

The Official Publication of the Department of Agriculture - RFO1

# DAMAGagri

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GROW LOCAL. BUY LOCAL. EAT LOCAL. #supportourricefarmers



# All for one, Always number one!

## VISION

A prime-mover towards a modernized and industrialized agriculture and fisheries sector.

## MISSION

To provide suitable, timely, and innovative interventions for a sustainable agriculture in the Ilocos Region.

## CORE VALUES

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



DAMAG AGRi


## THE COVER

This quarter's cover features the top two winners for the National Rice Awareness Month photography contest. Entries were submitted by Mr. Lester Cardinez (front) and Mr. Alex Belgica (back).

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*Farmers bring sacks of palay picked-up in Duplas, San Juan, La Union*

## DA-RFO 1, NFA partners for **Palay Sakay,** a free hauling service to support rice farmers

Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1, together with National Food Authority, will be providing free hauling services for small cooperative and individual rice farmers in the region.

Dubbed as "Palay Sakay: Libreng sakay ng palay, mataas na kita'y tagumpay," this program is an initiative of DA-RFO1 which aims to provide free hauling of palay harvest from a pick-up point closer to the farmers' area straight to NFA's warehouses for higher market price.

In the province of La Union, an interview with a farmer from Sto. Tomas, La Union has revealed that dried palay is sold to local traders ranging from P12.00 to 15.50 per kilo. He said that such price is hardly a break-even for their cost of production. However, due

to the high cost of transport rental to haul their produce to NFA which could provide them higher buying price, they are forced to sell their palay at a lower price to traders.

Recognizing this predicament of rice farmers in the region, DA-RFO 1 OIC Regional Executive Director Nestor Domenden said that DA must step in and assist farmers in what they need most at the moment.

"If one of the difficulties of our farmers in order to sell their palay to NFA to get a better price is the unavailability of vehicle especially during this pandemic,

then we will lend our available mobile resources to them through NFA," he said.

DA RFO 1 is set to make available eight hauling trucks to NFA for the free hauling of palay harvest to NFA designated warehouses in the provinces.

"We really need these trucks to haul the farmers' palay produce kasi iyan ang mga hinaing especially ng ating maliliit na mga magsasaka. 'Yung transportation po talaga ang problema nila especially sa mga farm locations na may mga feeder roads lang," shared NFA Region 1 Director Yolanda Navarro.



Through the 'Palay Sakay', in coordination with the local government units and farmer leaders, a schedule will be set for the hauling of palay at designated 'pick-up points' in identified municipalities.

"We have to schedule kung saan pipick-upin kasi 'di naman po pwedeng tatakbo ang ating truck na wala namang nakaready for pick up," Navarro added.

NFA will buy per kilo of palay based on certain categories. Under category A, palay is priced at Php 19.00 provided that it is clean and dry with 14% moisture content (MC) and with 95-100% purity.

Under category B, palay is priced at Php 18.012 if it has 90-94% purity, clean and dry, with 14% MC.

### Impact to farmers

The program's first beneficiary is the Association of United Farmers and Irrigators of Duplas, Incorporated whose members are from San Juan, La Union.

"Ang programang ito sa pagitan ng DA at NFA ay napakaganda lalong lalo na para sa aming mga taga barangay. Maihahatid na po namin ng walang dagdag gastos na arkila ng sasakyan dito sa NFA ang aming mga palay para sa



*First farmers' association beneficiary in Duplas, San Juan, La Union prepares their harvested dry palay for hauling.*

mas mataas na presyo," said Mr. Ramon Abad, president of the association.

(This collaborative effort of DA and NFA is truly remarkable especially for us at the barangay level. We can already deliver to NFA without spending on additional hauling cost and have a higher price for our palay.)

Meanwhile, Ms. Lydia Navalta, 60 years old, Chairman of the Provincial Farmers Action Council of La Union also encouraged her fellow farmers to sell their produce to NFA.

"I just hope that my fellow farmers would be able to see and hear about this

so they too can sell their harvest to NFA and have higher income," she said.

Small farmer cooperatives and individual farmers enrolled in the Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA) and are included in the masterlist of their local government unit thru the Municipal Agriculture Office are qualified beneficiaries for this DA-NFA initiative.

Qualified farmer beneficiaries are encouraged to coordinate with NFA and their respective local government units for the scheduling of free hauling of their palay on designated pick up points. ###



*DA-RFO1 OIC - Regional Executive Director Nestor D. Domenden and NFA R1 Dir. Yolanda Navarro along with other key officials during the symbolic turnover for the Palay Sakay Program on October 27, 2020.*



# Farmers engage on research through IFED project

Four months after handing over the vegetable seedlings to their organization, members of the Tambacan Riverside Fisherfolk and Farmers Self-Livelihood Association (TRFFSA) proudly showed-off their vegetable farm as a result of the research component of the DA-RFO I's Innovative Family Enterprise Development (IFED) project.

Established at Brgy. Tambacan in Burgos, Pangasinan, the 2,000 sq.m. vegetable garden is full of luscious, ready to harvest vegetables that commands good price when sold in the market. This is the fruits of labor of the 10 members of the TRFFSA who diligently worked hard to follow and carry out the recommended technologies of the agricultural extension workers of Burgos, Pangasinan with the assistance of technical experts from the DA-RFO I's Pangasinan Research and Experiment Center based in Sual, Pangasinan led by its Center Chief, Dr. Mary Jane Alcedo, together with Ms. Samsoneth Agustin, project leader for IFED in said municipality.

The TRFFSA is composed of 20 members that was established three years ago in Burgos, Pangasinan. With the inception of the IFED project as among the activities of the association, aside from tilapia production, members here gladly accepted





the project sometime in July when the orientation/briefing was conducted in their barangay by the DA-PREC.

The community vegetable garden area was previously unutilized. Owned by a private individual in Burgos, the association members entered into an agreement with the owner that they shall lease the area for two consecutive seasons following the one-third sharing scheme. Any amount generated by the project shall be equally divided with the farmer-member, the organization and the lot owner.

With the limited inputs provided by the project, only ten members were identified as beneficiaries. Adopting the roll-over scheme, the other members shall also benefit in the next cycle of the project.

Aside from vegetable seedlings, also provided under the project were farm inputs such as organic fertilizer for basal during land preparation, complete fertilizer (14-14-14) and

Before the project, they used to plant other crops on their usual practice of just doing the ordinary routine of planting, watering and waiting for the crops to grow and bear fruit which give them minimal harvest.

Through the project, they learned the proper way to set up trellis for their ampalaya and string beans vegetable production; cutting of lateral vines for the ampalaya one meter from the ground for better fruiting; the use of foliar growth enhancer that would make their plants grow robust and enhances flowering for higher chance of fruiting; the use of organic fertilizer combined with commercial fertilizer to enhance the growth and development of the plants, among others.

To make available the seeds needed for the next cropping season, the members also established their own vegetable seed production area which will be used for distribution to the

## **THEIR ENGAGEMENT IN THE PROJECT MADE THEM MORE OBSERVANT OF HOW THEIR PLANTS GROW AND THEY ARE ALSO ABLE TO SHARE THEIR NEW FOUND KNOWLEDGE OF INNOVATIVE VEGETABLE PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGIES TO OTHER FARMERS IN THE AREA.**

the foliar plant growth enhancer which form part the research component of the project.

Using the OPV variety of vegetables, there were seven kinds of vegetables provided which include tomato, eggplant, ampalaya, okra, pole sitao, hot pepper, and pechay.

Since the establishment of the project, they were already able to have their first harvest which was easily marketed because it's a good quality harvest.

Ms. Minerva Odan, the Treasurer of the association in her testimony on how the project benefitted them as recipients shared that aside from providing them additional income and a good source of fresh and naturally-grown vegetables for their own consumption, the project also provided them an avenue to learn new vegetable production technologies that they discovered to be truly effective in bringing them better quality harvest and higher productivity.

members and other interested individuals that would make the project more sustainable.

Their engagement in the project made them more observant of how their plants grow and they are also able to share their new found knowledge of innovative vegetable production technologies to other farmers in the area.

Meanwhile, Mr. Bonifacio Bonode, the adviser of the group expressed gratitude to the DA for bringing the IFED project in their barangay as it did not only empower the farmers in the community but it also strengthened the unity among the association members bringing them closer as they engaged learning by doing in their farm activities.

Through the IFED project, the association members felt a sense of pride in being able to raise the standards of farming in their area knowing that they have become better farmers through the project. ###



# Young Ilocos agripreneurs find opportunities in DA-ACPC's KAYA loan program

At 26, Enrico and Gab committed themselves to succeed in agri-enterprise through the Kapital Access for Young Agripreneurs (KAYA) financing program.

They are among the six qualified applicants for the KAYA loan program in Region 1 receiving an amount of Php 500,000 each as a start-up capital for their proposed business.

Enrico Theodore Ramos, a business management graduate ended up venturing into livestock production – after giving up his own business in Manila.

Meanwhile, Angelo Gabriel Santos, who veered away from his fisheries degree is now back on track for his proposed Bangus production and deboning business.

## **New start**

Enrico after graduating in 2015 started his own business contracting

schools for audio and lighting services along with his colleagues and side hustled as a band member in the busy nights of Manila.

“For a year, I was self-employed. Nakakapagod nga po,” he shared.

Not finding success at his current investment, he then decided to return at his hometown in Alcala, Pangasinan to start anew.

With a hog raising business in mind, he did his own research and sought advices from people who'd been in the trade for a long time.

He was successful with his piggery for three years, but as the African Swine Fever virus rapidly pervaded in the country, he at once converted it into a poultry farm taking into immediate action the advice of his mentor who

warned him of possible bankruptcy if he still continued the business.

“Pero kahit binenta ko iyong piggery ko, kinailangan ko pa rin ang KAYA kasi malaki ang gastusin sa pagconvert ng piggery into poultry farm. Kinailangan ko talaga ito para mabilisan yung improvement,” Enrico said, adding that he came across the program after reading an article about it in a newspaper.

He then asked further details about it on their local government unit and presented his interest. At the end, he was endorsed for the program.

Starting from 50 heads of chicken, he has successfully raised over 600 heads of CZ Dominant chickens bought from the neighboring provinces of Pangasinan to as far as Tagaytay.



At present, he is waiting for the delivery of his additional stocks purposely for breeding to produce his own line of free range chicken.

Enrico targets on supplying the locals of Alcala with quality lines of chicken and eggs hoping to provide other farmers a sustainable business model and an efficient poultry production technology.

### **Last chance**

In his early twenties, Angelo Gabriel Santos or fondly called as 'Gab' by his family during his college years shifted from one course to another, being unclear of what he really wanted.

"To be honest, for the sake na makatapos lang ako, sinubukan ko iyong course ng daddy ko at kapatid ko which is fisheries. Parang last chance ko para sa sarili ko. Kung hindi ko pa matapos, suko na ako," Gab shared.

He eventually graduated last year. But far from his course, Gab worked in a BPO company first after not finding a job related to his course.

"Pag may ganitong programs pala natutulungan din kami," he said, adding that in numerous cases, most fisheries graduates usually find opportunities first in the BPO industry.

So after learning about the KAYA financing program through DA's Facebook page, he immediately consulted his



*Mr. Enrico Theodore Ramos, 26*



*Mr. Angelo Gabriel Santos, 26*

father who is currently working as a research specialist in fisheries.

"Sobrang thankful ako sa opportunity because I was given the chance to start my own business with zero interest with that kind of amount. Saan ka ba naman nakakita ng ganun? Ang galing ng program. Nabigyan ng chance ang millennials," he said.

Hence, two weeks after receiving the capital loan, Gab has prepared his 2,876-square meter fish pond. From it, they are expecting to harvest from the farm a total volume of 7,916 kgs. of marketable sizes of bangus that will be deboned, processed and marketed within and outside the province of Pangasinan.

The Kapital Access for Young Agripreneurs (KAYA) financing program was launched this year by the Department of Agriculture, in partnership with Agricultural Credit Policy Council, providing interested youth ages 18-30 years old with an uncollateralized loan up to Php 500,000 with zero interest payable in five years.###





# AMIA

## project brings better lives for families in San Emilio

“Through AMIA, our living conditions as farmers definitely improved. With the trainings and learnings that the coordinator of the project imparted to us, we learned how we can make use of the available resources we have in the community. The way we do things now, especially in farming is indeed different from what we used to do.”

Mr. Vergara Guinatang, 59, President of the Kalumsing Rangtay ti Panagrang-ay AMIA Association, speaking on behalf of his members gave his testimonies on how the AMIA project changed their living conditions after receiving interventions provided by the Department of Agriculture under the Adaptation, Mitigation, and Initiative in Agriculture project (AMIA).

It was sometime in March 2017 when the group of DA personnel led by Ms. Mary Jane Alcedo consulted barangays Kalumsing, Sibsibbu and Langcuas of San Emilio, Ilocos Sur.

Being a part of the most vulnerable areas due to climate change where limited water supply is being experienced by the community especially in the months of January to May, several climate resilient interventions were provided as a result of the vulnerability assessment and gap analysis conducted by the project leaders during the early part of consultation dialogue in the area.

In Brgy. Kalumsing alone, among the major interventions identified and was provided are the water catching basin technologies to include the provision of



**MAS NATUTO KAMING GUMAMIT NG MGA MAKABAGONG  
TEKNOLOHIYA GAYA NG PAGTATANIM NG MGA IBAT IBANG GULAY  
PAGKATAPOS ANG AMING PAG-AANI NG PALAY AT PAGGAMIT NG  
MGA ORGANIKONG PATABA NA KAMI MISMO ANG GUMAWA.**

drums (20 units), hose (20 rolls where 1 roll: 1 member), black plastic (20 units) as well as water tanks (2 units). These interventions helped the community adapt and mitigate the recurring problems on water shortage in the community especially in growing their plants.

Sprayers as well as farm inputs and livelihood were likewise provided such as rice and vegetable seeds including new farming technologies which helped the farmers increase their yields and incomes.

To provide livelihood projects for the members, ten heads of goats including one buck was given to upgrade the existing goat breed in the area.

Giving members the opportunity to have an additional livelihood, they were also given ducks and chickens at 15 heads per member and 40 heads of native pigs at two heads per member.

"Laking pasasalamat namin sa DA sa mga ganitong tulong na ibinigay nila dahil tunay na nakapagpabago sa kabuhayan naming mga miyembro dito sa Kalumsing. Mas natuto kaming gumamit ng mga makabagong teknolohiya gaya ng pagtatanim ng mga ibat ibang gulay pagkatapos ang aming pag-aani ng palay at paggamit ng mga organikong pataba na kami mismo ang gumawa."

Referring to his vermiculture project,

Guinatang and the other members has established their own vermiculture where the vermicast derived from the project is used as fertilizer for their crops such as ampalaya, squash, intercropped with kadyos, sweet potato, among others.

A mountainous area, fishery production seems unlikely possible. But with the initiative of the members and help of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) in Candon City, raising tilapia is now a part of the livelihood project in the community.

Guinatang was able to turn his 0.25 sq. meter area into a small pond together with Mr. Samuel Balite where they raised tilapia for their families' consumption and for sale in the neighborhood.

More than anything, Guinatang and his members are truly thankful for all the projects they received from the DA. However, while enjoying all these interventions, he and his members have requested for the provision of farm machineries and equipment such as tractor and harvester that would make their farming a lot easier. He and his members also wanted to have an additional water impounding project that will be used to catch excess water during rainy season that would make available for irrigation to their crops especially when water is limited during dry season. ###



## Of protecting the Caraballo Mountains:

# LGU Natividad continues feat on envi, econ dev't through CADP

Endowed with fertile lands and mountain ranges that serve as haven for watersheds, the local government of Natividad in the province of Pangasinan continues to pursue its envisioned facets of development focused on sustainable economic growth and protected ecosystem through the Convergence Area Development Plan (CADP).

CADP is a comprehensive plan to address management of watershed and ecosystem in a holistic and sustainable manner through the implementation of projects which will be spearheaded by the Department of Agriculture, Department of Agrarian Reform, Department of Interior and Local Government, and Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

This collaborative effort is dubbed as the DA-DAR-DILG-DENR Regional Convergence Initiative for Sustainable Rural Development – a multi-sectoral planning strategy of the government to contribute inclusive growth and poverty reduction, particularly in the countryside, in partnership with the local government units and other government line agencies.

### Lipad! Natividad Convergence Area

This is the name for the proposed convergence area of the municipality which was launched on December 2019.

*A glimpse of the Caraballo Mountains in Natividad, Pangasinan. The range reaches an elevation of about 5,500 feet (1,680 meters).*



Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Caraballo Mountains". Encyclopedia Britannica, 14 Apr. 1999, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Caraballo-Mountains>. Accessed 27 January 2021.



Among the criteria for the selection of Natividad as a convergence area under the NCI-SRD is the community peoples' need for an environment-friendly enterprise and livelihood to protect the Caraballo Mountains.

Natividad is a fourth class municipality in the easternmost part of Pangasinan bounded by the municipalities of San Nicolas on the north, Tayug on the west, San Quintin on the south and by the rugged Caraballo Mountain ranges bordering Nueva Ecija and Nueva Vizcaya on the east. It is home to some 24, 299 individuals as per 2015 data of the Philippine Statistics Authority.

In a 2011 Community Based Monitoring System (CBMS) data, it was reported that out of the 5,123 households, approximately 62.99% are classified as poor. The locality has





*A view of the central part of Natividad, Pangasinan taken from Sky Plaza - one of its tourist destinations.*

very limited local employment opportunities besides farming, hunting, and forest products gathering.

Activities of forest dependent families particularly hunters, charcoal makers, firewood gatherers, and illegal wood suppliers to furniture makers and lumber dealers have caused destruction in the Caraballo Mountains.

“These activities have been among the damaging activities of the people specifically those residing near the Caraballo Mountains, depleting forest resources in the area,” said Mr. John Christian M. Sioco, Natividad Municipal Agriculturist.

“Forest fires are also instigated by the residents in order to get these wood resources,” he added.

The Caraballo Mountain ranges is one of

the most critical watershed of the province of Pangasinan and Natividad is among the five municipalities which has jurisdiction over this mountain. Big rivers originate from it which includes the municipality’s Viray river and the Karawetan Creek. These are major water support for drinking and agricultural activities of the locals.

If not protected, Caraballo mountain, will not only affect Natividad and its neighboring areas. Agno River – the main river that affects low-lying areas in Pangasinan also emanates from this mountain.

#### **Development wanted**

Focusing on environmental protection and economic growth, LGU Natividad identified two strategic goals to address

these issues. One is the need to improve the efficiency of the Caraballo Mountain as a watershed through effective forest protection and restoration and the other is to help uplift the socio-economic well-being of the people within the convergence area particularly those living near the Caraballo Mountain.

Initial support and interventions have been implemented to realize these goals.

For its environment protection and ecosystem management activities, Sioco, has reported that the LGU has already distributed chicken, native pigs, and goat to target recipients. Other beneficiaries had already started planting 2,500 seedlings of high value fruit trees provided by DENR including 10,000 Robusta coffee seedlings from DA alongside cacao, bamboo, and rubber trees.

Furthermore, beneficiaries underwent trainings spearheaded by ATI and DOST. These were on mushroom production and processing, candle making and bamboo weaving. Currently, they are manufacturing their own brand of mushroom-based products such as chips, sisig, chicharon, tocino, and others.

“Ang CADP ay napakalaking tulong sa mamamayan ng Natividad kasi di na sila nag-uuling, nababawasan na ang mga nangangaso sa bundok at konti na ang mga sunog sa bundok dahil nabibigyan po sila ng kabuhayan at may binabantayan na silang fruit trees, rubber trees, at bamboo,” shared Sioco.

For the fisheries sector of the municipality, BFAR has already delivered start-up materials for fish smoking, smokehouse, cool box and established integrated farming on tilapia with vegetable component.

There are still ongoing constructions of farm-to-market roads, irrigation canal, and multi-purpose drying pavement under the physical and infrastructure component of the CADP and much is yet to be done until the end of the project in 2022.

LGU Natividad nevertheless is optimistic in pursuing its programs and activities to preserve and cultivate what remains of the natural flora and fauna of their very own Caraballo Mountains. ###







countryside be able to have a common facility where they can be brought to have better opportunity of linkage to big companies and other markets in Metro Manila," Dar explained.

"We aim to establish a platform where we can eliminate middlemen and have traders with good heart access our farmers' products through the (trading) centers at a fair price," he added.

On the Abattoir project, Dar said although the facility has been approved as AA Slaughterhouse category, this can be upgraded into AAA category so that it can attract investments from big processing companies that are importing meat for their raw materials.

Meanwhile, the Sea Urchin Breeding, Hatchery and Nursery that shall be established in Brgy. Nalvo, amounting to P4.8 million is intended for the students of the Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College in Narvacan Campus which aims to provide enough supply of seedstock for sea urchin growers through the adoption of economically viable seed production system in general and will also serve as a learning facility for students taking up fishery-related courses.

Dar through the DA-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) also spearheaded the turnover of various fishery projects to the municipalities of Narvacan, Sta. Maria, San Esteban, Santiago and Candon City benefiting 101 registered fisherfolk and 40 fishermen's association who received sea urchin cages for commercialization purposes and the tuna conservation and management zone project.

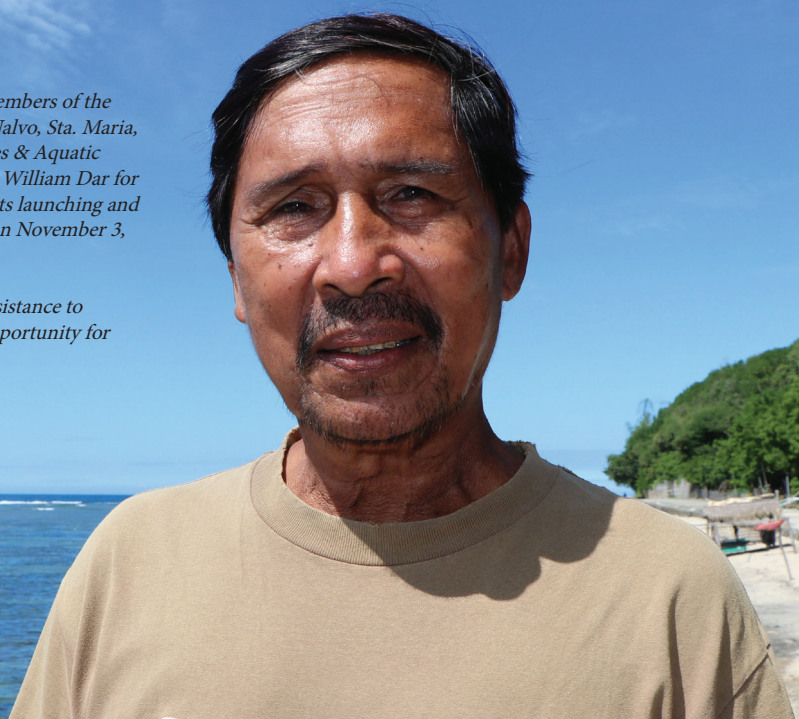
A total of 100 modules with five units cage per module was turned-over to the beneficiaries amounting to P5million which are intended to collect, develop and maintain good quality broodstock of sea urchin for breeding and nursery and to ensure ready and available source of seedstock.

These fishery projects are all in support to Sta. Maria's vision to be a center for sea urchin and other marine products in the North and the leading importer of sea urchin to Asian countries.

Dar also inspected the ongoing irrigation project worth P29.2M. The project will increase farm productivity catering an additional service area of 250 hectares and will benefit 137 farmers in Sta. Maria, Ilocos Sur.###

*Mr. Augusto Villones, on behalf of the members of the Maritangtang Fisherfolk Association in Nalvo, Sta. Maria, Ilocos Sur thanked the Bureau of Fisheries & Aquatic Resources (BFAR) through DA Secretary William Dar for the provision of sea urchin cages during its launching and ceremonial turn-over to the association on November 3, 2020.*

*The project aims to provide livelihood assistance to the members while giving them better opportunity for sustainable income and production.*



# CFSMFF program launched

The Cash and Food Subsidy for Marginal Farmers and Fishers (CFSMFF) program was launched in the provinces of La Union and Ilocos Sur on December 26, 2020 and December 27, 2020.

A total of 354 farmers and fisherfolk received from DA a total of P2.075M worth of cash and food assistance comprising 165 farmers and fishers from the province of La Union and 189 farmers and fishers from the province of Ilocos Sur.

The CFSMFF program aims to provide farmers and fishers direct cash assistance worth P3,000 and P2,000 worth of eggs, chicken, and rice that can be claimed through the e-voucher distributed. Other than corn farmers and fishers, other eligible beneficiaries of the program are sugarcane and coconut farmers and Indigenous People. They must also be registered in the Farmers and Fisherfolk Registry System.

Ilocos Region's allocation of about P70,100,000 under the program will benefit a total of 29,657 individuals from 49 identified eligible municipalities.

In the implementing guidelines of the program discussed by DA-RFO I Regional Technical Director for Operations Ms. Erlinda F. Manipon, beneficiaries must have an area of not more than one hectare.

They must come from municipalities under 4th, 5th and 6th income classification and from cities under 5th and 6th income classification. They must not also be covered by any social amelioration programs for other commodities, or by the DSWD and other government agencies.

The CFSMFF program does not only benefit those who will receive the P5,000 cash and food assistance but will likewise help cooperatives and associations who were accredited and tapped by DA as suppliers of the chicken, egg, and rice component of the said program.

This is a project of the DA in partnership with the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Philippine Coconut Authority, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples and the Sugar Regulatory Authority with a total budget of P4.5B from the P6.5B stimulus package for agriculture for social amelioration project under the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act of President Rodrigo Duterte's administration.

Department of Agriculture Secretary William D. Dar led the ceremonial launching together with DA-RFO I OIC-Regional Executive Director Nestor D. Domenden.###



*CFSMFF launching in San Fernando City, La Union and in Sta. Maria, Ilocos Sur.*





# DA-RFO I Sual station blooms

Likened to a flower that bloomed showing somehow its gratitude for being well taken cared of, the Department of Agriculture Pangasinan Research & Experiment Center in Sual, Pangasinan bloomed colorfully with beautiful landscape of different flowers, luscious array of organic vegetables and seedlings, rice on techno-demo field, indigenous fruit bearing plants, and other crops including livestock as it hosted the Hands on Training on Organic Agriculture Technologies cum Field Day on December 3, 2020.

Intent on luring more farmers in the region to adopt organic farming, the DA-RFO I thru its Organic Agriculture (OA) program staged the two-day activity that aims to showcase various technologies on organic agriculture production.

In his message to the participants, DA-RFO I OIC-Regional Executive Director Nestor D. Domenden thanked the farmer-participants for showing their passion and interest to learn and have a better understanding about organic farming.

"I encourage each and every one of you to campaign for more actors of organic farming because this is now the



*Training for the organic farming participants take a quick tour at the established organic demo sites of PREC-Sual, Pangasinan.*

trend. We want to live longer, we want to live healthy, we want to live strong," he said.

Other than lectures on organic farming and hands-on training on producing concoctions and other

organic inputs, the field day also highlighted several developments in the station centered on organic agriculture production.

The new project areas that were showcased in the station include



the greenhouse project planted with Japanese cucumber variety which offers a “pick and pay” scheme for visitors. Alongside is the seedling production area where the station propagates vegetable seedlings being distributed to interested beneficiaries in Pangasinan.

The vermi-composting area provides an all year round supply of fertilizer and substrates for the vegetable seedlings in the station to lower down production cost on vegetable and ornamental plant gardening.

On a path towards the techno-demo area was the newly built duck shed that houses organic ducks (in three different breeds) in support to the duck production project of the station.

Providing a breathtaking view for the visitors is the techno-demo area for ornamental plants where “plantitos” and “plantitas” draw inspiration on landscaping of ornamentals, herbs, spices, and salad vegetables such as

lettuce, amaranth, basil, etc.

Several structures that houses the native pigs, chickens and other ducks are also established in the area utilizing all available organic agriculture technologies to improve production and ensure a healthy environment for the animals raised.

Maximizing available land for crop production is the SCOPSA or the Sustainable Corn Production on Sloping Area project where techno-demo on lowland vegetables as well as cassava production is showcased.

As an integrated endeavor, the station also allocated an area for rice production paralleled with a small pond intended for tilapia raising.

Other lectures provided to the field day participants include the native chicken and muscovy duck production, organic open pollinated variety vegetable production, vermicomposting, different concoction production as well as wine

and vinegar production. The hands on training on herbal soap production was also conducted in partnership with Gabriel Guillao, an organic practitioner in Burgos, Pangasinan.

As a goodwill and token of appreciation for their active participation to the event, fruit tree seedlings such as tamarind, kamias, duhat, langka, kasoy, guyabano, and atis, among others including organic rice were given free to the participants.

The laudable transformation of PREC-Sual is not only a showcase of successful efforts toward the promotion of organic agriculture program of DA in the region but likewise, a testimony of a dynamic leadership by its station Chief, Dr. Mary Jane Alcedo, with guidance from OIC-Regional Executive Director Nestor D. Domenden and with the support of the Research & Development Division and the Organic Agriculture program of DA-RFO I. ###





*Rice farmers harvesting in Sto. Tomas, La union.*

# LU farmers benefit on DA's hybrid rice program

Rice farmer beneficiaries of the Department of Agriculture Ilocos Region's La Union Clustered Hybrid Advocacy, Mentoring and Partnership (LU CHAMP) program finally reaps the fruit of their labor after planting hybrid rice in a ten-hectare clustered techno-demo farm in the municipalities of Sto. Tomas and Rosario.

21 farmer cooperators in Sto. Tomas and 11 in Rosario were selected for the implementation of the program in partnership with the Provincial Government of La Union – Provincial Agriculturist Office and private seed companies.

Aside from these municipalities, LU CHAMP also covers ten other areas (Bacnotan, San Gabriel, Santol, Sudipen, San Juan, City of San Fernando, Aringay, Caba, Bauang, and Agoo) in La Union.

“Nagpapasalamat kami sa DA sa pagsali sa amin sa techn-demo farm na ito. Kung wala sila, malaki ang gastos namin. Kasi kahit mura ang presyo ng

palay, andiyan ang techno-demo na nakatulong sa amin (We are thankful to DA for including us in this techno-demo farm. Without them, our production cost would be a lot. For even if the price of palay is cheaper, there is the techno-demo that helped us.),” said Mr. Hilario Villanueva, 68, member of Bued Communal Irrigation System Dam 1 Association in Sto. Tomas, La Union.

As DA continuously intensifies its efforts in attaining food security in the country, increasing rice production through hybrid rice technology has been identified as one of the keys in attaining this goal as proven by the previous

hybrid rice derby that was conducted by the agency last year during the dry season.

This program therefore involved planting of one National Seed Industry Council (NSIC) approved hybrid rice variety in a ten-hectare cluster area in which the best variety in a specified municipality will be determined.

Farmers are still learning how to fully attain high production in using hybrid seeds but through this program, they are expected to apply practices maximizing the yield potential of 12 tons per hectare of the different commercially available hybrid rice seeds in the region. ###



*Harvesting in Rosario, La Union.*





## LUELCO Agoo branch embraces Kadiwa market to support farmers, fisherfolk

The management of La Union Electric Cooperative (LUELCO) in Agoo, La Union conveys full support to the Department of Agriculture's Kadiwa market having known and appreciated its purpose to help farmers and fisherfolk prosper in the region.

After the opening of a one-day Kadiwa market on October 23 at the LUELCO compound, Institutional Development Manager Mario del Rosario noted that once it is established as a regular program in partnership with the local government of Agoo, farmers and fisherfolk in their municipality will have a ready market for their produce and will enable them to have a direct linkage to consumers.

"LUELCO will adopt Kadiwa market and will be operating on a scheduled basis, most likely during the payment of electric bills to ensure larger number of buyers," said Rosario.

Meanwhile, three farmers' organizations along with the Philippine Carabao Center

were invited as exhibitors enticing LUELCO employees and walk-in buyers.

As Agoo farmers are known for their production of dinengdeng vegetables, participating exhibitors displayed fresh squash (fruit and blossoms), okra, winged beans, ampalaya (leaves and fruit), gourds, string beans, eggplant, and bamboo shoots, among others.

Other commodities available were fruits, bangus, tilapia, processed fish products, buffalo milk-based yogurt drinks, locally produced wines and vinegar, red rice, and other processed food products.

Kadiwa is a market system launched in 2019 in consonance with Secretary Dar's New Thinking for Agriculture paradigm to ensure that farmers and fisherfolk get the best prices for their goods, while providing affordable, safe, and nutritious food to the consuming public.###



## MSEs, farmers showcase products on Kadiwa - 'Locally Sourced' exhibit

Department of Agriculture's Kadiwa ni Ani at Kita continues to bring the best of farmers into the limelight.

As a project that strongly supports the direct farmer-to-consumer market linkage, DA-RFO1's Kadiwa project this time, goes hand in hand with Robinsons Malls' very own 'Locally Sourced,' a program that supports the Micro Small Enterprises (MSEs) in the region by providing a venue for locals to market their quality made Filipino products through trade fairs.

On October 30 to November 1, fresh farmers' produce, processed food products, garden plants, and handicrafts were exhibited by the 23 invited farmers' associations and MSEs at the Robinson's Mall, Calasiao, Pangasinan.

"This is the first time that a private institution has initiated an invitation

to the Department of Agriculture for a collaborative program supporting farmers, fisherfolk, and MSEs in the region," said Regional Technical Director for Operations Erlinda F. Manipon, in appreciation to the management of Robinsons Malls of their effort in supporting the local business industry in the region.

"The mission of 'Locally Sourced' is also just in time with the upcoming National Rice Awareness Month theme this November promoting to grow local, buy local, eat local, which may not only be applicable in the rice industry but also including other commodities in the region," Manipon added.

The second leg of this collaborative exhibit was held on November 15 to 17.###



# DA-RFO 1 successfully maintains ISO-9001:2015 Certification

Nov. 26-27, 2020 - The two-day hurdle of providing documented evidences to prove its compliance to the ISO-9001:2015 standards ended successfully for DA-RFO I as it passed the 2nd Surveillance Audit with not a single non-conformity finding from the auditors.

"With the result of the audit, and raising no major nor minor non-conformity, we are happy to recommend your continued certification to ISO-9001:2015."

Lead auditor Mr. Renato Madrid, Jr. of the Certification International Philippines, happily announced this as a concluding message during the closing meeting for the DA-RFO I 2nd Surveillance Audit on November 27, 2020 at the Regional Field Office 1's 5th Floor Conference Hall.

Together with his support auditor Mr. Arnel Intatano, both auditors conducted the virtual audit for DA-RFO I's Quality Management System focusing on 13 selected areas of audit.

Areas audited were the Context of the Organization & Actions to address Risks and opportunities; Procurement;



DA-RFO1 top management officials in a virtual audit with the Certification International Philippines for its 2nd Surveillance on November 27, 2020.

Regulatory Division; Customer Satisfaction and Feedback Handling; Management Review; Agricultural Engineering Division; Internal Audit, Non-Conformity & Corrective Action; Competence & Awareness; Integrated Laboratories Division; Internal & External Issues, Needs & Expectations of interested parties; Review of Internal Audit Results; Field Operations Division; and Research & Development.

During the opening meeting prior to the audit, DA-RFO I OIC-Regional Executive Director Nestor D. Domenden thanked the entire DA-RFO I team for

their efforts put into making sure that the 2nd surveillance audit will yield positive result for the organization.

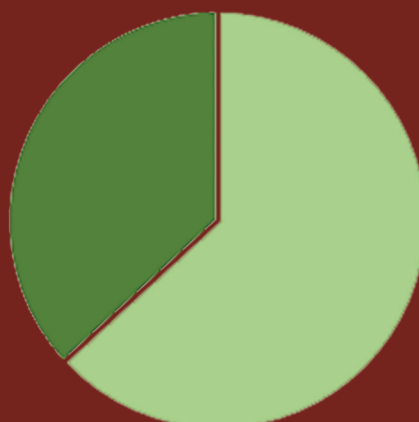
"Thank you for all your commitment and dedication in taking by heart the strict implementation of our Quality Management System as we raise the standards of public service by maintaining our ISO-9001:2015 Certification," Domenden shared.

DA-RFO I obtained its ISO-9001:2015 in January 18, 2019 under then Regional Executive Director Lucrecio R. Alviar, Jr. ###

## ASF UPDATE

as of December 4, 2020

- **Php 30,916,160** - total amount used for the procurement of 762 heads cattle and 3,352 heads chicken. These animals were distributed to beneficiaries as recovery plan.
- **Php 53,030,000** - distributed under Indemnification Program (Php 5,000 given per depopulated hog of beneficiary)



No. of mun. and brgys. served
Pangasinan
36 municipalities
185 barangays
La Union
14 municipalities
61 barangays
Ilocos Sur
5 municipalities
38 barangays





*Farmer graduates of the School-on-the-Air from the provinces of La Union and Pangasinan.*

For four months, Region 1 farmers were schooled on the latest technologies on hybrid rice production via DA-RFO1's radio program "Oras ng Magsasaka." This set-up is dubbed as School-on-the-Air – a practice that has been adapted by DA since decades ago.

Five radio stations were tapped by DA-RFO1 thru the Regional Agriculture & Fisheries Information Section (RAFIS) to air series of topics on hybrid rice production technology targeting 300 farmer listeners in the whole region who have enrolled in the program.

From among the 300 enrollees, top 10 from each province were recognized based on their total final scores from the exams given

## BRIDGING the gap



**THE SCHOOL-ON-THE-AIR  
MADE ME BETTER IN THIS  
FIELD, LITERALLY AND  
SPIRITUALLY A BETTER  
FARMER.**

**VICTOR DUCUSIN**  
*Most Outstanding SOA graduate  
for the province of La Union*







SOA farmer graduates of Ilocos Norte together with MS. Eva Agustin, RAFIS farmcaster; Ms. Norma P. Lagmay, Ilocos Norte Provincial Agriculturist; Ms. Lorna Lubera, Ilocos Norte farmcaster; and City of Batac LGU representative.

by the SOA farmcaster at every lesson/topic discussed on air.

The graduation ceremony for the provinces of La Union & Pangasinan was held at DA-RFO I conference hall on November 20, 2020 while graduation ceremony for Ilocos Norte & Ilocos Sur listeners was on November 26 & 27 in their respective provinces.

Awards given to the outstanding graduates include P5,000 in cash for the first honor with tablet plus plaque of recognition. The second honor received P3,000 in cash, cellphone, and plaque of recognition while the 3rd honor received P2,000 in cash and plaque of

recognition. Top four to ten received P1,000 each plus certificate of recognition.

The SOA on Hybrid Rice was strategized to help in the DA's goal of increasing rice farmers' productivity and attain higher rice sufficiency level to at least 93%.

Despite the popularity of the internet, SOA radio programs still play an important role at present in empowering and informing farmers especially those who are residing in far-flung areas where radio is more effective in bringing them latest news, information and updates from the government. ###



**SALAMAT SA INYONG PROGRAMA NA NAGBIGAY KAALAMAN AT NAGSILBING GABAY NAMIN BILANG MAGSASAKA. ITO AY MALAKING TULONG SA AMIN. NAWA'Y PATULOY PO KAYONG MAGBIGAY NG GANITONG PROGRAMA HINDI LAMANG SA PAGSASAKA NG PALAY KUNDI PATI NA RIN SA IBANG AGRICULTURAL CROPS PARA MABIGYAN NG TAMANAG KAALAMAN ANG BAWAT MAGSASAKA.**

JACQUELINE TERRADO  
Most Outstanding SOA graduate for  
the province of Pangasinan



Pledging support to the victims of Typhoon Ulysses through the Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office I (DA-RFO I), farmer associations in the region stepped in and heeded the call of OIC-Regional Executive Director Nestor D. Domenden to help the calamity victims in Cagayan.



With a total pledge of 600 bags of rice @ 25kg/bag, said donations came from the United Pangasinan High Value Crops MPC, the Pangasinan Tropical Fruit MPC, the Pangasinan Organic Seed Growers MPC and Mango Growers Associations from Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur and La Union.

Other farmers' associations who participated in the relief operations include the San Pablo Cooperative in Balaoan, La Union; the Bacarra Zanjera Irrigators Association in Bacarra, Ilocos Norte; and the LM Arenas Coop of Manaoag, Pangasinan.

DA-RFO1 employees also joined the relief operations by donating various food and non-food relief items that is worth more than P200,000.

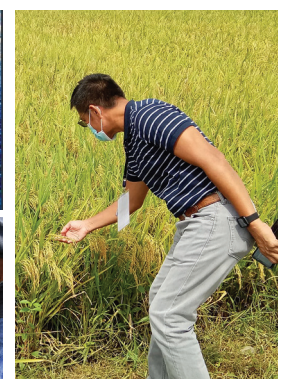




# NOVEMBER

#supportour  
ricefarmers

Photos submitted for the NRAM  
photo contest by: Ivie Faith  
Guillermo, Rodney Jake Balunos,  
Reina Banquirig, Mimi Alejandro  
Blas, Klense Jezreel Cariaga, Anna  
Marie Luis, Violet Asuncion, Genifer  
Domondon, Tristan Jaycee Blas,  
Catalina Faye, Danny Bajit, Mau  
Pauline Rarogal, Mhilton Bacarisa,  
Kristine Rarogal, Joan Rarogal,  
Joseph Tadeo, and Norwen Cervera.







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ATIONAL ICE WARENESS ONTH





## THE SECRETARY'S CORNER

### Ph agri sector's resilience paves way to all-time palay yield of 19.44 MMT in 2020

Despite losing about 419,560 metric tons (MT) of palay due to several typhoons, the country is seen to attain a record harvest of 19.44 million MT this year.

“We owe this year’s all-time palay production to the resilience and hardwork of our country’s farmers, and strong support of our local government units and the private sector, who altogether contributed to attaining such remarkable feat,” said Agriculture Secretary William Dar.

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) projected that the country’s

palay production for 2020 would reach 19.44 MMT, comprised of the actual production of 11.9 MMT, from January to September, and projected harvest of 7.54 MMT for the fourth quarter (Q4), based on standing crop as of November 1, 2020.

“We can say that Filipino rice farmers are starting to reap the benefits from the Rice Tariffication Law (RTL), particularly from the annual P10-billion Rice Competitiveness Fund (RCEF), including our regular rice program and rice resiliency project,” the DA chief added.



# WE OWE THIS YEAR'S ALL-TIME PALAY PRODUCTION TO THE RESILIENCE AND HARDWORK OF OUR COUNTRY'S FARMERS, AND STRONG SUPPORT OF OUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR, WHO ALTOGETHER CONTRIBUTED TO ATTAINING SUCH REMARKABLE FEAT.

“Despite the unprecedented challenges, from logistical nightmare brought about by the pandemic to the series of typhoons that hit major production areas in the country, our rice sector continues to post significant growth,” he said.

The projected 2020 record yield of 19.44 MMT is 3.3 percent more than last year's output of 18.81 MMT, and surpasses the previous production record of 19.27 MMT attained in 2017.

Secretary Dar attributes the feat to the fruits of various DA programs and interventions that include the RCEF, rice resiliency project, and regular inbred and hybrid rice programs.

“This is just the beginning, as in succeeding seasons we expect farmers to further increase their average yield to six tons from the current four tons per hectare,” Secretary Dar said.

“RCEF has already proven its effectiveness even during these challenging times. We are confident that we can achieve more in terms of productivity as our economy opens up, and demand for locally-produced rice stabilizes,” he said.

Next year, the DA will also focus on providing farmers' cooperatives and associations (FCAs) drying equipment and facilities to increase the farmgate prices of palay.

“We will pursue said initiative as part of our farm clustering and consolidation strategy, dubbed as ‘Bayanihan Agri Cluster’ or BAC, to attain economies of scale. This will enable FCAs to attain a bigger harvest, reduce their cost of operations, and thus earn bigger incomes,” he added.

From January to November this year, the country lost a total of 419,560 MT of palay worth P6.94 billion, due mostly to four strong typhoons in October and November, namely: “Ulysses” that damaged 145,800 MT; followed by “Quinta” – 112,000 MT; “Rolly” – 64,250 MT; and “Pepito” – 63,160 MT.

“Had it not been for the typhoons and other challenges, we could have produced more. For 2021, we are targeting a conservative production of 20.48 MMT to a high of 20.66 MMT,” the DA chief said. ###









# WDD on field







*A food-secure and resilient Philippines with empowered and prosperous farmers and fisherfolk.*