Local Government Units for realizing the

goals and objectives of the DA for higher production and increased incomes of the farmers through the farming technologies showcased in the techno-demo such as farm mechanization and the strategy of a farm consolidation.

She likewise encouraged the farmers present in the field day to adopt in their own farms whatever learnings they acquired during the field day to sustain the DA's efforts of making Ilocos Region as a consistent highest corn yielder in the country, as she vowed to remain steadfast in all the needed support of the farmers.

"Patuloy na tutulong ang DA sa inyo. Samantalahin ninyo ang mga ganitong pagkakataon na nagbibigay ang gobyerno ng mga suporta sa inyo para mas lalo pang maiangat ang inyong produksyon at kita para sa ikauunlad ng bawat isa," Bueno added.

The field day was also attended by the farmers from Batac City, Dingras, San Nicolas, Badoc, and Solsona, where among the corn producing municipalities in Ilocos Norte.#



PSABE Ilocos Chapter conducts reg'l convention

Unifying efforts of developing agricultural engineering profession as a potent component in the growth and development of the agri-fishery sector in the region, the Philippine Society of Agricultural Biosystems Engineering (PSABE) llocos Chapter conducted its 9th PSABE Regional Convention. Held on Jan. 23-24, 2020 at the Philippine Rice Research Institute in Batac City, Ilocos Norte, the Regional Convention gathered a total of 175 professional agricultural engineers including the pre-professionals with the theme: The role of Agricultural and Biosystem

Engineering towards sustainable agricultural development.

Gracing the occasion as the Guest of Honor and Speaker is no less than Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office I Regional Executive Director, Lucrecio R. Alviar, Jr. who committed his support to develop the agricultural engineering profession by sharing his intention of hiring additional 32 licensed agricultural engineers for a project-based activities of DA-RFO I on top of the 25 regular employees of the agency.

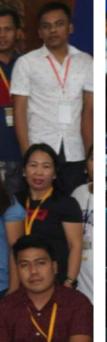
"We will recruit these engineers if only to accord the farmers a timely delivery of their much-needed projects," Alviar said.

He then called the four State Colleges and Universities (SUCs) in the region offering agricultural engineering course to recommend alumni of their universities who can be possibly hired by DA-RFO I.

Recognizing the important roles of agricultural engineers in the attainment of Secretary William Dar's twin goal for a higher production and









income of farmers, Alviar emphasized the need to look on location-specific interventions such as the provision of agri-machinery and equipment that would suit the need of farmers to attain improved production and income.

Meanwhile, inspiring the participants with her message, Mariano Marcos State University President, Dr. Shirley Agrupis also underscored the valuable role of agricultural engineers in sustaining the growth and development of the agri-fishery sectors.

Emphasizing on the three I's which stands for Idea, Innovate and Inspire, President Agrupis called on the "Bayaws" to get out from their boxes and make things happen.

"Coming up with a design is not enough, but what matters is the impact that we make to our clients," Agrupis said.

Giving updates on the Bureau of Agricultural and Fisheries Engineering (BAFE) Program including updates on ABE Law otherwise known as RA 10915, Engr. Ariodear Rico, BAFE Director, discussed about these programs giving emphasis on the need for proper inventory of the agri-machineries and equipment, including infrastructure and irrigation projects and interventions provided by the DA to farmer organizations

and cooperatives, including those for repair in the region.

Aside from updating the attendees with agri-engineering information, technical papers were also presented by experts in both the academe and attached agencies of DA providing salient inputs on how agricultural engineering could contribute to the sustainable growth and development of the agriculture sector.

Likewise, the PSABE Convention served as avenue for a reorganization of the PSABE Ilocos Chapter with Engr. Mark Harry Pastor as the newly elected President.#





Bridging the gap between farmers and researchers in terms of technology transfer, a one-day technology forum was spearheaded by DA – RFO I's research division at the Hotelinda Suites, Vigan City, Ilocos Sur on January 30, 2020.

The conduct of the forum is second in the region which aims to showcase the results of studies conducted by the researchers of the agency. It is also a way of sharing the information resulted from their hard works that can complement and supplement

the indigenous knowledge of farmers.

Through the said activity, 16 discoveries on rice, corn, high-value crops, livestock and CPAR-based technology was downloaded to agriculture stakeholders in the region.

"This activity is one way of responding to the battle cry of



Officer-in-charge of the Research research and technologies that does not reach the grassroots level are useless.

forum participated by over extension workers, municipal and Ilocos Sur.

representative, Hon. Eric Acuña AMO (Ako'y Organiko), a that can be used as bio fertilizer,

province of Ilocos Sur.#

DA CHIEF AIMS FOR MOR

Story taken from Sec. Dar's Official FB page

With renewed vigor and strategy, the Department of Agriculture (DA) will strongly partner with the private sector and organized farmers' and fishers' groups to further increase the country's exports of farm and fishery products, with emphasis on diversified and expanded value chain from farms and fishponds to processing.

"We will push for more exports of farm and fishery products to propel the agriindustrialization of the Philippine countryside," said Agriculture Secretary William Dar, during a meeting of the Export Development Council (EDC) on February 6, 2020, at the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) central office in Makati.

"We need to have a systematic and longterm strategy to develop and promote exports of both raw and processed agricultural and fishery products," Secretary Dar said, as export promotion is among the eight paradigms under the DA's "new thinking for agriculture."



RE AGRI, FISHERY EXPORTS

EDC chair and DTI Secretary Ramon Lopez said it was the first time in recent years that a DA chief attended an EDC meeting. The EDC is the export promotion arm of the DTI mandated to institutionalize the national export drive that will enable the country's products to compete globally.

Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) show that top Philippine agriculture exports reached \$5.875 billion from January to November 2019, with bananas accounting for 30 percent at \$1.77 billion.

Secretary Dar, however, challenged the country's exporters to diversify their products, to include emerging export winners like fresh and processed tropical fruits, natural rubber, and other coconut products like coconut water and coco sugar, to name a few.

"With the DA's new thinking for Philippine agriculture, we can do much better if we bring our resources together. The way forward really is for the government to strongly partner with the

private sector," he added.

He then instructed concerned DA agencies—specifically the Bureau of Plant Industry (DA-BPI), Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR), Philippine Coconut Authority (DA-PCA), and High-Value Crops Development Program—to elevate their game in partnering with big agribusiness firms, small and medium enterprises, and organized farmers' and fishers' to develop more innovative and competitive agrifishery export products.

During the EDC meeting, Dar emphasized the need for aggressive and sustained export promotion as he urged the private sector to help small farmers and fisherfolk through the "big brother-small brother" approach.

"Exports of agri products should not depend on surplus production to supply the international market. We need to have the economies of scale on-farm production that will give us sustained quantity and quality of export products," Dar said.#







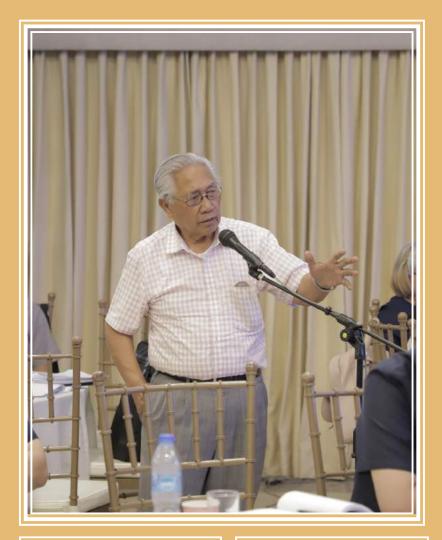








































As per record of the Philippine Statistics Authority, corn production in Ilocos Region went down by 2.68 percent in the 4th quarter of 2019. The output was posted at 7,712 metric tons (MT), lower than the 7,924 MT output in the 4th quarter of 2018. All the provinces of the region, except Ilocos Norte, registered lower production. The harvest area decreased from 1,933 hectares to 1,868 hectares due to high moisture content during the planting schedule and shifting to other commodities. The yield per hectare, on the other hand, improved from 4.10 MT to 4.13 MT.

Ilocos Norte ranked first in terms of volume of corn production with 17.64 percent share. From 2,646 MT production in the same period of 2018, it went up to 2,772 MT due to increased demand, bigger sizes of produce due to adequate water, lesser destructive typhoons, and increased usage of hybrid seeds. The harvest area and the yield per hectare also recorded positive growth.

Ilocos Sur ranked second with 35.62 percent of the total corn production. Its production went down from 2,840 MT in the 4th quarter of 2018 to 2,747 MT in the 4th quarter of 2019. Decreased production was caused by lower yield per hectare from 4.06 MT to 3.90 metric tons. On the other hand, harvest area grew from 699 hectares to 705 hectares.

La Union accounted for 14.68 percent of the total corn production. It registered a production of 1,132 MT, lower than the production of 1,176 MT recorded in the same quarter of 2018. Some farmers shifted to other commodities that resulted to lesser harvest area of 319 hectares from 334 hectares.

The province of Pangasinan recorded the least corn production with 13.76 percent of the total corn production in the region. From 1,262 MT volume of production in 4th quarter 2018, the corn production in the province went down to 1,061 MT in the 4th quarter of 2019. Although the yield per hectare improved from 4.21 MT to 4.37 MT, the harvest area decreased to 243 hectares from 300 hectares. Higher moisture content during the planting schedule did not permit more plantings.

