

Damagri

FROM STUDENT TO AQUAFARMING SUCCESS

*Roy Uson's million-
peso dream realized*

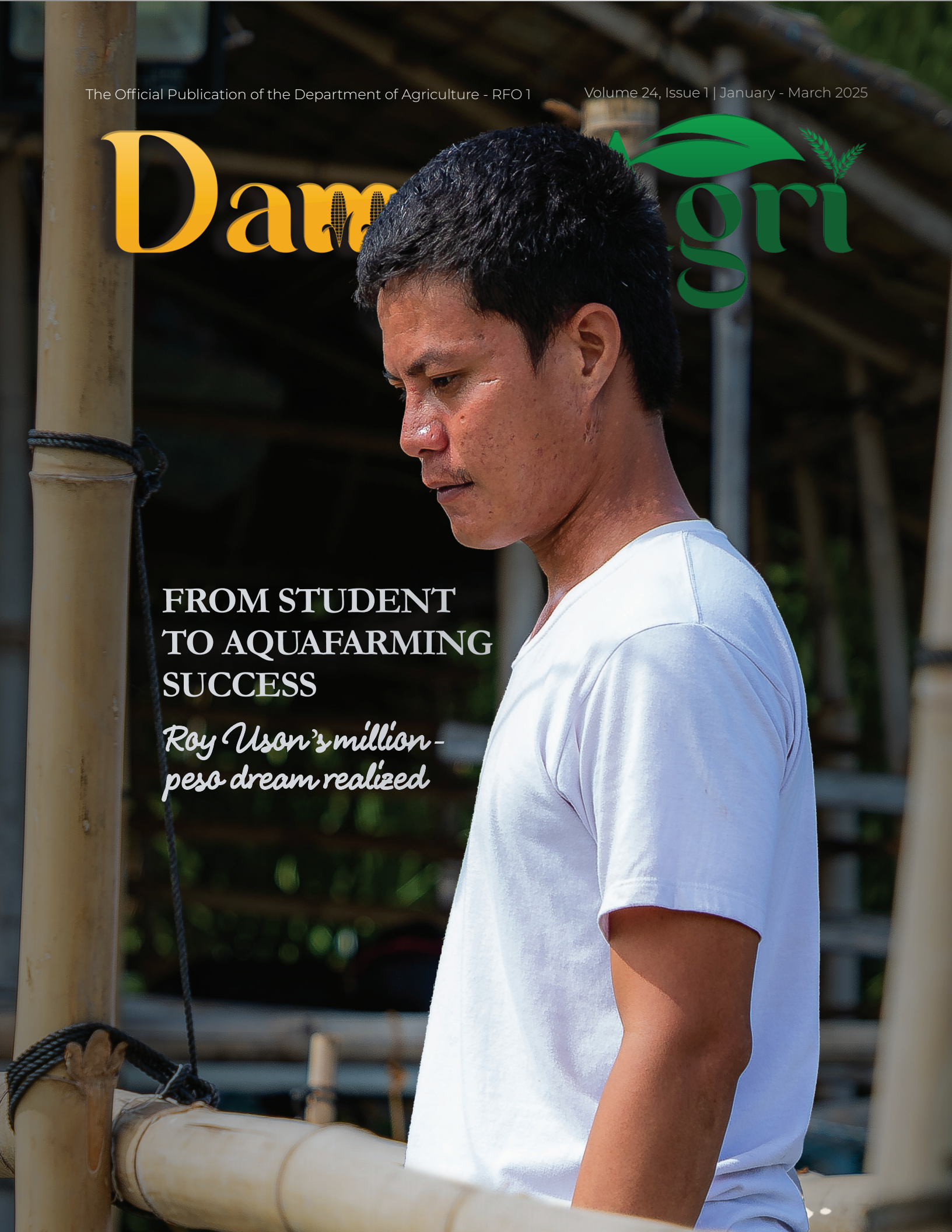


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DA SEC. LAUREL LEADS FARMERS' TRADING CENTER TURN-OVER IN ROSALES

Department of Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, Jr. led the inauguration and turnover of the multi-million pesos worth of agricultural trading center in Brgy. Tomana East, Rosales, Pangasinan on March 25, 2025.

A Php60 million project funded by the DA under the Enhanced Kadiwa Inclusive Food Supply Chain Program in cooperation with the Abono Partylist representative Hon. Robert Raymund Estralla III who donated the 8,000 sq. m lot, the project is expected to improve the profitability of the farmers as well as farmers cooperatives and

associations by transforming them into an empowered entrepreneur.

An activity that attended by around hundreds of farmers and vendors in the various municipalities of the 6th district of Pangasinan, the inauguration and turn-over ceremony was highlighted with the unveiling and awarding of the certificate of turn-over to the municipality of Rosales headed by Mayor William Cezar.

In his message during the turn-over ceremony, Secretary Laurel underscored the relevance of projects such as this trading

center to increase the income of farmers while providing the consumers with fresh, accessible and affordable agri-products.

Seeing the potential of this DA project to improve the distribution and consolidation of agri products and commodities, Secretary Laurel vowed to establish another trading post in Pangasinan while granting the request of the LGU Rosales for a rice drying facility and a cold storage facility with solar power system.

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BALUNGAO FARMERS' SUMMIT GATHERS THOUSANDS OF FARMERS

Over a thousand farmers gathered at the newly established Rice Processing Center III in Barangay Pugaro, Balungao, for a one-day Farmers' Summit on March 26, 2025.

The summit served as a platform to update farmers on key agricultural development programs and initiatives facilitated by the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice), Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC), Agricultural Training Institute (ATI), and private seed and fertilizer companies. The event was organized by the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Balungao through the Office of the Municipal Agriculturist.

Former Pangasinan Governor Amado “Pogi” Espino



graced the event as the Keynote Speaker, alongside Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office I (DA-RFO I) Regional Technical Director for Operations Engr. Dennis Tactac, who represented Regional Executive Director John Pascual.

were discussions on Malusog Rice, crop insurance, and training opportunities led by PhilRice, PCIC, and ATI-RTC.

The Farmers' Summit remains a key initiative of the Balungao LGU, aiming to equip farmers with vital

Among the event highlights

continued on page ...



**UYAAN WINS 3RD PLACE IN 2024-2025 NAT'L SEARCH FOR
OUTSTANDING RURAL WOMEN**

Ms. Veberly Jubilo Uyaan of Balaoan, La Union, is third runner-up in the 2024-2025 National Search for Outstanding Rural Women.

Ms. Uyaan, along with seven other shortlisted candidates, was recognized in a ceremony held on March 28, 2025, at the Bureau of Soils and Water Management, Diliman, Quezon City. She received a certificate of award and a cash prize worth Php60,000.

In the event, Ms. Uyaan was accompanied by Ms. Betty Junto, Balaoan Municipal Agriculturist, and Ms. Edilyn Goldara, DA-RFO1 GAD focal person.



DA CONDUCTS TECHNICAL BRIEFING ON SUBSIDIZED DRONE SERVICE TO BOOST RICE PRODUCTION

Keeping up with the latest technology in agricultural production, the Department of Agriculture-Rice Banner Program is conducting simultaneous technical briefing and actual service demo for its new program on agricultural drone assistance in rice clusters which will provide farmers drone-assisted farming operations.

Based on the guidelines discussed by Mr. Julius Briones and Ms. Leah Coloma of the DA-RFO I Rice Banner Program, the drone program hopes to provide farmers significant cost reduction on rice cultivation and

improve efficiency by using cutting-edge technology such as the agri drone.

Through the said program, farmer-beneficiaries will receive a drone service voucher worth Php2,000 per hectare for drone-assisted farming operations. The Php2,000 shall cover pre-flight planning, crop establishment, nutrient management and pest and disease control. However, eligible farmer-beneficiaries may customize their service package by choosing to avail one or two or all of the offered drone services based on their specific needs.

To ensure swift and smooth implementation of the program, Municipal Agriculture Officers who participated in the briefing were encouraged by DA-RFO I to fast track the submission of rice cluster areas in their municipality covering 20 hectares and list of farmers who are eligible to avail of the program.

Farmers may visit their Municipal Agriculture Office to know more about the agricultural drone assistance program.

DA ILOCOS REGION STRENGTHENS RESEARCH COLLAB WITH AFRREDN THROUGH MOU SIGNING

Through its Research Division, the Department of Agriculture Ilocos Region effectively led a meeting with heads and representatives from various member institutions of the Agricultural and Fisheries Research, Development, and Extension Network (AFRREDN) on February 7, 2025, at the DA-RFO 1 conference hall.

A ceremonial signing of the MoU was conducted to strengthen research collaboration among member institutions. It serves as an entry point for research and extension proposals from the AFRREDN community for possible

funding by DA-BAR.

Other highlights of the meeting included the presentation of the approved AFRREDN guidelines and a detailed discussion of the activities planned for Fiscal Year 2025.

Participants also engaged in a participatory discussion to finalize the roles and functions of the AFRREDN committees including the Research for Development Committee, Extension and Transfer Committee, Institutional Support Committee, and Knowledge Exchange Committee.

AFRREDN, alongside DA - Agricultural Training Institute, serves as a vital partnership tool for stakeholders in agriculture and fisheries for development and extension (R4DE). The network guarantees effective implementation of interventions through the collaborative effort of its members as well as ensure the quality of programs, services, and policies. Particularly, AFRREDN will spearhead prioritization and coordination of R4DE activities, programs and services to be undertaken at the regional level.



DA-RFO1, ILOCOS SUR UNVEIL KEY PROJECTS TO BOOST IRRIGATION, AQUACULTURE AND CROP PRODUCTION

The Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office I (DA-RFO I), through its Ilocos Sur Research Center I (ISReC), in collaboration with the Provincial Government of Ilocos Sur, led the blessing and inauguration of a solar-powered water irrigation system, stocking of tilapia and hito fry at the newly built aquaculture farm, and Farmers' Field Day for the field validation of different FPA-registered fertilizers for optimum nutrient management of selected solanaceous crops in Ilocos Sur on February 6, 2025, in Bulag East, Bantay, Ilocos Sur.

The event was spearheaded by Ilocos Sur Governor Jeremias C. Singson, alongside DA-RFO I Regional Technical Director for Operations Dennis I. Tactac and Chief of the Research and Development Division, Dr. Gilbert Rabara. These activities served as a platform to highlight research and development innovations, particularly in irrigation, aquaculture, and vegetable production.

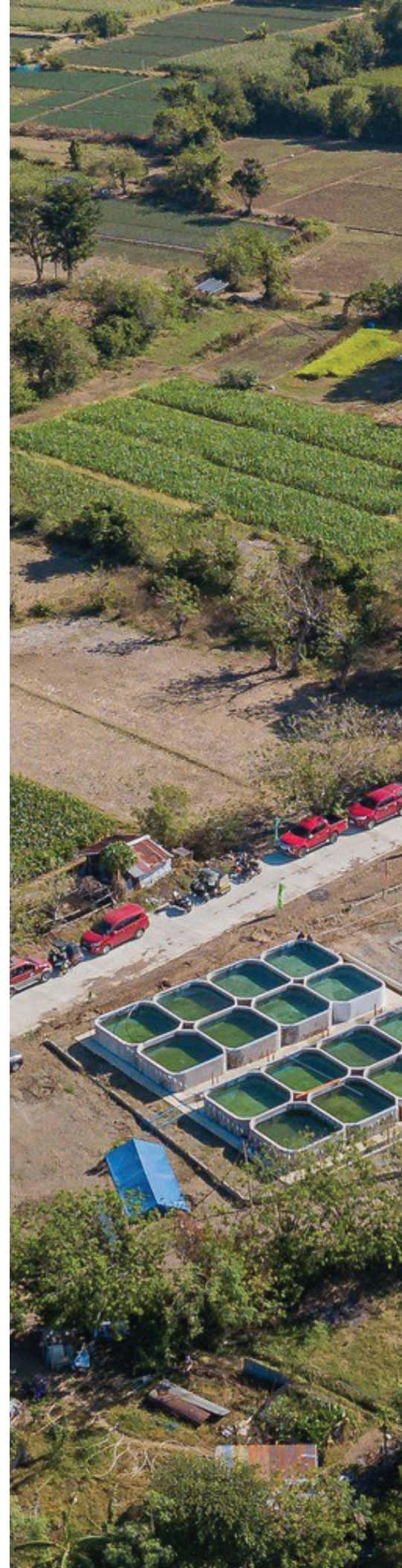
A joint initiative between ISReC and the Provincial Government of Ilocos Sur, in partnership with the Ilocos Sur Maharlika Wellness Center, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), and private seed and fertilizer companies, these projects aim to enhance fish production and improve vegetable yields. The aquaculture project

is expected to boost the supply of tilapia and hito, while the Fertilizer Derby showcased various strategies to increase the productivity of key crops such as eggplant, tomatoes, and peppers.

Governor Singson expressed his gratitude to DA-RFO I and BFAR for their continued support of agricultural initiatives in Ilocos Sur. He also reaffirmed his commitment to advancing agri-fishery projects that contribute to food security and economic growth in the province.

Meanwhile, preliminary results from the Fertilizer Derby indicate no significant yield difference between increased or reduced fertilizer application rates. However, researchers emphasized the importance of proper timing in foliar fertilizer application to optimize yields while reducing production costs. Further economic analysis and assessment are underway to provide farmers with cost-effective and sustainable fertilizer management options.

These collaborative efforts underscore the commitment of DA-RFO I and its partners to sustainable agricultural development, equipping farmers and fisherfolk with innovative solutions to enhance productivity and profitability.





DA ILOCOS AWARDSS PHP1.4M WORTH OF SUGARCANE PROCESSING FACILITY TO AMIA BENEFICIARIES IN PANGASINAN

The Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office I (DA-RFO I), through the Adaptation and Mitigation Initiative in Agriculture (AMIA) Program, awarded a Php1.4 million-worth sugarcane processing facility to the San Pedro Mabini Farmers Agriculture Cooperative in Pangasinan, benefiting 70 farmer-members.

The facility aims to support the cooperative in expanding its 'basi' and sugarcane vinegar production, aligning with the AMIA CREATE framework, which promotes climate-resilient and market-oriented agri-fishery enterprises.

AMIA CREATE is an initiative under the DA's AMIA program, aimed at helping farmers in the Philippines adapt to climate challenges and become market-oriented.

The farmers also received training in business mind-setting, product packaging, and labeling.

The awarding ceremony was led by DA-RFO I AMIA's Jerico L. Valerio, with local officials in attendance.



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Meanwhile, for the project to become sustainable, Department of Social Welfare and Development Secretary Rex Gatchalian who was also present in the event led the distribution of livelihood assistance in the form of cash to the vendors from the identified members of associations which shall serve as their seed capital in putting up their business in the trading center.

To further maximize the trading center, a training center located on the second floor is allocated to serve as venues during trainings and seminars to enhance their marketing skills and improving their product quality and enabling direct wholesale trading for higher profit and income.

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information and updates on agricultural programs while encouraging their active participation in government-led projects for a more sustainable farming sector.



DINGRAS LGU DONATES 19.6 HA TO DA-RFO1

Decades after the Department of Agriculture—Ilocos Norte Research and Experiment Center (DA—INREC) in Dingras, Ilocos Norte was established, the 19.64-hectare land it stands on is finally donated to the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office One (DA—RFO1) during the signing of the deed of donation on February 17, 2025, at the DA-INREC Dingras Station, Cali, Dingras, Ilocos Norte.

Under the leadership of Dingras Mayor, Hon. Joefrey P. Saguid, the Local Government of Dingras granted ownership to the DA-RFO1 the 19.64 hectares of land in Brgy. Cali and Brgy. Saludares of Dingras, Ilocos Norte.

The signing of the deed of

donation was also highlighted with the turn over and release of the livestock hauling truck worth Php 3.5 million, to LGU Dingras as part of the INSPIRE project of DA under its Livestock Banner Program.

As stated by Ms. Melinda G. Calumpit, Assistant Chief of the DA-INREC, Dingras Station, “This (exchange) shows that when we work together, we can create aspirations that turn into reality.”

Dr. Gilbert Rabara, Chief of the Research Division, highlighted the importance of the land being owned by the DA-RFO1, stating that infrastructure and enhancements will no longer be restricted; more buildings and laboratories can be built as

ownership now falls solely on DA. In gratitude, Mr. Medardo Pablo, Chief of INREC-Batac emphasized, “The donation will undoubtedly benefit our farmers and other stakeholders not only in Ilocos Norte but also in the Ilocos Region.”

The ceremony also highlighted the advantages of the donation and a tour around the station to show the scope of the land donated. In his acceptance speech, OIC - Regional Executive Director John B. Pascual stated, “This is a testament to what we can achieve when the government and local communities work together: a stronger, more sustainable agricultural sector for Ilocos Norte and beyond.”

LINGGAWA IPS WELCOME DA'S 4K PROGRAM

The Indigenous Peoples (IPs) group in Sitio Linggawa of Barangay Pidpid, Santa Cruz, Ilocos Sur, has welcomed the Department of Agriculture's Kabuhayan at Kaunlaran ng Kababayang Katutubo (DA 4K) Program.



The IPs in the community will receive interventions in support of their agricultural activities once they meet the program's requirements.

“Given that IPs’ major livelihood is farming, the 4K program is here to give support and livelihood projects to IPs within their ancestral domain,” said Ms. Marian Sumbad, 4K Ilocos Region Community Development Officer, during the beneficiary profiling and validation held in the sitio on February 27.

Over 160 residents from the Kankana-ey, Bago, and Kalanguya groups live in Sitio Linggawa.

The community primarily cultivates pigeon peas (cardis), peanuts, ginger, sweet potatoes, rice, and other legumes. Aside from crop production, they are also involved in tilapia farming and raise livestock such as cattle, goats, ducks, turkeys, chickens, and pigs.

Despite its potential for agriculture, Sitio Linggawa has major accessibility issues. Reaching the area requires a two-hour hike, for it has no existing road access. Yet, the resilience of the community is evident, as IP farmers carry their harvests by foot to trade in the Santa Cruz business center.

The DA 4K program recognizes the dedication of the IPs in Sitio Linggawa to supporting their families through farming. Thus, the program looks forward to making the community a part of its future projects.

The 4K program is a special project by the DA that focuses on strengthening the agricultural competitiveness and self-sufficiency of indigenous cultural communities and indigenous peoples across the country.

ARMYWORM HITS ONION FARMS IN PANGASINAN; DA ILOCOS LAUNCHES MASSIVE SPRAYING EFFORT

On the third week of January, over 49 hectares of onion farms in San Manuel, Pangasinan, were reported to have been infested by armyworm. The affected areas include barangays Santo Domingo and Lapalo.

The widespread presence of the pest was confirmed by the Department of Agriculture (DA) Ilocos Region's Onion Armyworm Surveillance Team, who immediately advised farmers to take action through massive pesticide

spraying.

To guide farmers, a demonstration activity using organic pesticides was held on January 26 in Santo Domingo, San Manuel.

After the session, 72 liters of pesticide—enough to treat 18 hectares—were distributed, with more supplies being delivered to cover the remaining affected areas in Santo Domingo and Lapalo.

The DA-RFO1 recommends massive spraying as compared to individual efforts, as it is more effective in preventing pests from hiding and reproducing. The advised best time for spraying is around 3 PM or later.

To prevent further damage, the agency plans to implement this spraying strategy across all the affected areas in the region.





DA ILOCOS BOOSTS PAFES IMPLEMENTATION THRU BENCHMARKING ACTIVITY

In a bid to enhance the implementation of the Province-led Agriculture and Fisheries Extension System (PAFES) across the Ilocos Region, the Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office I (DA-RFO I), led by PAFES focal person and Planning Monitoring and Evaluation Division (PMED) Chief Ms. Doris Joy Garcia, spearheaded a benchmarking activity for key PAFES implementers from the region's four provinces.

The activity, conducted in collaboration with PAFES partner-implementers from the Local Government Units, DA Attached Agencies and partner SUCs, aimed to gather valuable insights and best practices from PAFES-assisted enterprises in Sagada, Mountain Province. This initiative underscores the importance of strong partnerships among local government units (LGUs), funding institutions, and stakeholders to promote agricultural growth and development.

One of the key sites visited was the Sagada Heritage Village Bee Farm, a Learning Site for Agriculture managed by Magsasaka Siyentista Jayson O. Cam-ed. The bee farm, supported by ATI-Cordillera, showcases innovative honey production techniques and artificial insemination technology to breed superior queen bees. As an ATI Learning Site, the apiary benefits from training programs funded under PAFES to promote agri-entrepreneurship and capacity building.

The group also visited the shared service facility for coffee processing, operated in partnership with the Sagada Arabica Coffee Growers and Processors Inc. (SACGPO). This facility is a testament to the power of collaborative resource utilization, with support drawn from PAFES funding, the High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP), and the Philippine Rural Development Project (PRDP). The facility helps enhance the quality of Sagada Arabica coffee,

strengthening the competitiveness of local growers in both domestic and international markets.

Benchmarking activities such as this are vital as they allow LGUs to learn and adopt best practices from other provinces. By seeing firsthand how PAFES is successfully implemented elsewhere, stakeholders can identify strategies to maximize resources and strengthen agricultural development in their own areas.

The activity highlighted the importance of collaboration among LGUs, DA regional offices, and key institutions in advancing PAFES objectives.

With the knowledge and experiences gained from this benchmarking activity, the DA-RFO I and its partner institutions are optimistic about replicating successful models in the Ilocos Region, further driving agricultural transformation and rural development.

RICE TECHNO FORUM FROM ACROSS THE REGION

PANGASINAN FARMERS EYE HIGH-YIELD RICE VARIETIES AT DA'S TECHNO FORUM

Farmers explored high-yielding rice varieties to increase their production in a field tour organized by the Department of Agriculture Ilocos Region during the Provincial Rice Technology Forum (PRTF) for the dry season on March 5.

The PRTF featured 11 agricultural companies that presented their latest rice varieties in Barangay Manaol, Pozorrubio, Pangasinan.

Participating companies included Leads Agri Ventures Corporation, TAO Seeds, Advanta Seeds Philippine Incorporated, Enviro Scope, Green and Grow Tech Incorporated, Seedworks, SL Agri-tech Corporation, Syngenta, Pro Agri Seed Corporation, Ramgo, and Bioseed.

Erwin Abayan, president of the Villanueva Farmers' Association, expressed his gratitude to have participated in the activity.

"Daytoy outcome na ti [PRTF] tadta napintas," Abayan said. "Adu iti nakita mi nga naduma-duma nga variety nga dapat maimula tapnu tumaas ti ani mi met nga mannalon." (This PRTF outcome is admirable. We saw many different varieties that we should plant to increase our harvest.)

The demo farms, established last November, provided farmers with

a firsthand look at the showcased 29 varieties' performance.

The PRTF, also known as the hybrid rice challenge, aims to identify high-yielding, suitable local varieties and increase farmers' awareness of hybrid rice.

Last year's wet season PRTF, held at the same site, saw Syngenta's RH9000 lead with 9.50 metric tons per hectare (MT/ha), followed by Bioseeds' Biorice Bonus with 9.12 mt/ha, Pro Agri Seed Corporation's LP2096 with 8.24 mt/ha, Leads Agri's Jackpot 102 with 7.47 mt/ha, and Bioseed's Biorice Zarap with 7.10 mt/ha.

OVER 300 FARMERS JOIN IN DA'S RICE TECHNO FORUM IN BANTAY, ILOCOS SUR

Over 300 farmers participated in the Provincial Rice Techno Forum (PRTF) held in Barangay Malingeb, Bantay, Ilocos Sur, on Friday, February 21.

The PRTF is an annual event of the Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office 1 through the Rice Banner Program. It aligns with the Masagana Rice Industry Development Program's objective of promoting hybrid rice to improve farmers' yield and income.

This year's forum in Ilocos Sur featured participation from 11 companies, including Bioseed, Seedworks, Syngenta, PASCo Leads, Advanta, GGT, TAO, Enviro Scope,

Bayer, and SL Agritech.

Farmers had the opportunity to observe 26 rice varieties cultivated on a 20.18-hectare demonstration farm owned by the Malingeb Dur-as Bantay Farmers Association.

The showcased varieties include:

- NSIC Rc 162H (BioZarap)
- NSIC Rc 522H (BioRice453)
- NSIC Rc 180H (BioRice650)
- NSIC Rc 350H (TH 82)
- NSIC Rc 236H (US 88)
- NSIC Rc 234H (NK 5017)
- NSIC Rc 376H (S6003)
- NSIC Rc 404H (LP 2096)
- NSIC Rc 456H (LP 937)
- NSIC Rc 696H (LP908)
- NSIC Rc 486 (LP 534)
- NSIC Rc 656H (LAV 777)
- NSIC Rc 666H (Jackpot 102)
- NSIC Rc 246H (ADV 8112)
- NSIC Rc 246H (ADV 8112)
- NSIC Rc 620H (Hyvar S26)
- NSIC Rc 504H (Hatao Sinandomeng)
- NSIC Rc 4904 (Hatao Dinorado)
- ECO SIERRA 299
- ECO Sierra 497
- NSIC Rc 314 (Arize Bigante Plus)
- NSIC Rc 748H (AZ 6585)
- NSIC Rc 408H (SL 68)
- NSIC Rc 540H (SL 20)
- NSIC Rc 718H (SL 39)
- NSIC Rc 132H (SL8)
- NSIC Rc 488H (SL 19)

All varieties were cultivated under uniform management from sowing to harvesting.

Through this forum, farmers will assess the best-performing varieties based on crop stand, panicle formation, and resistance to pests.

The DA-RFO1 has successfully established six trial sites across the region during the last wet cropping season of 2024 and four sites for the current dry season of 2024-2025.

DA-RFO1 HOLDS DRY SEASON PROV'L RICE TECHNO FORUM IN LA UNION

The Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office 1 continued its series of Provincial Rice Technology Forums (PRTF) for the dry season, holding the 4th leg in Bauang, La Union, on March 10, following the successful events in Pangasinan and Ilocos Sur earlier in the first quarter.

Each of the 25 hybrid varieties by ten participating seed companies was showcased in a 0.25-hectare demonstration plot. La Union farmers participated in a field walk to evaluate the crop stand, reaction to pests, and panicle formation.

Meanwhile, the forum also highlighted the results of the previous wet season's front demonstration site. Topping the list was Bioseed's Biorice Bonus with a yield of 13 metric tons per hectare (13 MT/ha).

The dry season Provincial Rice Technology Forum series will conclude with two events in the demonstration sites established in Ilocos Norte.



DA-RFO1 LINKS ILOCOS TOMATO FARMERS TO INSTITUTIONAL MARKET



The Department of Agriculture - Regional Field Office I (DA-RFO I), through its Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD), and in coordination with the High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP), successfully facilitated a market linkage for tomato

farmers in Ilocos Region.

On February 25, the Sangjera Nagcarsuan Farmers Association, Inc. and Zanjera Naganakan Farmers Association, Inc. from Sarrat, Ilocos Norte delivered an initial 6,293.26 kilograms of tomatoes to Tosen Foods

Incorporated in Meycauayan, Bulacan at an expected price of Php23.00 per kilogram. Succeeding deliveries will take place every Monday and Thursday since March.

The market linkage was made possible through close coordination of AMAD and the HVCDP where a meeting was conducted in October to firm up the marketing deal with Tosen Foods Incorporated.

The Provincial Government of Ilocos Norte extended its support to the farmers by providing logistical assistance through the awarded KADIWA truck, with a 50% subsidy on fuel expenses.

This initiative underscores DA-RFO I's commitment to enhancing market opportunities for local farmers, ensuring stable income, and strengthening the agricultural value chain in the region.

DA-RFO1 EMPOWERS FARMERS WITH FINANCIAL GRANTS FOR BETTER MARKET ACCESS

The Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office I (DA-RFO I), through its Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD), awarded financial grants to the Local Government Units (LGUs) of Bantay, Ilocos Sur, and Basista, Pangasinan on February 10, 2025.

OIC-Regional Executive Director Dr. John B. Pascual, together with Regional Technical Director for Operations Engr. Dennis I. Tactac, and OIC-AMAD Chief Ms. Rhoda

Galban, led the turnover of the grants to the LGU representatives at the DA-RFO I Office of the Regional Executive Director. The Municipality of Basista, Pangasinan, received Php2 million for the agri-products delivery support to local farmers, accepted by Municipal Agriculturist Mr. Anthony F. Resultay. Meanwhile, the Municipality of Bantay, Ilocos Sur, was granted Php5 million for the farmers' transport vehicle and marketing logistics services, with Municipal Agriculturist Mr. Jordan R.

Briones receiving the check on behalf of the LGU.

For many farmers, the challenge is not just growing crops but also getting them to consumers while still fresh and in good condition. These grants will provide much-needed transport solutions, ensuring that high-quality, farm-fresh produce reaches markets faster, reducing losses and increasing profits for hardworking farmers.



DA-RFO1 RECEIVES PRIME HRM LEVEL 2 RECOGNITION, HONORS RETIREES, LOYALTY AWARDEES



The Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office 1 (DA-RFO1) on January 30, 2025, was granted the PRIME HRM Level 2 recognition by the Civil Service Commission Regional Office 1.

The PRIME HRM, or Program to Institutionalize Meritocracy and Excellence in Human Resource Management, is a program by CSC, created to improve the human resource management skills and structure of government agencies.

PRIME HRM Level 2 indicates that DA-RFO1 has a process-defined HRM, characterized by goal-oriented decision-making with the existence of some automated systems but little

integration of data. A set of defined and documented standard operating procedures is present, although it needs improvement.

On the same date, DA-RFO1 employees were recognized for their exemplary work and years of public service.

The Personnel Development award was given to the following: Engr. Eleanor Blanco for her doctorate in public administration; Dr. Marlon G. Mendez for finishing the Public Management Development Program Middle Managers Class Batch 29; and Ms. Loida P. Pacursa for finishing the Public Management Development Program Middle Managers Class

Batch 30.

Honored retirees were Ms. Wilhelmina P. Castañeda (41 years in service), Ms. Mercedes S. Daduya (40 years in service), Mr. Normandy A. Inacay (37 years in service), Ms. Annie Q. Bares (36 years in service), Ms. Larina G. Zabala (32 years in service), and Mr. Fernando L. Ramos (18 years in service).

Meanwhile, recognized loyalty awardees were as follows:

Ms. Sylvia N. Saguiguit, Senior Administrative Assistant I—40 years in service

Ms. Mercedes S. Daduya,

Administrative Aide
I—40 years in service

Mr. Normandy
A. Inacay, Agriculturist
I—37 years in service

Dr. Maria Remedios
H. Pajatin, Agricultural
Center Chief III—35
years in service

Ms. Glenda M.
Villaga, Information
System Analyst II—30
years in service

Mr. Aries V. Magat,
Senior Science Research
Specialist—25 years in
service

Mr. Rufino D. Gagni
III, Science Research
Specialist II—25 years in
service

Mr. Jayson
P. Bermudez,
Administrative Aide III—
20 years in service

Ms. Analiza R.
Ramos, Development
Management Officer
V—20 years in service

Ms. Leah Lyn U.
Ronduen, Administrative
Officer IV—20 years in
service

Mr. Robert P.
Signaben, Farm Worker
I—20 years in service

Mr. Fernando I.
Ramos, Security Guard
I—18 years in service

FIRST LADY BRINGS “LAB FOR ALL CARAVAN” TO PANGASINAN



First Lady Louise Araneta-Marcos visited Bayambang, Pangasinan on February 6 to lead the ‘LAB for All Caravan,’ providing free medical and government services to thousands of Pangasinenses.

A collaborative effort among government agencies and other private institutions, LAB for All is a project by the First Lady that started in May 2023. It aims to bridge healthcare and essential public services to underserved communities across the country.

“Every time the ‘LAB for All’ team meets, we always remind ourselves that this is just an extension of what my husband always says, which is – Lagi po

nating mahalín ang Pilipinas. Lagi po nating mahalín ang Pilipino,” the First Lady said.

During the caravan, the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1 distributed free vegetable seed packs, tree seedlings, and informational materials to farmers and other attendees.

This marks the First Lady’s third visit in the region for the caravan. Her previous stops were in Ilocos Sur and La Union last year, reinforcing the administration’s commitment to bringing vital services closer to the people.

16 DA-ATTACHED AGENCIES TO JOIN RCI-SRD



Strengthening collaboration and partnership in the Regional Convergence Initiative for Sustainable Rural Development (RCI-SRD) in Ilocos Region, 16 member agencies of the Regional Management Council (RMC) opted to join the Ilocos Regions Technical Working Group for wider access of government programs, projects and initiatives especially in the rural areas.

In the recently held 1st Quarter Meeting of the RCI-SRD Technical Working Group in Ilocos conducted at the 5th Floor Conference Room of the Department of Agriculture on March 28, 2025, Regional Convergence Secretariat, Ms. Irene Tactac announced the inclusion of 16 member-agencies of the RMC from the five original member-agency in the RCI based on RMC Resolution No. 1 duly approved by the RCI member-agency representatives.

RED John Pascual in his message reiterated the essence of converging efforts and resources among government agencies in the region to realize the goals and objectives of the convergence initiatives of the member agencies.

Recognizing the member-agency's efforts which made the Ilocos region to achieve the most number of convergence sites in the country, RED Pascual enjoined the proponents to apply for the DA's Civil Society Organizations accreditation to have a full access of the various development programs and projects that the agency members provide.

Meanwhile, while waiting for the approval of the convergence sites from the NCI-SRD, the RCI initiated some preparatory activities for the launching of the selected convergence sites in June where series of meetings shall

be conducted to discuss the program activities as well as the sourcing out of resources from the various convergence member-agencies.

The Agri-Enterprise and Agro Development Component of the technical working group is scheduled on the first week of April for field validation and needs assessment prior to the preparation of the project proposal for submission to the NCI-TWG on April 21, 2025.

Another salient activity of the NCI in April is the conduct of Strategic Communication Plan Writeshop to be held in Binalonan, Pangasinan to increase awareness about the programs and projects of the RCI-SRD with a field visit to the identified convergence sites with existing valid CADPs shall be conducted particularly in the convergence sites in San Manuel, Natividad, Balungao or San Nicolas.

DA-GAD TRAINS WOMEN ASSOCIATIONS ON MUSHROOM PROCESSING

Gathering 20 members of the Green Ladies Association of District 2 (GLAD2) of Burgos, Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1 (DA-RFO 1) through its Gender and Development (GAD) office, promoted product value-adding via Livelihood Training of Mushroom Processing for Women on March 11-12, 2025, at Burgos, La Union as part of 2025 Women's Month Celebration.

Following the community mushroom production training on August 2024, DA-GAD returns to Burgos to enhance the GLAD2's agri-preneurial capacity. Under the guidance of guest speaker and retired

DA GAD alternate-focal person, Ms. Filomena Bugaoan, the training involved processing mushrooms into different products such as the mushroom siomai, mushroom shanghai, mushroom chili oil, and mushroom polvoron.

For the second day, Ms. Maria Panela D. Gabriel of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), as part of the DTI's information dissemination campaign, educated the women agri-preneurs on consumer rights and responsibilities, emphasizing on awareness of the Philippines' consumer laws along with useful tips and tricks when buying different products.

This activity is greeted with enthusiasm from the women's association led by Association President, Ms. Marilyn Calub, ensuring that the training will improve their production and income. It is as part of the department's support for agribusinesses and mutual partnership with empowered women, all joining hand-in-hand for the improvement of the country's economy and food security.

The other site for the training was in San Fabian, Pangasinan, on March 13-14, 2025, with members of Wondermoms Rural Improvement Club.





DA ASSESSES IMPACT OF GRANT AWARDED TO ASF-AFFECTED HOG RAISERS IN LA UNION

Under the joint coordination of the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1 Regulatory Division, Livestock Banner Program, and Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation Division (PMED), African Swine Fever (ASF) affected hog raisers from San Juan, La Union, and Rosario, La Union were interviewed and surveyed for the Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation (RBME) on March 18-19, 2025.

A total of P755 000.00 was granted to hog raisers last 2024 whose livestock were culled during the height of ASF in 2023, allowing them to receive P5000.00 for each culled hog. The DA went back to check how these grants were used and if it helped the affected hog raisers.

These funds, according to the evaluation, were used by raisers to start again and were allowed to utilize the funds however they wanted. Some used

the indemnification funds for restarting their hog raising business, for family basic needs, as capital for other business ventures, or for crop production.



DA-GAD BRINGS LAB, OTHER SERVICES TO UMINGAN FARMERS

As part of the celebration of Women's Month this March 2025, the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1 Gender and Development (GAD) office brings along the Integrated Laboratories Division (ILD) and the Registry System for Basic Sectors in Agriculture (RSBSA) office to provide technical laboratory services and registration services to the farmers of Umingan, Pangasinan on March 26, 2025.

The outreach offered services to some 30 farmers and farmer representatives invited by the Umingan Local Government Unit (LGU). Both women and men alike were able to acquire technical laboratory services such as soil analysis, animal health recommendations, providing bio-control agents (BCAs), and crop health diagnosis provided by the Regional Soils Laboratory (RSL), the Regional Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (RDDL), the Regional Crop Protection Center (RCPC), and the Regional Feed Chemical Analysis

Laboratory (RFCAL), respectively.

The event also provided an avenue for the farmers to register under the RSBSA or inquire about the status of their registration through representatives from the said office. The registry was also the determining factor for choosing Umingan, as it is the municipality with the highest

number of women farmers in Pangasinan.

The DA-GAD is committed to continuing its collaboration with different offices to continue providing outreach programs to different places, ensuring that the DA's services can reach every Filipino citizen in Region 1, both men and women alike.



DA-RFO1 CONDUCTS CY 2026 PLANNING WORKSHOP

To prepare for the implementation of the Department of Agriculture's (DA) programs and projects for Calendar Year (CY) 2026, the DA-Regional Field Office I (DA-RFO I) conducted a planning and budget proposal workshop on February 4-6, 2025, at Selah Vie Resort Hotel, San Ildefonso, Ilocos Sur.

The workshop gathered heads and planning officers from the DA's banner programs and other operating units to discuss priority programs and projects aligned with the DA's two-pronged goals: achieving food security and developing the agri-fishery sector into a profitable

industry to boost farmers' incomes.

In her briefing and orientation, Ms. Irene Tactac, Project Evaluation Officer IV of the Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation Division (PMED), outlined the process of project proposal submission, including the criteria for evaluating programs, projects, and activities to be prioritized for funding in CY 2026.

Key criteria for project evaluation include maximizing income, reducing poverty, increasing the income of farmers and fisherfolk, enhancing production, reducing import dependency, and

promoting cost-reduction technologies.

Ms. Tactac also urged participants to consider key principles when proposing projects, emphasizing the importance of programmatic or outcome-based approaches, cost-efficiency, relevance, and readiness for implementation (shovel-ready projects).

To ensure comprehensive evaluation, each banner program and operating unit had the opportunity to present their proposed projects for review by PMED staff and Regional Technical Director for Operations Engr. Dennis Tactac. The reviewed proposals were presented at the Luzon-wide Plan and Budget Proposal Workshop on February 17-21, 2025, at Sola Hotel, Laoag City, Ilocos Norte.

DA-RFO1 LEADS REG'L MANCOM MEETING TO STRENGTHEN INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION

The Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Office I (DA-RFO I), as Chair of the Regional Management Council (RMC), spearheaded the conduct of the 4th Quarter RMC Meeting on February 11, 2025. Hosted by the Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center I (ATI-RTC I), the meeting was held at ATI, Tebag, Sta. Barbara, Pangasinan.

The quarterly RMC meeting serves as a platform for discussing agency updates, development efforts, and collaborative initiatives in the agriculture sector. A key agenda of the session was the presentation of ATI-RTC I's profile, programs, and projects which is an integral part of the RMC's strategy to keep agencies informed of each host institution's contributions.

ATI-RTC I Center Director Dr. Jayvee Bryan G. Carillo led the presentation, highlighting the institute's initiatives in fulfilling its mandate as the training arm of DA. Among the key updates was the development of a Specialist Track Curriculum for Farmers in rice, corn, and high-value crops, aimed at enhancing knowledge and skills in training methods. Dr. Carillo also showcased ATI's various training programs aligned with DA's banner programs, covering different segments along the food value chain.

Another focus of the meeting was the presentation of each agency's agricultural development efforts, including key issues, 2025 action plans, and required support. A major challenge raised was the limited funding for fully implementing development initiatives. Other concerns included the need for improved facilities, logistics, training



assistance, and manpower support-issues that could be addressed through resource-sharing and strengthened collaboration among RMC member agencies.

In his message, DA-RFO I Regional Executive Director Dr. John B. Pascual underscored the importance of inter-agency cooperation in advancing the agriculture sector. He encouraged agencies to stay updated on DA's programs and emphasized that collaboration is key to addressing

challenges. He also relayed key directives from DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel, Jr. particularly in reinforcing efforts toward achieving national food security.

The RMC remains committed to fostering a cohesive and well-coordinated approach in delivering agricultural programs and services in Region I, ensuring that farmers and stakeholders receive the support they need for sustained growth and productivity.

DA DISCUSSES CY 2025 WORK PLANS, BUDGET WITH ATI-RTC



“We can share our resources, so that we can do more for the Bagong Pilipinas,” Ms. Garcia said.

Dr. Jayvee Bryan Carillo, OIC of the ATI-RTC shared the same insights noting that the year 2025 is expected to be the year of tangible results as anchored to the directives of DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel.

With the limited resources on budget and manpower for both agencies, Dr. Carillo called on the need for complementation as needs of the farmers are unlimited.

Meanwhile, to determine the activities that needed complementation and collaboration, each of the representative of sub-sectors on rice, corn, high value crops, livestock, special projects, institutional and information presented their planned programs and budgets which were reviewed by the panel of critiques composed of Dr. Carillo, Ms. Garcia, ATI-RTC’s Assistant Director, Ms. Jo Aben, Field Operations Division Chief, Ms. Analiza Rosario, Integrated Laboratories Division Chief, Dr. Constancia Diaz and Agribusiness and Marketing Division OIC-Chief, Ms. Rhoda Galban.



Unifying the work plans and budgets for CY 2025 with the Agricultural Training Institute-Regional Training Center I (ATI-RTC), heads of the various operating units of the Department of Agriculture in Ilocos met for a one-day planning workshop at ATI-RTC Conference Room on February 12, 2025.

Aimed at unifying the planned extension programs, projects and activities for both agencies towards realizing a more impactful delivery of extension services in the region,

the planning workshop provided an avenue to develop extension projects and activities that both the agencies and other stakeholders and partners could work on to achieve the desired outcomes.

Ms. Doris Joy Garcia, Chief of the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Division (PMED) of DA in Ilocos noted the importance of resource sharing and complementation in the extension activities of both agencies which are in line with the food sufficiency goals and objectives of the DA.



YOUNG AGRI-PRENEURS COMPLETE AGRINEGOSKWELA TRAINING

Some 25 participants of the Young Farmers Challenge Program (YFCP) gathered for the final day of the AgriNegoSkwela Training on February 24, 2025, at the Department of Agriculture - Regional Field Office 1 (DA-RFO 1) Conference Room.

The training was conducted under the coordination of Ms. Jhanine Agdeppa, Ms. Ajurina Libed-Otica, and Mr. Harley Andres, YFC coordinators for La Union, Ilocos Sur, and Pangasinan, respectively. It was spearheaded by Ms. Rhoda Galban, Officer-in-Charge of the Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division

(AMAD).

AgriNegoSkwela aims to equip young agri-preneurs with essential business skills to help them grow and sustain their agribusinesses. The training emphasized the power of social media and digital tools in marketing agricultural products.

On February 24, 2025, participants attended sessions on Social Media Marketing, led by Mr. John Kirby G. Savellano and topic on Video Editing for Business was also discussed by Ms. Gerylle Vanmarie T. Palabay

For Day 2 on February 25, 2025, Ms. Corazon G. Valdez, MS III MDS discussed “How to Effectively Participate in Trade Fairs,” guiding the young entrepreneurs on maximizing market exposure.

At the end of the training, the young agri-preneurs officially graduated, committing to apply their learnings in improving and expanding their businesses. This initiative is part of DA-RFO 1’s continuous efforts to support agri-MSMEs and promote food security across the region.

SEVEN ELYU STARTUPS PITCH BUSINESS MODELS AT YFCP PROVINCIAL-LEVEL EVALUATION

Applicants from La Union for the Young Farmers Challenge Program - startup category were invited to present their enterprise before a panel of judges for the Business Model Canvas Evaluation Provincial Level, at the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1 on January 20, 2025.

Under the leadership of Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division Officer-In-Charge, Ms. Rhoda Galban, seven applicants namely: the Marikmik Farm, BeeRaise Zero Waste Apiary, AGRISYNC, Porky Piggery Farm, Walter's Goat Farm, Smartland Integrated Farm, and the Kring's Integrated Garden were all subjected to careful assessment.

The judges were comprised of

experts of different fields, as follows: Ms. Rhoda Galban, OIC AMAD Chief; Ms. Corazon Valdez, Market Specialist II; Ms. Angelica Quiban, Senior Trade-Industry Development Specialist from the Department of Trade and Industry;

and Ms. Evelyn Guzman-Breguera, entrepreneur and owner of Abundance Agri-Tourism & Training Center Inc. These chairpersons also offered their expertise and provided valuable opinions to the presented enterprises.



ILOCOS YOUTH AGRI-PRENEURS PROPOSE BUSINESS MODELS IN YFC INTERCOLLEGIATE CATEGORY

Some six representatives of State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) all over Region 1 pitched their business proposals at the Business Model Canvas Pitching and Evaluation Intercollegiate Category for the Young Farmers Challenge at the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office One on January 21, 2025.

Business models included Coco Delicias from Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University - South La Union Campus (Dmmmsu-South La Union Campus), RRJ Mycogreen Farm from Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College - Main Campus (ISPSC), POTTECH and Gundaway from

Mariano Marcos State University (MMSU), and ABesiness on Palakang Bukid (GCK ABEnture) and Morio Cracks from Pangasinan State University (PSU), each and everyone vying for the P250,000 cash grant to further expand their agri-ventures.

Motivated not only by profits and the grant, these young agripreneurs sought to improve their business models for promotion of their hometowns, preserving tradition and cultural heritage, minimizing agricultural waste, and helping the community.

The evaluation committee is comprised of Ms. Rosel E. Tubaang,

Agriculturist II and Ms. Corazon G. Valdez, Market Specialist III of the Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division (AMAD) as the chairpersons. Other members of the panel of judges offering their honed expertise are as follows: Ms. Angelica Quiban, Senior Trade-Industry Development Specialist from DTI; Ms. Evelyn Guzman-Breguera, entrepreneur and owner of Abundance Agri; Ms. Juanita Gabriel, Saint Louis College Professor and Business Education Program Head; and lastly, Ms. Grace Ventura, ATI Senior Agriculturist and Partnership and Accreditation Section Chief.

FCAS GRANTED COFFEE, CACAO SEEDLINGS AT CEREMONIAL DISTRIBUTION

Some 18 representatives of four Farmer Cooperatives and Associations (FCAs) were granted coffee seedlings, cacao seedlings, and plastic drums during the Ceremonial Distribution of Coffee Seedlings, Cacao Seedlings and Plastic Drums at DA-PREC Sta. Barbara on January 24, 2025.

This activity was led by the High Value Crops Development Program. Mr. David Rondal, focal person of the Community-Based Coffee and Cacao Enterprise Development Project (C3EDP), also instructed farmers about the best practices in taking care of said seedlings.

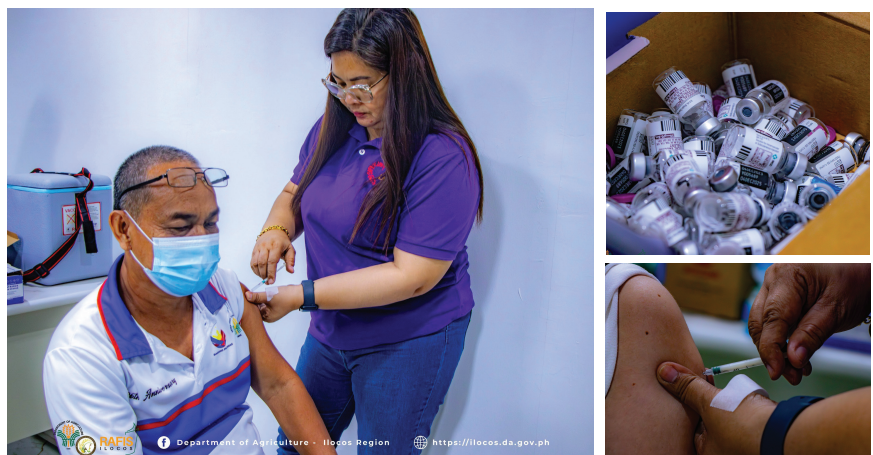
This is first of many distributions to come for farmer associations and cooperatives as the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office - One is committed in helping farmers reach their full potential.



DAEA CONDUCTS ANTI-PNEUMONIA VACCINATION OVER 200 DA EMPLOYEES

The Department of Agriculture Employees Association (DAEA), in partnership with the Provincial Government of La Union, vaccinated 200 Department of Agriculture employees with anti-pneumonia shots at the DA-RFO1 ground floor on January 27, 2025.

The anti-pneumonia vaccine has a validity of five years. Employees are advised to take paracetamol in case of fevers—among the side effects of the vaccine—and are reminded to refrain from drinking alcohol during the next twenty-four hours.



DA-RFO 1 EMPLOYEES CLINCH TOP SPOTS IN FOUR EVENTS AT AREX1 SPORTSFEST



DA-RFO1 employees placed first and runners-up in four out of seven events during the three-month-long sports festival organized by the Association for Regional Executive Directors Uno (AREX1).

In the women's chess competition, Ms. Aprilyn Pagaduan secured first place.

Mr. Mcjim Cariño earned first runner-up in the men's badminton singles and landed second for doubles alongside Mr. Ric Francis Reyno.

For the badminton women's category, Ms. Jaefanie Estillore took the second runner-up for the singles. Meanwhile, partners Ms. Katherin Matro and Ms. Raquel Bumadilla

earned the second runner-up spot for the doubles event.

In bowling, DA-RFO1 placed first runner-up overall. Mr. Oscar Padua was recognized for the highest single score with 125 points, together with Mr. Santos Flores for the highest double score with 234 points.

For the Mobile Legends competition, DA-RFO1's team placed as first runner-up in the women's category. The team included Ms. Princess Bautista, Ms. Rachelle Ducusin, Ms. Renella Acosta, Ms. Yulica Esperanza, Ms. Marneli Orpia, Ms. Dimple Parbo, and Ms. Alona Marie Tiangson.

The sportsfest, which started in October and concluded in December

last year, culminated in an awards ceremony held on January 28, 2025, at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources 1 (DENR1) Training Center.

AREX Uno, a non-government organization in the Ilocos Region, is led by the executive directors of various government agencies, government hospitals, and state universities and colleges. Currently, the association has 29 participating government offices.

The AREX Uno was established to provide government employees a platform where they can nurture meaningful partnerships, strengthen professional networks, and promote camaraderie within the public service sector.



DA-GAD KICKS OFF NATIONAL WOMEN'S MONTH CELEBRATION

In celebration of the National Women's Month 2025, the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office One (DA-RFO 1) through its Gender and Development (GAD) Office led the kick-off ceremony on March 3, 2025 at the DA-RFO 1 grounds.

Resource Speaker Veberly Uyaan, Outstanding Rural Woman Awardee, highlighted, "Ito (the Women's Month Celebration) ay isang pagkakataon na ipakita ang ating lakas, talino, at dedikasyon sa pagpapaunlad ng ating komunidad at ekonomiya." And true enough, the highlight of the event is the invitation of women in agriculture, women entrepreneurs, and past women awardees of agriculture-related grants for the trade-fair showcasing their agricultural products both fresh and processed, as well as women-made arts and crafts.



Furthermore, she added, "Ang buwan ng kababaihan ay isang panahon na hindi lang upang ipagdiwang ang ating mga tagumpay, kundi upang kilalanin ang mga paglalakbay na patuloy ginagawa ng mga kababaihan lalo na sa sector ng agrikultura."

The program also included a live-band performance, encouraging employees to showcase their talents while wearing the NWMC 2025 Advocacy shirt, emphasizing the support of the DA-RFO 1 for women and their contributions for their community, for the economy, and for agriculture.

LOVE IS IN DA AIR: DAEA ILOCOS MARKS 21ST ANNIVERSARY

The Department of Agriculture Employees Association (DAEA) in Ilocos Region marks its 21st anniversary on February 14 in time with the Valentine's Day Celebration.

The employees from all the different divisions and offices of the DA-RFO1 came together to set up creative booths featuring a variety of gimmicks – from playful prison booths to Squid Game-themed activities and many more.

The event served as an avenue for the employees to bond, celebrate, and showcase their creativity.



DA-RFO1 PARADES THE STREETS OF SAN FERNANDO FOR CITYHOOD ANNIVERSARY

Seeds raining, the agri king and queen reigning; the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1 (DA-RFO 1) took part in the Grand People Parade's Parade for the 27th Cityhood Anniversary on March 14, 2025.

Joined by 60 DA employees, the parade started from Pennsylvania Avenue to the City Plaza, only pausing for the dance performance to the music of the Cityhood jingle. The DA also joined in the parade float competition, showcasing the region's agri-products and the Mr. and Ms. DA, all the while giving out free seeds to the parade audiences. The DA float won the 1st Runner-Up in the Best Float Category next to the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR).

True to the theme for the 27th Cityhood Anniversary, "Pista ti Ragsak Ken Panagkaykaysa," the DA's participation brought joy to the spectators and showed its unity with the city and other agencies.



DA EMPLOYEES GETS REFRESHER COURSE FOR VIRTUAL, ONSITE MEETINGS

Some 80 Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1 (DA-RFO 1) employees took a refresher course entitled “Comprehensive Training for Effective Onsite and Virtual Meetings / Trainings / Workshop” focusing on the use of Google Workspace software and presentation-related hardware for efficient office meetings at the DA-RFO 1 Conference Hall on March 14, 2025.

Instigated by the Information Management Section (IMS), the workshop tackled basic GMeet and GForm skills to ensure smooth online meetings without assistance. Subsequently, the IMS also taught technical hardware skills regarding the use of the LED screen and projector for



future uses, ensuring that every office has the basic skills and knowledge for an efficient presentation.

The DA-RFO 1 is committed to

improving its employees, giving them opportunities for growth and skills development in order to provide better service for farmers, fisherfolk, and Filipino citizens.

DA-RFO1 EMPLOYEES BOOSTS CONFIDENCE, PROFESSIONALISM IN PERSONALITY DEV'T TRAINING

Some 30 employees of the Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1 participated in a personality development training on Thursday in an effort to enhance their confidence and professional skills.

Ms. Cherrie B. Bayuga, Supervising Human Resource Specialist from the CSC Regional Field Office 1, served as the resource person.

During the session, Ms. Bayuga discussed important topics, which included the nature of personality development in public service, principles of good housekeeping, and office decorum.

The training, as explained by Ms. Bayuga, is focused on building employee confidence and fostering



positive behavior by addressing personal management, grooming, health, nutrition, and soft skills for professional and interpersonal communication.

An initiative of the Human Resource Management Section of the agency, the training is expected to contribute to a more professional and efficient work environment.

OF QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICE: DA-RFO1 EMPLOYEES UNDERGO VALUES ORIENTATION WORKSHOP

In the government sector, the delivery of quality public service depends on the kind of values instilled in its workforce. If quality seeds were sown, expect a fruitful harvest.

In the Department of Agriculture—Ilocos Region's commitment to continual improvement, some 30 employees underwent a Values Orientation Workshop (VOW) on February 18-19, 2025, enriching participants' knowledge on public service values and ethical standards based on Filipino culture.

VOW is a program by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) focused on five Filipino core values—the Pagka-tao, Pagka-kalikasan, Pagka-Filipino, Pagka-tagapaglingkod, and Paglalagom.



Resource persons for the two-day workshop were Mr. Jerwin B. Linsangan, Chief Human Resource Specialist, and Ms. Cherrie B. Bayuga, Supervising Human Resource Specialist of the CSC Regional Field Office 1.

This workshop is part of DA-RFO1's strategy to help employees become better individuals with a mindset aimed at providing high-quality service to the public.

BASIC CUSTOMER SERVICE TRAINING FOR DA-RFO1 EMPLOYEES

In line with its mission of providing an excellent service to its customers, 30 employees of the Department of Agriculture in Ilocos underwent a 2-day training on Basic Customer Service Skills at the 5th Floor Conference Room in San Fernando City, La Union.

In her discussion with the concept, the service management and other key elements in providing quality services to the customers, Ms. Ma. Rosette Roduen-Romero, Special Investigator III of the Civil Service Commission - Regional Field Office I who served as the subject matter specialist in the training made emphasis on the relevance of providing excellent

service as well as the critical role that the employees will play to satisfy the expectations of the customers.

With the traditional point of view that customer service would apply only for front-line personnel, Ms. Romero noted that all transactions that requires interaction with any person must be given proper attention.

She likewise emphasized the importance of right attitude in government service as key to successfully providing excellent service. "We don't only need technical and capability skills to determine the level of our job satisfaction. It is more of our attitude when we deliver that needed

service to our customers," Ms. Romero said.

To further enrich the skills and knowledge of the trainees in the subject matter, several worthwhile and fun strategies were utilized aside from the discussions and oral recitation among the attendees including role play and fun game activities.

The Basic Customer Service Skills Training is among the capability enhancement training that the Human Resource Management of the DA in Ilocos to further enhance the knowledge and skills of its employees in performing their duties and responsibilities as public servants.

An aerial photograph of a coastal area in Damag-AGRI. In the foreground, a concrete bridge with a metal railing spans a body of water. To the left of the bridge, there are several rectangular aquaculture ponds with yellowish-brown water, surrounded by green mangrove trees. In the middle ground, a larger body of water contains numerous small boats and fishing structures. In the background, a dense forest of mangroves and a small village with colorful houses are visible. Beyond the village, a range of mountains stretches across the horizon under a cloudy sky.

FROM STUDENT TO AQUAFARMING SUCCESS

Roy Usor's million-peso dream



CESS
realized

Roy S. Uson, a 28-year-old civil engineering student from Bongalon, Labrador, Pangasinan, faced a pivotal choice: blueprints or blue waters? Driven by a lifelong passion for aquaculture and a desire to uplift his family, the son of a fisherman decided to dive headfirst into entrepreneurship, blending his academic pursuits with his love for the sea.

Growing up, Roy witnessed firsthand the challenges and potential of aquafarming. His family's livelihood depended on the fish his father tended as a renter and caretaker.

Seeing untapped opportunities, Roy envisioned a modern, sustainable fish farm that could boost incomes for local fishers. He believed innovative aquaculture systems, combined with Pangasinan's abundant water resources, held the key to transforming his community.

A turning point came when a friend introduced him to the Young Farmers Challenge (YFC) 2023. Roy applied, not expecting to win, but his vision and drive resonated with the judges. He secured not only the national YFC grant but also provincial and regional awards, providing crucial financial backing.

Roy's Uson Polyculture Farmstead Aquafarm, which began as a modest 200-square-meter crab-fattening operation, now spans 2.3 hectares. He implemented an ingenious aqua-polyculture system, raising milkfish (bangus), rabbitfish (samaral), and crabs symbiotically in two grow-out pens (15m x 20m x 3m). This diversified approach created multiple revenue streams from a single location.

The results were remarkable. Each



three-month cycle yields 50,000 to 100,000 milkfish fingerlings, sold for 5 pesos each, and the same quantity of rabbitfish fingerlings, sold for 10 pesos each. His products are distributed throughout Regions 1, 2, and 3.

Roy's success attracted the attention of local exporters in Manila, restaurant owners, and individual buyers. He also forged a partnership with a UK-based shipping company, opening doors to potential exports to the Middle East.

To further enhance his operations, he invested in a refrigerated truck, enabling efficient delivery across his

target regions.

Starting with approximately 230,000 pesos, Roy has grown his business to an impressive 6 to 7 million pesos, including the value of his grow-out commodities and farm expansion. He also maintains a healthy emergency fund of 600,000 to 700,000 pesos.

Roy's success story isn't just about financial gains. He's a responsible son, supporting his family while continuing his civil engineering studies. He passionately encourages other young people to explore agribusiness, highlighting the Department of Agriculture's unwavering support, from initial





funding to marketing assistance.

Through innovation, unwavering hard work, and the support of programs like the YFC, Roy S. Uson has transformed his dreams into a thriving reality, proving that with passion and determination, anyone can turn their vision into a million-peso success.

The YFC program continues to empower aspiring agri-preneurs, ensuring that young farmers like Roy have the resources and support they need to succeed.



*Babae sa lahat ng sektor, aangat ang
bukas sa Bagong Pilipinas*

#NationalWomensMonth2025



Department of Agriculture Regional Field Office 1
Aguila Road, Sevilla, San Fernando City, La Union

Research Stations:

DA-Pangasinan Research and Experiment Center, Sta. Barbara, Pangasinan
DA-Pangasinan Research and Experiment Center, Sual, Pangasinan
DA-Ilocos Integrated Agricultural Research Center, Bacnotan, La Union
DA-Ilocos Sur Research and Experiment Center, San Juan, Ilocos Sur
DA-Ilocos Norte Research and Experiment Center, Batac City, Ilocos Norte
DA-Ilocos Norte Research and Experiment Center, Dingras, Ilocos Norte



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