

The background of the cover is a photograph of rice farmers in a lush green field. Several farmers are visible, wearing traditional wide-brimmed straw hats. Some are holding umbrellas, including a prominent blue and white checkered one on the right and a red one on the left. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image.

The Official Publication of the Department of Agriculture - RFO1

DAMAG *agri*

Volume 19, Issue 3

July - September 2020

**ILOCOS REGION RICE PRODUCTION
UP IN FIRST SEM, 2020**

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

D edication -	Serving with a heart
R esiliency -	Overcoming challenges
I ntegrity -	Valuing public trust
V igilance -	Responding to clients' needs
E xcellence -	Raising the bar



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THE COVER

For the first sem of this year, the region's rice production grew by 1.23%. Despite the pandemic, Ilocos farmers still continues to provide positive growth, maintaining Region 1 as one of the rice sufficient regions in the country.

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economic recovery





Farmer associations receive their certificates of turn-over as recipients of the various farm machineries worth PhP 55.85M during the visit of Secretary Dar in the province of Ilocos Sur in September.

DA INVESTS P1.2B FOR AGRI-DEVELOPMENT IN ILOCOS

Spurring growth and development of agri-fishery sector in the province of Ilocos Sur, the Department of Agriculture has poured investment of around P1.2B since 2017.

Department of Agriculture Secretary William Dar noted this in his recent visit in the province of Ilocos Sur gracing the ground breaking ceremony of P32-M worth of infrastructure facilities for the Ilocos Sur Polytechnic College (ISPSC) in Sta. Maria, Ilocos Sur and the awarding and turn-over of P55.85M worth of DA farm machineries and equipment benefitting a total of 76 farmer associations from 27 municipalities in the province.

Out of this P1.2B investment for Ilocos Sur, around P600M was given this year that form part the interventions from the five major

Banner programs of the DA under Rice, Corn, High Value Crops Development Program, Livestock and Organic Agriculture program.

These interventions comprise of agricultural inputs, farm to market roads, agri-infrastructures where bulk of the funds invested was to carry out the Farm Mechanization Program of DA to increase productivity and income of farmers.

“We want agriculture to grow. With the 10% growth in production of agriculture alone this year, we still need an additional 20% for the growth of agribusiness to make it 30% as we are making a lot of reforms, and interventions

so that Philippine agriculture will truly be the backbone to our economy,” Dar said.

Seeing the potential of ISPSC as a driver to propel the research and extension activities in the province, Dar vowed for the allocation of P66M for the establishment of another ISPSC Branch that offers Veterinary Medicine course alongside with the establishment of Ilocos Sur Research and Extension Center including Training Center located in San Juan, Ilocos Sur.

In the pipeline next year is the P100M trading post for the municipality of Sta. Maria worth P100M and the P50M worth of ISPSC Branch in Narvacan which will offer fisheries courses and a Food Processing Center at the ISPSC main branch worth P40M.

Maximizing his visit in the region, Dar also went to National Foods Corporation (NFC) in Sarrat, Ilocos Norte to inspect the management and operation of the 35-year-old semi-government facility for possible recommendations and solutions on its current challenges.

Along with the possible investor, Candaba, Pampanga Mayor Gerry Pelayo, Dar announced the NFC Board’s decision to privatize the facility.

However, while the facility is on its process of privatization, DA through the Agricultural Credit Policy Council shall help the NFC with the provision of P26M loan capital for farmers to finance their farming operations this year covering 800 hectares and another P39M to finance the loans of NFC to the farmers in their previous planting season while waiting for the marketing of the P120M products that would defer the previous loans from farmers.

Pelayo, who expressed optimism to support Dar’s agri-industrialization projects committed to send technical team to look into the upgrading and development of the facilities with the establishment of additional facilities catering to smaller markets with smaller packaging of the NFC products like in sachet forms.

He likewise asked the NFC management to increase the area planted with tomato, educate farmers on the management of the plant; teach them on financial literacy while other cash crops may also be utilized in support to the food consolidation that Dar is aiming to optimize the market as well as income of Region 1 farmers.###

Secretary Dar along with ISPSC President Gilbert R. Arce and Ilocos Sur District I Congressman Deogracias Savellano graces the symbolic launching of the DA funded solar power system project at ISPSC Sta. Maria Campus.



DA ILOCOS AWARDS P43.3M WORTH OF FARM MACHINERIES, EQUIPMENT

The Department of Agriculture in Ilocos Region led by its OIC-Regional Executive Director Nestor Domenden awarded Php43.4M worth of farm machineries and equipment to 72 farmer associations in Ilocos Norte on September 11.

Assisted by Ilocos Norte Governor Matthew Joseph Marcos-Manotoc, the awarding and distribution ceremony was held at the DA-Ilocos Norte Research and Experiment Center based in Batac City, Ilocos Norte.

In his message during the program, Domenden underscored the importance of the farm machineries and equipment in pursuit of realizing DA's vision of increasing farm productivity and income of Ilocos farmers.



Newly appointed DA-RFO1 Regional Executive Director Nestor D. Domenden leads the awarding ceremony for the distribution of farm machineries worth Php 43.4M in Ilocos Norte

Domenden encouraged the recipients to take good care of the machineries handed over to them as this would surely help in their farming activities to improve their yield and consequently their incomes.





The awarding and distribution of farm machineries is part of the DA's mission to improve production efficiency as well as in response to the need to modernize the farming industry in lieu of aging farmers vis a vis lack

Manotoc in his message thanked the DA for its farm mechanization project that seeks to make farming efficient for his farmer constituents thereby improving their productivity and incomes.

He likewise pledged his full support and commitment in the development of the farming sector in the province and vowed to remain a strong partner of DA in bringing better programs and projects in agriculture.

The awarding and distribution of farm machineries is part of the DA's mission to improve production efficiency as well as in response to the need to modernize the farming industry in lieu of aging farmers vis a vis lack of interest of the youth in farming.

He also sought the support of the association in all of the agri-development efforts of DA so that food sufficiency level in the countryside be increased.

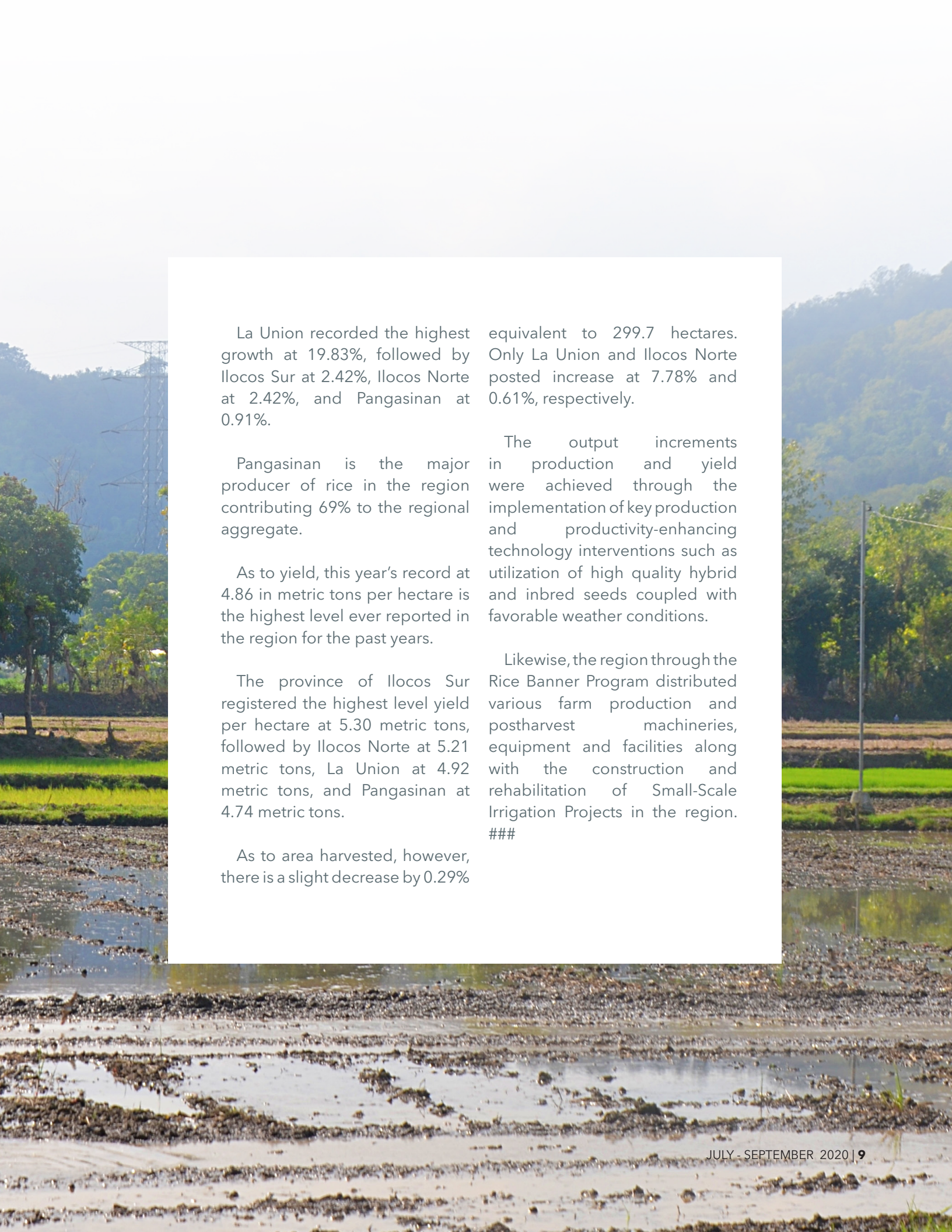
Meanwhile, the Agricultural Training Institute based in Batac, Ilocos Norte thru its Assistant Center Director, Ms. Melinda Mangabat awarded to the Provincial Government of Ilocos Norte a check worth Php4M as a Rice Achievers Awardee. ###



ILOCOS REGION RICE PRODUCTION UP IN FIRST SEM, 2020

Rice production in Ilocos Region grew by 1.23% in the first semester of 2020.

As per Philippine Statistics Authority data, the volume of production increased by 6,033 metric tons from 488,855 metric tons in 2019 to 494,887.85 metric tons in 2020.



La Union recorded the highest growth at 19.83%, followed by Ilocos Sur at 2.42%, Ilocos Norte at 2.42%, and Pangasinan at 0.91%.

Pangasinan is the major producer of rice in the region contributing 69% to the regional aggregate.

As to yield, this year's record at 4.86 in metric tons per hectare is the highest level ever reported in the region for the past years.

The province of Ilocos Sur registered the highest level yield per hectare at 5.30 metric tons, followed by Ilocos Norte at 5.21 metric tons, La Union at 4.92 metric tons, and Pangasinan at 4.74 metric tons.

As to area harvested, however, there is a slight decrease by 0.29%

equivalent to 299.7 hectares. Only La Union and Ilocos Norte posted increase at 7.78% and 0.61%, respectively.

The output increments in production and yield were achieved through the implementation of key production and productivity-enhancing technology interventions such as utilization of high quality hybrid and inbred seeds coupled with favorable weather conditions.

Likewise, the region through the Rice Banner Program distributed various farm production and postharvest machineries, equipment and facilities along with the construction and rehabilitation of Small-Scale Irrigation Projects in the region. ###

ILOCOS NORTE LGU BUYS FARMERS' PRODUCE FOR RELIEF



Photos courtesy of Ilocos Norte Local Government Unit

A total of 8,093 individuals from the 36 households of Ilocos Norte benefited from the Provincial Government's project on the procurement of fruits and vegetables as alternative relief during the imposed Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) in Luzon due to Covid-19 pandemic.

An effort of the Provincial Government under the leadership of Governor Matthew Joseph M. Manotoc through the Provincial Agriculture Office headed by PA Norma B. Lagmay, purchase of the fruits and vegetables used as reliefs goods also benefited a total of 143 farmers in the province who were able to sell their produce amid the pandemic.

Among the vegetables and fruits procured and distributed were kamote, peanut, watermelon, squash, and pinakbet vegetables such as okra, eggplant, ampalaya, and pole sitao.

The majority of the farmer-suppliers came from the municipalities of Vintar, San Nicolas, Pasuquin, Currimao, Badoc, Pinili, Sarrat, Dingras, and the cities of Laoag and Batac.

Mr. Louie Agcaoili, a farmer from Brgy. Namuroc, Vintar Ilocos Norte is among the beneficiaries of the project as he was able to sell 830 kgs. of his bell pepper harvest and 1,340 kgs. of watermelon with a total sale of P36,700.00.

"Nagpapasalamat po kami sa OPAg-Ilocos Norte dahil napakalaking tulong po itong proyekto na mabenta ang aming mga produkto dahil napakahirap ang aming kalagayan noong panahon ng lockdown," Agcaoili said.

One of the major struggles of farmers during the pandemic is the difficulty to transport their products to the market since public transport was suspended and travel from one province to another is also restricted

for those without necessary travel permits.

"Considering that our products are highly perishable, the initiative is very timely and necessary. Kung wala siguro itong effort na ito ng aming Probinsiya, malamang nabulok na lang ang aming mga produkto," Agcaoili added.

Mr. Angelo Mateo, a farmer from Brgy. Bacsil South, Laoag City, also a beneficiary of the project expressed his gratitude on behalf of his farmer-neighbors who were all thankful for the initiative of the Provincial Agriculture Office as their produce was sold at a reasonable price and on a per-volume basis.

Meanwhile, frontliners in the barangay which include barangay checkpoint personnel and volunteers including barangay health workers were also benefited from these efforts of the PLGU of Ilocos Norte.

The Department of Agriculture in the region is also in full support to all the initiatives of the Local Government Units in addressing the challenges of the pandemic, especially in the agriculture sector as it helped link farmers to available markets within and outside the region during the imposed ECQ.

DA-RFO I Regional Executive Director Lucrecio R. Alviar, Jr. has been in constant coordination with Local Chief Executives especially during the ECQ on several concerns where the assistance of the DA has been sought to aid farmers in the marketing and transport of their produce. ###

DA'S RPC PROJECT BRINGS HOPE TO PIDDIG FARMERS

Breaking the cycle of dependency to unscrupulous rice traders who are taking advantage on farmers' no consistent market access for their rice produce, members of the Piddig-Basi Multi-purpose Cooperative (PBMPC) beamed with pride now six years after the establishment of the DA's Rice Processing Complex II (RPC-II) in this interior town of Piddig, province of Ilocos Norte.





Overwhelmed with how their lives were transformed because of the establishment of the RPC in the area, from being a subsistence farmer before to a progressive farmer now, the officers and members were truly delighted and full of gratitude to the Department of Agriculture.

Recalling how the project started in Piddig, Mr. Juanito Fabian, Operations Manager of the RPC during an interview, recognized the efforts of former Piddig Mayor Eddie Guillen, being the author of the RPC project and all other projects in Piddig benefitting the farmers in the area.

Organizing first the PBMPC, a consolidation of the 42 Zanjeras in Piddig with 845 farmer-members, gave way to a tremendous flow of support and interventions given to the farmers from the Local Government Unit of Piddig in tandem with the DA and its various attached and line agencies.

The RPC II established in Piddig, Ilocos Norte which is worth P16-million is among other projects which the DA has turned over to the PBMPC in July 2015. Since its establishment, farmer-members have enjoyed higher market price for their produce while at the same time giving consumers affordable and accessible supply of locally produced rice.

“Isa sa mga problema namin noon ay ang murang bentahan ng aming mga palay na binibili ng mga traders from Bulacan. Pagkatapos magiling, ibinabalik lang naman nila dito sa amin na bigas na may kamahalan na ang presyo,” Juanito relayed when asked what brought the farmers group to request for the rice processing center.

“Pero simula nung mag operate itong RPC, kami na ang nagdidikta ng presyo ng aming palay sa mas mataas na halaga at the same time, kung kumikita ang pagbebenta namin ng palay, kikita rin ang mga members namin,” Juanito said.

With the palay and rice trading activities being made in the RPC, its establishment also paved the way for the members



to have access for capital in their farming activities with the provision of capital through loan provided to the members for only 1 percent interest rate per annum.

The BPMPC's success can be attributed to the cohesive support of its leaders and the Department of Agriculture including the cooperation among the members and its officers.

"Napakalaki ang tulong na binigay ng DA sa amin maliban dito sa RPC dahil nabigyan din kami ng mga machineries katulad ng rice mill, harvester, planter at iba pang makinarya. Naging magaan na ang aming pagsasaka at hindi na magastos ang pag-aani namin sapagkat nabawasan na ang aming mga gastusin sa pagtatanim," Juanito said.

With the 16 million investment of DA for the establishment of the RPC II, farmer-members of PBMPC including its neighboring municipalities really enjoyed

the benefits it has served especially during the implementation of the enhanced community quarantine brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It's a blessing in disguise itong nangyaring pandemya dahil malaking tulong sa amin upang mabenta ang aming mga produktong bigas," Juanito informed.

For the municipality of Piddig alone, the PBMPC-RPC was able to supply around 2,000 bags at 50 kilos of its rice produce which were distributed to the affected families during the community quarantine. It has likewise supplied the municipality of Banna with 100 bags of rice at 50 kilos per bag, the municipality of Marcos with 100 bags at 25 kilos per bag and the City of Laoag with 500 bags at 25 kilos per bag.

Meanwhile, Mr. Noel Baliclic testified during the interview that a big factor to consider in their success as a group is the



consolidated farming system that the DA and the LGU of Piddig have been promoting to farmers as it paved the way for better collaboration and partnership with the other farmers' organization in the area.

According to Baliclic, the provision of technical assistance including the provision of farming inputs such as seeds and fertilizers provided opportunity for the farmers in Piddig to plant the same variety of hybrid and inbred seeds which provides them better yield and production.

Farmer-members of the PBMC could not help but compare how the establishment of the RPC truly improved their way of living.

"Napakahirap po noon dahil kanya-kanya kami. Kung kani kanino lang kami nagbebenta ng aming palay. Walang ipon at kung saan saan kami umuutang. Kung anu-ano na lang ang ibinibenta namin para may puhunan. Pero nung meron na itong

RPC, dito na kami nagbebenta ng aming palay at nakakautang na kami ng puhunan sa mababang interes. Kaya naman umangat din ang aming pamumuhay," Baliclic added.

Mr. Lolito Jacinto, also a member of the PBMPCC expressed gratitude to the DA and the officialdom of Piddig for the many benefits that he has derived from being a member of the group which changed his family's living condition.

"I was able to send my children to school, acquired a motorcycle for transportation and have renovated our house with the extra income that I have obtained for the last five years of planting rice sold here in the PBMPCC - RPC II," Jacinto said.

With the establishment of the DA-RPC in Piddig, farmers here in the locality surely hopes for a better tomorrow as they all enjoy the benefits that it serves in the community. ###



AMIA PROJECT BRINGS 'EGGCELLENT' INCOME BOOSTER FOR ANDA FARMERS

An egg a day is okay, it is good for the health. A tray of egg a day is money on the way!

This is how the members of the Anda Mushroom Growers Organization-Farmers Association (AMGO-FA) take into heart the benefits of the Adaptation, Mitigation, and Initiative in Agriculture (AMIA) Project they have received from DA-RFO 1. Not only a daily provision of egg for their good health, but a daily provision of additional income.

AMIA is DA's special project that aims to respond to the challenges posed by climate change in the agri-fishery sectors in the country to become resilient and responding towards achieving the goals and objectives of sustainable development.

Anda is a 3rd class municipality identified to be vulnerable to typhoon and drought based on the vulnerability map of the province of Pangasinan.

With the threat of drought and annual onslaught of strong typhoons, farmers of Anda encounter challenges of growing crops such as rice, vegetables, and corn.

As the DA's partner in this noble mission, the AMGO-FA is a recipient of various interventions from AMIA that helps the members become socially prepared especially on the provision of livelihood projects that give each member an additional source of income and sustainable livelihood.

Started in the early part of June, amidst the implementation of the enhanced community quarantine due to the Covid 19 pandemic, the project was introduced to the AMGO-FA members through the conduct of briefing and orientation by DA-Pangasinan Research and Experiment Center (PREC) based in Sual, Pangasinan led by Dr. Mary Jane Alcedo, AMIA focal person of the region.

The orientation was followed by a technical briefing where member-partners were equipped with technical-know-how on raising free-range chicken as well as duck as a pre-requisite in availing of the stocks provided by DA.

From an initial harvest of 12 eggs on the first two weeks after receiving the stocks, this increased to an average of 115 eggs a day which was sold at P6 per piece and sold to private individuals and walk-in buyers.

The AMGO-FA is composed of 20 member-cooperators led by Ms. Marilou Celi and Mr. Ramon Zafra, the Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively. Upon the recommendation of the Municipal Agriculturist in the area, the association was selected from among three identified beneficiaries of the livelihood project.

A total of 300 ready to lay free-range chicken and 30 heads of mallard ducks were awarded to AMGO-FA while housing for the stocks was a counterpart of the association.

Along with the stocks, DA also provided 30 drums for water harvesting purposes and 25 gallons of molasses at 30 kilos per gallon that was used as feeding supplements for the stocks provided.

Having learned the benefits of natural farming, farmer-members feed the chickens with leaves of madre de agua, malunggay and banana as well as azolla combined with commercial feeds to reduce production costs of their stocks.

With the need for breeder, the group bartered their hens to accredited breeder producers in

the area with 10 hens in exchange for seven (7) cockerels. These cockerels ensure the daily production of eggs for the farmer-members.

From an initial harvest of 12 eggs on the first two weeks after receiving the stocks, this increased to an average of 115 eggs a day which was sold at P6 per piece and sold to private individuals and walk-in buyers.

Realizing the benefits of this enterprise, they fully embraced managing the stocks alternately per member on a weekly rotational schedule.

Now at two months of doing the enterprise, the members are able to derive an accumulated income of P28,600.00.

Determined to sustain the project and rise above the challenges brought by climate change in their municipality, the association members look forward to increasing their number of stocks and aiming to have their own incubator and shredding machine to further enhance their production and ensure the success of their project.###



300 HAS. F2C2 PILOT AREA SOON TO BE ESTABLISHED IN PANGASINAN



Residents of Brgy. Diaz, Umingan actively participate in the Participatory Rural Appraisal approach conducted in their area for the identification of interventions fitting to their needs under the 300-ha. farm consolidation project.

The Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1 will be establishing one of its pilot areas for the Farm and Fisheries Clustering and Consolidation Program (F2C2) in a 300-hectare consolidated farms in Brgy. Diaz, Umingan, Pangasinan.

F2C2 is the first formal, comprehensive, and holistic government initiative to be implemented at the national level to address the agriculture sector's current issues on lack of access to credit and capital, modern farming and fishery methods, farm mechanization, post-harvest and processing facilities, transport and logistics, packaging support, and information and technology, among others.

For this project, DA-RFO1 will be partnering with Pangasinan Farmers' Agricultural Cooperative. The organization was selected given the potential of their farm land, mostly rolling hills, for the adoption of the F2C2 farming set-up.

The cooperative is composed of diverse members having residents from the municipality of Mangaldan and provinces of Masbate, Capiz,

and Batangas. After their livelihood was devastated by strong typhoons in the past years, they chose to settle in the area with an average residence of two years.

To strengthen farmers' participation in the implementation of the project, initial consultations were held identifying water irrigation system, farm-to-market roads, lack of farm machinery and agricultural inputs, and pest as major problems.

Mainly cultivated for squash, cassava, and corn production, the 300-hectare pilot area will be developed for the production of rice, corn, high value vegetable crops, fruit trees, livestock, and fisheries.

As per guidelines signed by Secretary William Dar, DA-RFO1 will be providing technical guidance to support the farmers' production activities and access to existing financial assistance programs along with the provision of their needed training.

With the average size of farms in the country that has continually shrank from almost three hectares per family in the 1980s to 0.9 hectare as of 2012 (PSA), F2C2 is seen to drastically change the country's current agriculture situation as it has led other countries to an increased agricultural production levels, higher incomes and better access to resources, technologies and markets. ###

An aerial view of some of the target areas for the 300-hectare consolidated farm



DA-RFO I PREPARES 100ha FARM AREA IN AGOO FOR COMMUNITY HYBRID RICE FARMING PROJECT

The Department of Agriculture is pushing forward the concept of farm clustering and consolidation as a vital tool in leveling up agricultural productivity in the country.

Rising up to the challenge of consolidating farms to optimize the available interventions and assistance to farmers, the Department of Agriculture in Ilocos Region has successfully convened three (3) farmer associations from Brgys. Sta Maria, Sta. Fe and San Jose in Agoo, La Union involving 185 farmer-individuals, to form a cluster and consolidate their farms for the 100-hectare Community Hybrid Rice Farming Project to be implemented by DA-RFO I.

The 100-hectare contiguous area will cover two cropping seasons, both in wet and dry including irrigated areas and will not only focus on hybrid rice production but with emphasis on value chain approach providing the farmer-cooperators with

interventions from production to marketing up to processing, making rice production a viable business for them.

The concept and success of clustering was first experienced by a farmers' association in Agoo, La Union in 2018 when DA implemented its hybrid rice derby project in a 10-hectare contiguous area involving the Sta. Maria Farmers' Association. In partnership with private seed companies, the project provided the cooperating farmers free inputs like seeds and fertilizers. Using 12 hybrid rice varieties, the project successfully showcased to farmers the high potential of hybrid rice seeds in increasing their yield as well as income.

"Nagsimula ang lahat nang sumulat ako kay Governor

Francis Emmanuel Ortega upang ipaalam na kami ng aming grupo ay interesado na magkaroon ng mga proyektong pansaka upang matulungan kaming mga maliliit na magsasaka (It all started when I wrote a request letter to Gov. Ortega expressing our interest to avail projects in agriculture that will help small farmers like us.)," Ms. Maritess Mamuyac, Sta. Maria Farmer' Association president as she recalled how they reaped bountiful blessing in the past when their farms were consolidated to introduce hybrid rice production in their area.

"Laking pasasalamat namin dahil agarang tumugon ang opisina ng agrikultura at agad-agad nag conduct sila ng pa-briefing sa amin na dito gagawin ang hybrid rice derby at ang kailangan ay pag-isahin ang

aming mga sakahan (We're very grateful that the agriculture office immediately responded to our request and conducted briefing about hybrid rice derby in our Municipality and that we need to form a cluster for the said project.)," Mamuyac added.

Seeing the high potential of hybrid rice seeds to increase their yield as well as income through the said project, a lot of farmers then were encouraged to plant hybrid rice seeds in the area.

Mr. Armando Quezada, a member of the Sta. Maria Farmers Association and the Barangay Kagawad of Sta. Maria also gratefully recalled that by participating in the said project he was able to increase his yield by 25% as compared when he was still using inbred rice seeds.

Replicating the success of the 10-hectare Hybrid Rice Derby project, members of the Sta. Maria Farmers Association are now excited for greater chance at improving their lives with the introduction of the Community Hybrid Rice Farming project.

As part of the preparatory activities, the group have undergone a community organizing, briefing and extension activities facilitated

by the Rice Banner Program as well as the R&D Group of DA-RFO I in coordination with the Local Government Unit of Agoo. During the briefing, needs and expectations were identified to ensure efficient implementation of the project.

Preparing the farmers for the full implementation of the clustering project next year, the DA plans to federate the three associations involved in the 100-hectare hybrid rice production project into one organized farmers group that would be provided with priority interventions and technical assistance in terms of production, processing and trading of rice.

It is easier and more cost-efficient and effective for the DA to deal with organized farmers through their FCAs than individual farmers where technical assistance and other interventions like inputs and agri infra, machinery and equipment will be provided by DA.

Other than the community organizing, the group would also be trained on business plan making, financial planning and record keeping to enhance their capability in transforming their association into an agri-business cooperative where part of their vision is to be able to own and

manage a Rice Processing Center in the future.

DA has also included the IFED or the Innovative Family Enterprise Development Project as among the vital activity of the associations where the farmer-cooperators will be given goats to raise and vegetable seeds for diversification while waiting for their rice crop harvest season.

Three to four years from now, with all the interventions DA will provide under the Community Hybrid Rice farming Project, the group of farmers of Sta. Maria, Santa Fe and San Jose would certainly be great contributors in vitally sustaining and developing the agriculture industry in Ilocos Region. ###



MALASIQUI FARMERS EYE BETTER LIFE WITH DA'S IFED PROJECT

Reaping now what they have sown three months after the lockdown of Luzon, farmer-members of the Nalsian Norte Farmlight Farmers Association in Brgy. Nalsian Norte, Malasiqui Pangasinan felt motivated with the success of the Department of Agriculture's IFED project established in their area.

IFED or the Innovative Family Enterprise Development is DA-RFO I's project strategized in response to the pandemic which provides modality for farmers to increase their incomes through various livelihood projects on crops and livestock.

Covering five production components of crops, poultry and livestock, namely: IFED on vegetables, goat, cattle, ducks, and chicken; the IFED project in Brgy. Nalsian Norte, Malasiqui is among the 19 IFED projects established in the province of Pangasinan with a total project cost of Php3,805,000.

Nalsian Norte Farmlight FA is a group of farmers in Brgy. Nalsian that composed of around 160

farmer-members. Led by Mr. Pedro de Guzman assisted by his Secretary, Mr. Ferdinand de Guzman, the IFED project in the area according to him paved way for the farmer-members to open up income generating opportunities amid the pandemic.

Started with a briefing orientation by the Research and Development Division of the DA through the Pangasinan Research and Experiment Center (PREC) in Sta. Barbara, Pangasinan, farmer-recipients were informed on how the projects will be implemented in the area.

Out of the five components of the IFED project, three components such as vegetable production, goat production, and chicken production were



provided to the Nalsian Norte Farmlight FA.

For the vegetable production component, 30 farmer-members were provided with vegetable seedlings good for one hectare which they planted within the community.

Seven kinds of pinakbet vegetables were provided such as eggplant, tomato, okra, pepper, bitter gourd, pole sitao and pechay. Aside from the vegetable seeds and seedlings, DA also provided other inputs such as fertilizers, plastic mulch and foliar fertilizers as they used the area for research.

For the IFED chicken, 47 farmers received 18 pullets and 2 cockerels each from DA. Along with these stocks are drugs and biologics for the animals while housing for the animals were provided as counterpart by the recipients.

On the IFED goat, a total of 43 farmer-recipients will receive five does each from DA while seven

bucks will also be distributed to seven farmer-members which shall be used to upgrade the stocks provided to the members. The seven farmer-recipients of these bucks were selected by the association.

To provide the farmer-recipients with the knowledge and technical know-how on the package of technologies on vegetables, goat and chickens, DA through the PREC-R&D conducted trainings and seminars giving emphasis on the use of organic and bio-pesticides as well as feeds formulation to animals.

What makes the project unique among other agri-development projects of DA is the roll-over scheme of the project where the recipients are to pay forward the seeds and animal stocks they received to other members of their family, relatives, friends or neighbors so that the project will be passed on from one recipient to the next until the entire community will benefit. ###

OF EMPOWERING WOMEN IN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR



Ms. Jerlyn Labatete, GAD focal person of the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1, orients the women beneficiaries as to how food security starts at home through backyard vegetable gardening.

As reported by the Philippine Statistics Authority, the country's agriculture sector grew by 0.5 percent in the second quarter of the year, despite the pandemic and the Ilocos region has recorded a 1.23% increase in rice production for the first semester.

Behind these figures are the invaluable efforts of farmers who worked hard to secure the food chain supply. And as a country with an increased awareness of gender equality as brought

by government policies and initiatives, how much of this should be attributed to men and how much to women?

The Department of Agriculture

in its mandate for a food-secured and resilient Philippines, especially during this pandemic, cannot deny the significance of women's role in agriculture.

DA ILOCOS VOWS FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE

What's good isn't always right but a righteous governance is always good.

In unison with the Department of Agriculture's advocacy for honest and virtuous delivery of service to the public, DA-RFO1 held a ceremonial event for the signing of the pledge for "Good Governance and No to Corruption."

This is DA's response to President Rodrigo Duterte's call for transparency and integrity in all government offices.

Secretary Dar on his previous directive enjoined all DA officials

and employees "to morally & conscientiously practice good governance with the highest integrity and no tinge of corruption."

Joining the DA-RFO 1 employees in signing the Pledge of Good Governance and No to Corruption is its new OIC-Regional Executive Director, Dir. Nestor D. Domenden, CESO IV,

In the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1, through its Gender and Development program, various interventions such as training on mushroom production, agri-based micro-enterprise, organic farming, and provision of start-up kits among others were implemented for the past years to support selected women's groups.

Since 2017, DA-RFO 1 in partnership with the local government units has already assisted 75 women-led associations with members primarily of indigenous peoples and rural women.

For this year, additional 14 women associations were selected to receive mushroom and vegetable production projects amounting to PHP 30,000 and PHP 90,500, respectively.

In a turnover ceremony on September 3 and 4 in Pangasinan, recipients from the Magtaking Tribal Council - Bugallon, Mangaldan Federated Rural Improvement Club (RIC) - Mangaldan, and San Carlos City Federated RIC - San Carlos City, had warmly expressed their gratitude in receiving the projects.

"We're indeed very fortunate to have been chosen as one among the recipients of this project of DA thru the Gender and Development (GAD) program," said Ms. Lourdes Jomero, President of Mangaldan Federated RIC and recipient of vegetable production starting kit, in her message for the members of the federated association who were present in the event.

Beyond the image of a housekeeper, especially in rural areas, the agency recognizes that empowering this vulnerable

group of the population is also a major factor in increasing the potentials of the country's agriculture should it be given adequate support and attention.

"Dito amin pong kinikilala ang inyong kontribusyon pagdating sa agrikultura. 'Di lang po bilang nanay na taga-luto ng ulam, kundi kaya niyo na din pong magproduce ng sariling pagkain para po sa inyong pamilya. We are promoting the active participation of women in providing food for the family," shared Ms. Jerlyn Labatete, DA-RFO1 GAD focal person, to the recipients.

These endeavors intended to expand both men and women farmers' access to agricultural resources and economic options and were selected suiting the women's productive activities. ###

together with Regional Technical Director for Operations Erlinda F. Manipon and Regional Technical Director for Research & Regulations Dr. Jovita M. Datuin.

Amid the pandemic, the agency remains positive and determined to pursue great developments for the agriculture sector in Ilocos Region as it also vows to serve with utmost integrity coupled with competence. ###



DA-RFO1 RED Nestor D. Domenden on his first day as director spearheads the pledge for good governance together with DA-RFO1 employees.

LU FARMERS RECEIVE PHP20.9M WORTH OF FARM MACHINERIES, EQUIPMENT

26 farmer groups in the province of La Union have received their allocated machineries and equipment worth more than PhP 20.9M under the farm mechanization project of the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1.

Through the Rice, Corn, High Value Crops Development, and Organic Agriculture Banner Programs, 127 units were distributed comprised of four-wheel drive tractors, combine harvester with baler, precision seeder, hand tractors, hauling truck, pump & engine sets, corn sheller, hammer mill,

cassava grater, cassava pulverizer, multi-cultivator, HDPE pipe, knapsack sprayer, plastic crates, forage, rice mill, and forage chopper.

“Daytoy nga intervention ket ited mi tapnu mapadur-as ti panagtalonyo ken pumintas ti panagkakadwayo a kas maysa nga asosasion (This intervention is given to you (farmers) to increase your production and to strengthen your bond as an association),” shared Regional Technical Director for Operations Erlinda F. Manipon to the recipients.

Beneficiaries of the farm mechanization project are legitimate and organized farmers’ groups who are engaged in agricultural production including processing and are duly registered with the Security Exchange Commission (SEC).

This project is one of the major programs of the Department of Agriculture to help farmers increase their production by lessening their cost, labor and production losses.

“Dakkel ti maitulongna ta maksayan ti labor ken naparpartak ti panagtrabahomi nangruna no kastoy a panagtutudo. Mayapurami pay a gapasen dagitoy mabalinen a maapit tapno nu agbagyo, saan nga ag-lodge dagiti pagaymi (This machinery can benefit us





a lot especially in lessening labor especially during this rainy season. We can rush harvesting those (rice) that are ready for reaping to avoid it from lodging during the typhoon season)," said Mr. Floro Mecua, 66, President of Seedgrower MPC of La Union – recipient of combine harvester with baler.

On the other hand, Ms. Susan Hermenigilda, 59, of Barangay Baraoas Sur Farmers' Association from Naguilian, La Union expressed her appreciation in receiving one unit of corn sheller and two units of water pump on behalf of the members of their association.

"This is a big help to our members in the association. We cannot afford to have a corn husker before hence, we have to rent but now we have it. Anytime, we can help the

members of our association," Susan said adding that the provided water pumps are immensely useful given the wide coverage of unirrigated areas in their locality.

The awarding ceremony was graced by RTD for Operations Erlinda F. Manipon along with La Union Provincial Agriculturist Ramon F. Laudencia, Regional Agricultural and Fishery Council Chairman Vincent A. Adorna, ILIARC Center Chief Edith Estacio, Field Operations Division Chief Annie Q. Bares, Ms. Josephine N. Cabanban – Supervising Agriculturist, and La Union Agricultural Project Coordination Officer Romeo De Mayo.

The ceremony was held at the Ilocos Integrated Agricultural Research Center in Bacnotan, La Union on August 18 and 19. ###

PROPER COORDINATION AND REPORTING, KEYS TO FIGHT ASF

The importance of reporting and project monitoring were once again asserted during the CY 2020 1st Semester Assessment and Consultation Workshop on Livestock Programs and Projects of the Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office 1 (DA-RFO 1).

According to Dr. Annie Q. Bares, Chief of the Field Operations Division of the DA-RFO 1, these are essential in keeping track of the new cases of African Swine Fever (ASF).

Dr. Bares said that one of the hindrances reported by the City/Municipal Agriculturists is the poor coordination between the livestock owners and the barangay officials which results in the late reporting of ASF cases.

Based on the latest monitoring in the province of La Union, Dr. Raquel Difuntorum of the Office of the Provincial Veterinarian reported that only three municipalities are under the light green zone which include Bacnotan, Burgos, and Luna.

She added that areas affected with the said virus under the red zone are the municipalities of Agoo, Aringay, Bauang, Balaoan, Pugo, Sto. Tomas, and the city of San Fernando, while 10 towns belong to the pink zone.

To flatten the curve of ASF, among the strategies under the Bureau of Animal Industry is the TIGIL or Targeted Communication, Integrated Surveillance, Geo-tagged Animal and Meat Movement, Intentional Meat Product Training and Testing, and Localized Attack.

In the entire Region 1, only the province of Ilocos Norte has zero ASF cases.

Meanwhile, the DA-RFO 1 sustains its targets to provide production support services, which includes livelihood assistance, trainings, incentives, provisions for animal health and others, for the farmers in the region under the Livestock Banner Program as well as the Bayanihan Heal as One Act for the current year despite the challenges in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic.

To date, the Livelihood Assistance Program and Extension Support Services have already listed 100% and 95% accomplishments, respectively, for distributing 800 semen straws and providing incentives to agriculture extension workers (AEWs).
###



ASF-AFFECTED FARMERS BENEFIT FROM REHAB PLAN, INITIAL INTERVENTIONS RECEIVED

To accelerate the recovery of backyard hog raisers from the devastation caused by the African Swine Fever (ASF) virus outbreak, the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office I (DA-RFO I) through its Regulatory Division headed by Regulatory Chief Dr. Florentino Adame, and with the support and guidance of DA-RFO I Regional Executive Director Lucrecio R. Alviar, Jr., crafted a rehabilitation plan to support raisers particularly those in the province of Pangasinan with 1,454 affected hog growers.

As part of the said rehab plan, affected hog raisers from Lingayen received 20 pullets and 2 roosters each on July 15 while those from Malasiqui received a total of 71 heads of upgraded Brahman cattle heifer and four (4) upgraded junior bull on July 17, 2020.

Out of the 144 targeted recipient of free-range chicken, 36 farmers are yet to receive their chicken as delivery of poultry is still on-going while for cattle recipients, all the targeted 609 farmers have already received cattle, however, an additional 37 yearlings will be given to individuals who have culled hogs of more than eight heads.

With the recovery plan's allotted fund of P30,916,160.00 DA RFO I aims to support affected backyard raisers in recovering from their economic losses due to ASF which was worsened by Covid-19 pandemic since it has restricted the availability of

meat products. It also aims to entice affected farmers to engage in poultry ventures to sustain animal production in the region.

To include other municipalities who have undergone with the culling protocol against ASF, the Department of Agriculture Ilocos region made an additional proposal to help the affected backyard hog raisers.

Feeds, vet drugs distributed

The Regulatory Division of the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1 recently distributed feeds and veterinary drugs/supplements as a component of the African Swine Fever (ASF) Rehabilitation Plan to ASF affected farmers in the Municipalities of Mapandan and Calasiao in Pangasinan.

"The DA has allocated recovery fund to regain the losses of livestock raisers affected by the ASF. Among the distributed rehab assistance are cattles and to ensure good health of the animals, additional feeds and drugs/supplements were likewise provided," DA-Regulatory Chief Dr. Florentino Adame informed.

Since the ASF virus started to cause havoc in various municipalities in the region particularly in Pangasinan, DA-RFO 1 has exerted all efforts to source out and allocate additional funds that will provide not only cash relief thru the indemnification but to formulate rehab plan that will enable the affected livestock raisers to have other livelihood options like cattle raising.

As of press time, there were 21 farmers in Brgy. Baloling, Mapandan who received 27 cattles with 27kgs of feeds each and 12 farmers in Brgy. Nalsian and Talibaew in Calasiao who received a total of 16 cattles with veterinary drugs such as dewormer and vitamins (as per the request of the farmer).

The criteria on the distribution of the animals were based on the amount and number of hogs culled from each affected raiser. For each farmer who has eight and above numbers of hogs that were culled, additional one cattle was given.

A total of 762 cattles worth Php30,916,160.00 is set to be given in the Province of Pangasinan which will benefit 609 affected livestock raisers.###

P42.5 MILYONG TULONG NAIPAMAHAGI SA MGA MAGSASAKA, MANGINGISDA

Aabot sa P42.5 milyong halaga ng tulong ang naipagkaloob sa mga magsasaka at mangingisda sa buong rehiyon ng Ilocos sa kalagitnaan ng Covid-19 pandemic.

Ito ay sa pamamagitan ng direktang pagbili ng mga Lokal na Pamahalaan ng sari-saring agri-fishery products upang patuloy pa rin ang kita ng mga ito sa kabila ng mahigpit na pagpapatupad ng community quarantine.

Umaabot sa P3.8 milyong halaga ng mga produktong pang-agrikultura ang binili sa mga magsasaka at mangingisda sa probinsiya ng La Union, P9.8 milyon sa Ilocos Sur, P17.2 milyon sa Ilocos Norte, at P11.8 milyon sa Pangasinan, na siyang ipinamahaging tulong o relief goods sa mga pamilyang apektado ng pandemic.

Sa pinakahuling talaan na isinumite ng Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD) ng DA-RFO 1, may kabuuang 140 na farmer-suppliers mula sa apat na lalawigan sa buong rehiyon ang nakinabang sa nasabing programa kung saan 22 mula sa La Union; 25 mula sa Ilocos Sur; 15 mula sa Ilocos Norte; at 78 mula naman sa probinsiya ng Pangasinan.

Sa lalawigan ng La Union, ang mga bayan ng Agoo, Balaoan, Bauang, Bangar, Luna, Sto. Tomas, Sudipen, at lungsod ng San Fernando ang mga naitalang direktang bumili sa mga produkto mula sa mga magsasaka nito tulad ng bigas, mais, munggo, kamote, kalabasa, at iba.

Mga produkto namang tilapia, bangus, karne ng baboy, bigas, at iba't ibang klase ng gulay ang binili ng mga bayan ng Cabugao, Caoayan, Narvacan, San Emilio, Santiago, Sinit, at Sta. Lucia at mga lungsod ng Candon at Vigan sa Ilocos Sur.

Pitong bayan din mula sa Ilocos Norte na kinabibilangan ng Bacarra, Badoc, Currimao, Dingras, Marcos, Piddig at Vintar, at ang lungsod ng Laoag, ang tumulong sa kanilang magsasaka at mangingisda na may produktong bigas, bangus, mga prutas at gulay.

Sa probinsya ng Pangasinan ay malaking tulong ang mga bayan ng Balungao, Rosales, Sual, at Umingan at ang lungsod ng Alaminos sa kabuhayan ng kanilang mga nasasakupan.

Samantala, patuloy naman ang programa ng DA na "Kadiwa ni Ani at Kita" kung saan patuloy na tinutulungan ang mga magsasaka at mangingisda na mailapit ang kanilang mga produkto sa mga tao sa gitna ng pandemya at naibebenta ang mga ito sa abot-kayang halaga. ###



— THE — **SECRETARY'S** C O R N E R

story from Sec. Dar's Official Facebook account

DA TO IMPLEMENT AGRI RESPONSE PROGRAM TO PERK UP ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Aware of the agriculture sector's role in the government's economic recovery efforts, the Department of Agriculture (DA) will continue implementing much-needed interventions to match the scale of the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Agriculture Secretary William Dar said the DA will vigorously pursue comprehensive, science-based, inclusive and innovative programs to build efficient and resilient food production and distribution systems to adequately feed the country's growing population, now and in the future.

He made the pitch at the recent virtual launch of a World Bank report, titled "Transforming Philippine Agriculture: During COVID-19 and

Beyond."

"At this juncture of our history when the world battles a pandemic – that has not only claimed millions of lives, but is also paralyzing social and economic activities – I cannot overemphasize the need for all of us in the agriculture and rural development sector to unite and keep agriculture going to ensure nutritious and affordable food for our people and increased incomes for our farmers and fishers," he added.

During the virtual event, the DA chief thanked the World Bank for its continued support to the Philippine agriculture sector, including the ongoing Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP)

THE TRANSFORMATION OF PHILIPPINE AGRICULTURE INTO A DYNAMIC, HIGH-GROWTH SECTOR IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE COUNTRY. IT IS THE SUREST WAY IF WE ARE TO SPEED UP OUR ECONOMIC RECOVERY FROM THE PANDEMIC AND ACHIEVE A MEANINGFUL POVERTY-REDUCTION AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH.

that has become one of the best examples of successful multi-sectoral, multi-level partnerships.

The six-year, \$280-million PRDP is administered by the DA and jointly funded by the World Bank, the national government, and participating local government units. It aims to establish an up-to-date, value-chain oriented and climate-resilient agriculture and fisheries enterprises, including road networks and infrastructure facilities.

He is also confident the financial institution will also approve the DA-proposed \$200-million Fisheries and Coastal Resiliency (FishCoRe) project that is expected to support the scaling-up and modernization of Philippine capture fisheries and aquaculture, through the provision of technical support, capital, and enabling environment.

The FishCoRe project also aims to address structural weaknesses in the value chain to improve sustainability and resiliency of fishery resources, increase incomes of fisherfolk, and uplift the socio-economic condition of coastal communities amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

The World Bank's 110-page report on transforming the Philippine agriculture proposes sector-wide reorientation and reforms, adjustment in the modalities of government support, establishment of reliable databases and analytical capacity in DA for stronger evidence-based decision-making, as well as subsectoral and thematic interventions to support transformational change such

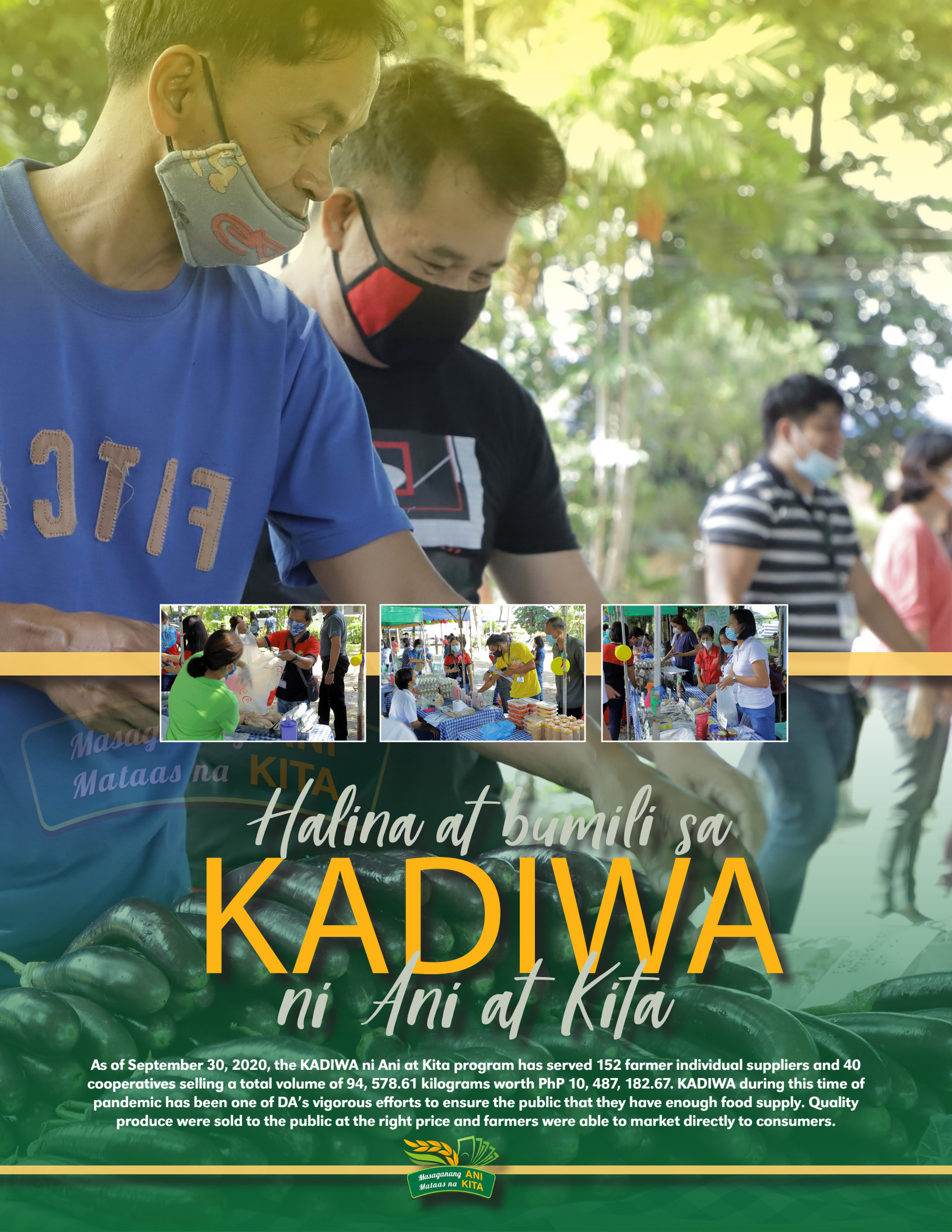
as land consolidation, modernization, and industrialization.

Secretary Dar said the message of the World Bank report is clear: "The transformation of Philippine agriculture into a dynamic, high-growth sector is essential for the country. It is the surest way if we are to speed up our economic recovery from the pandemic and achieve a meaningful poverty-reduction and inclusive growth."

He said the DA will follow the path laid out under its "new thinking for Philippine agriculture," guided by the following eight paradigms:

- Agricultural modernization;
- Industrialization;
- Farm and fishery consolidation and clustering;
- Systematic and strategic export development;
- Strengthening rural infrastructure program;
- Higher DA budget and public-private sector investments;
- Cooperation with the legislative branch; and
- Roadmap development.

"The DA family is working doubly hard to empower farmers, fisherfolk and agripreneurs to raise their agricultural productivity and profitability while ensuring greater sustainability and resilience from disasters climate change impacts, and pandemics," he said. ###



Masaganang ANI
Mataas na KITA

Halina at bumili sa KADIWA ni Ani at Kita

As of September 30, 2020, the KADIWA ni Ani at Kita program has served 152 farmer individual suppliers and 40 cooperatives selling a total volume of 94, 578.61 kilograms worth PhP 10, 487, 182.67. KADIWA during this time of pandemic has been one of DA's vigorous efforts to ensure the public that they have enough food supply. Quality produce were sold to the public at the right price and farmers were able to market directly to consumers.

